



*An "Omer Counter" to count the days between Pesach and Shavuot.*

Beginning on Pesach, we mark the passage of time day by day until Shavuot. This spring we will mark another significant day: the 50th anniversary of the Six Day War.

This edition of the Shofar highlights our strong connection with Israel. It is easy to get confused or depressed by the politics of the Middle East. These articles invite us to enjoy Israel's culture, to explore its history and to rejoice in its accomplishments. Tobin Spiller, pictured with his parents, Daniel and Jennifer and his brother, Abbott, did just that this past fall. "After touring all through Israel, my journey ended at Robinson's Arch with my bar mitzvah. At that same place, generations of pilgrims long ago ended their physical journey and began their spiritual journey. Like so many who came before me, I came home carrying memories that will last a lifetime."

# BOOK PEOPLE

By Rabbi Alexander Davis



Never doubt the power of a book to change the course of history.

That is a lesson that comes through in Adam Kirsch's *The People and the Books*. Kirsch, a poet, Jewish studies director at Columbia University and frequent columnist, explores 18

classics of Jewish literature that forever influenced and impacted Jewish life.

Kirsch's chapter on Herzl reviews Herzl's life and his accomplishments but gives special attention to his literary output. Herzl was a journalist, author and play write. He covered the Dreyfus affair and wrote a play about a ghetto Jew facing anti-Semitism.

By the spring of 1895, Herzl was obsessed with the Jewish question. So he set off to convince Baron Edmond de Hirsch and the Rothschild family to underwrite the establishment of colonies in Palestine. But his meetings were utter failures. Herzl then shifted. He published *The Jewish State* in 1896 in an edition of three thousand copies.

*The Jewish State* outlines Herzl's vision for a state. And while many of his ideas failed to materialize, this book launched him on a whirlwind career as a Zionist speaker, organizer and diplomat. As Kirsch writes

*The Jewish State*, the book that came into the world as a freak and a fantasy, led within the space of half a century to the creation of a Jewish State. In the history of Judaism, other books have done more to shape Jewish religions and the Jewish spirit, but none had the same kind of practical, political impact. Not since Moses stood on the slopes of Mount Nebo and prophesied the fate of the Israelites in the Promised Land, in the book of Deuteronomy, had a single person done more to direct the course of Jewish history.

Without the Zionist Congress and Herzl's tireless diplomacy, the book would not have launched a state. But as in Hirsch's other examples, we see in *The Jewish State* the power of books to challenge the status quo, to rally a nation, to spark a revolution.

I love walking people through the Beth El Learning Center. Not only is the room beautiful, the Max Shapiro Library Collection has something for everyone – modern novels, history, Jewish thought and practice, Torah study, and more. Adults check out books for pleasure reading and students for school reports.

Marcia Oleisky continues to serve as the collection's devoted librarian organizing and updating the collection. Recently, Mike Frisch has taken up the painstaking work of electronically cataloging the collection. Todah!

In addition to the Learning Center, over the past few months, we have been busy planning for next year's launch of the Center for Learning. We've had successful sample programs and sent out surveys. Even as we develop the program, we know that books will play a central role in our learning. Look for opportunities to join book discussion groups and attend talks – because just having a large author collection sit on shelves means little unless readers digest them.

Not every book we read will lead to the creation of a state. But they might inspire a new idea, reveal a new perspective, or transport us to new vistas. As they do, we will continue to be worthy to be known as The People of the Book.

For Jews, books are at the center of learning. How appropriate then that today, Israel sells more books per capita than any other country in the world.

# Chefs & Torah

By Rabbi Avi S. Olitzky



No other institution in Minnesota can claim to have hosted such culinary talent as Beth El Synagogue. It's actually quite a humbling and incredible feat that so many award-winning and nationally acclaimed chefs are willing to give of their time and talent – not to mention undergo the gauntlet of navigating preparation of tried and true dishes with kosher modifications.

For four years running, our Tu B'Shevat Seder has served as a primary gathering for these chefs. They come together, sometimes having never before worked side-by-side, and they become a family and a team, in our kitchen and in our Leonard & Fay Ribnick Kiddush Hall (which is converted that evening into a staging and prep space). The guests for this enchanted evening get to eat and drink and dine on the bountiful creations of this Minnesota talent, but there's something that they don't know.

When we invite these chefs to participate, the initial pitch includes the idea that: "each year we hold a very special food and wine dinner, highlighting the seven (really) eight foods of the biblical land of Israel – all part of a celebration of the Jewish festival of Tu B'Shevat." This intrigues them – a mysterious undertaking surrounding food, and it opens the door for us to study together.

We review Deuteronomy 8:8 – we match the order of the courses, highlighting each species parallel to the order they are listed biblically. We unpack whether the *davash* mentioned in the Torah is (bee) honey or drippy dates (as Rashi suggests). We deliberate about capping the dinner at 180 guests – symbolizing a life-enriching evening (the tenfold

multiple of *Chai*). We discuss that the purest way to relate to the passing of time – and its cyclical nature – is to reflect on the change in the length of day. And so our wine transitions from light-body to darkest and boldest to match this change in light – and then back again. And most importantly, the notion of connecting with Israel across the oceans of today and the tides of time challenges each chef to try something they haven't done before.

Behind the scenes and in advance of our evening, we study and talk Torah with our chefs. And that's one of the reasons they're delighted to participate. Through their culinary performance, they implicitly become our rabbinic masters and mystics.

The Jewish mystics of the Middle Ages may very well have partaken in a feast such as the one we offer for Tu B'Shevat. But one thing we can be sure of: the *kavanah* (intentionality) behind the meal, the goal of the gathering, and the love for Israel (yesterday and today) implicit in its conception, keeps people coming back year after year, and attracting newcomers just the same.





# Singing Our Way Home

By Cantor Audrey Abrams

In February, we hosted Israeli singer, Bat ella Birnbaum at our annual coffeehouse. Bat ella's desire to introduce the music of iconic Debbie Friedman to Israeli society inspired her to translate all of Debbie's music into Hebrew. But does singing music in Hebrew make it Israeli? What is Israeli music? It's hard to say.

Just as it's impossible to define "American" music, it's impossible to specifically define "Israeli" music. The influences are vast and great. Immigrants from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East came together to form a new Israeli sound in which nationalism played a significant part. The music of Israel grew out of this rich melding of traditions to create a distinctive musical culture.

When I was growing up, I sang in my synagogue high school choir and danced in our teen troupe. We learned songs like "Machar," a classic Israeli folk song by Naomi Shemer, "Rad Halaila," a song that is said to be the second most famous to Hava Nagila for dancing the hora, and "Sharm El Shaikh," the Six Day War Israeli Anthem. To me, this music was passionate and spiritual. Listening and dancing to it, I felt very connected to something much bigger than me. I was fascinated with how religious music was popular and popular music was political and nationalistic. As I got older, I expanded my repertoire of the influences of Israeli music when learning Ladino songs from Spanish Jewry and piyutim (poems) composed by Iraqi and Syrian Jewry.

When I think of Israeli music, one song in particular stands out – Erev Shel Shoshanim.

## *Evening of Roses*

*Let us go out to the grove  
Myrrh, Spices, and Frankincense*

*Is the carpet under your feet*

*Night falls slowly*

*And a wind of rose blows*

*Let me whisper a song for you slowly*

*A song of love*

This beautiful Hebrew poem was written by Moshe Dor. The melody, by Yosef Hadar, was first recorded in 1957 and was well-known throughout the Middle East. It was choreographed into an Israeli folk dance, recorded by international singers including Harry Belafonte, sung at countless weddings, and incorporated into weekly Shabbat prayers of the musaf amidah. Beyond its words, when I hear the melody, I am filled with a sense of calm, serenity, and simplicity. These are not words that readily come to mind when thinking of Israel. But one other does: Home.

When a plane lands in Tel Aviv and a Jew steps out onto Israeli soil, there is an indescribable feeling of coming home. As we listen to and sing the music from the Holy Land, we are singing "our song;" and like a couple walking down the aisle and standing under a chuppah, Israeli music in all its diversity, complexity and beauty has the power to take us home.



# Where I Am Home

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By Dan Mosow, Beth El President



A few years ago, I had the opportunity to spend about two weeks in Israel with some friends of mine. It was my second trip to Israel in a span of four years. While in Israel, I was fortunate enough to participate in several classes, tour many parts of the country and

spend time with my friends talking about our families, our dreams and what it meant to each of us to be “Jewish.”

During my trip, one of my friends and I went to have lunch with my niece who works at Tel Aviv University. We took a cab from our hotel to the campus and spent the next three hours listening to her talk about how much she loves living in Israel. You could hear her passion for Israel in every word. It was great.

As she finally said “well, I better get back to work,” I told her that we wanted to walk back to our hotel rather than taking a cab, but we didn’t know how to get back. Since our hotel was on the beach, she pointed to the Mediterranean Sea and said, “walk towards the water,” and so we did. About

an hour into our walk, I said to my friend, “Here I am in a foreign country, don’t know the language, have no idea if I am in a safe area and am not 100% certain that I am going in the right direction. But I am so comfortable and relaxed with these surroundings. I am at peace.” I can only describe the feeling in one phrase, “I am home.”

I experience the feeling of being home on two other occasions. The first is obvious: when I am at home with Stacy, and with Benji and Zoe, that sense of peace is that much greater. The other time I experience a sense of inner peace is when I am at Beth El, sitting in services.

One would think that I would be concerned with making sure that services are running smoothly, if the temperature in the sanctuary is comfortable for the congregation, if the sound system working properly and on and on. I am conscious of my surroundings and I do pay attention to these details. But the feeling of being at home overcomes me. All the concerns and issues that I deal with during the week are gone. I am at peace.

I am not an observant person in the traditional sense. So the sense of inner peace does not come from the service itself. Instead, for me it is a time to reflect on my personal goals, review the past week and imagine the coming week.

I would encourage you to come to services. Even if we don’t necessarily always follow along, we can still spend a few minutes reflecting. Like me, you just might feel like you are home at Beth El.

# New Members

In the spirit of welcoming families to the congregation – so everyone can put names with faces – we are now offering new families the opportunity to place their photo in the Shofar. If you have joined Beth El in the past year, please email [lgoldberg@bethelsynagogue.org](mailto:lgoldberg@bethelsynagogue.org) with a family picture. It is our goal to feature as many photos of new families as possible.

## PLEASE WELCOME

Lee Levitan

Laura Horne with Alana and Jonah Wasserman

Michal Rischall & Keith Schulhof with Maya and Lev

Kari Chester & Noah Trueger with Pacey and Chester

Howard & Jody Sigal with Benjamin and Bori



*The Chester & Trueger Family*



*The Horne Wasserman Family*

# Israel at Aleph Preschool

By Karen Burton, Director of Aleph Preschool



How fortunate we are to live in a community that offers a selection of Jewish schools and programs for our children to learn and grow.

At Aleph Preschool, we pride ourselves on the importance of being Jewish to include a strong curriculum rooted in Judaics that help foster children's natural curiosity through a play-based model of creativity, problem solving and critical thinking. We try to meet each child's unique range of knowledge, interests, talents, needs and learning styles.

We instill a love of Jewish living and being part of a larger Jewish community through celebrating Chagim (Holidays), life cycle events and prayers.

Our children learn to understand themselves and their sense of belonging to their local and global community, including Israel, through immersion in Jewish spirituality, language, culture and heritage.

If you have ever visited Aleph Preschool during the year, you will see in the classrooms, hallways and on the children's faces, the passion and sheer joy of learning about the Holidays, Shabbat and Israel. Try joining us for our monthly Musical Shabbat on the first Friday of each month at 9:30 am, to hear the children sing and dance with the Torah's. It is delightful.

Our curriculum is built around year-long themes with varying Midot (Jewish Values) for children to learn. One of our favorite monthly themes during the

summer is The Land of Milk and Honey (Eretz Yisrael). Israel is always close to our hearts and we are fortunate to have a number of teachers who were either born in Israel or lived there for a number of years. They all bring their experiences to the classroom. Along with our daily conversational Hebrew classes, taught by Maayan Levi-Edwards and a weekly Hebrew music class led by Dori Weinstein, our children are not only immersed in the language, but in the culture too.

Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel's birthday) is always a full day celebration at Aleph Preschool. Our children take imaginary plane rides to Israel with passports in hand; they climb Masada, spend a day at the Shuk and enjoy a lunch of falafel in pita with Israeli salad.

Throughout the year, Israel is brought into our classrooms daily. In December, we completed a preschool wide Tzedakah project through JNF, filling the "blue boxes" with pennies for JNF water solutions in Israel. Our children learned the importance of Israel's water challenges, which bodies of water are drinkable and how salt water can become drinkable all through interactive activities. Through this project our Aleph Preschoolers raised over \$800.00 for Israel. During each summer, we host the Israeli Scouts. They share their love and passion for Israel with our kiddies and entertain them with a wonderful concert. They bring Israel alive to our children and we are so fortunate to have them visit each summer.

Our connection to our heritage is a vital part of who we are and what we believe in. Our Judaic curriculum is part of what solidifies our relationship with Israel.

Please stop by and visit us to see our preschool in action. You are welcome anytime.





## CONNECTING MY CHILDREN TO ISRAEL

By Amanda Awend, Director of Shorashim and Young Families Engagement

Israel holds a special place in my heart. I have not been there since visiting with Camp Ramah Seminar many years ago, but I certainly look forward to returning one day. I have shared pictures with my children and talked about my meaningful experiences at the Kotel on top of Masada and planting a seedling in memory of those that passed. But my children have not yet been to Israel.

For most people, especially children, connectivity and learning come from tangible experiences. So, how do we connect our children to Israel when it is so far away? We can do this throughout the Jewish holidays by telling stories, singing songs, and eating special foods that bond us to our ancestors and our homeland. Additionally, my family makes it a part of a weekly ritual to give tzedakah, charity, to Israel.

It is customary in our home to give tzedakah every Friday night before we light the Shabbat candles. My husband and I take our loose change from the week and leave it out for our children to put in our tzedakah boxes. Most recently, we have been putting our money in the JNF (Jewish National Fund) box that we received from my daughter's Aleph Preschool class several months ago. We originally received this tzedakah box to collect money to help preserve and sustain fresh water in Israel. She learned about it at school, and we were excited to bring that mission home. Shortly before the tzedakah box was due back to school, wild fires spread throughout the state of Israel.

After we turned our money back in to JNF, we had a new and very important responsibility; we were now going to collect money so that we could help plant trees in Israel. This goal tied in perfectly with Tu B'Shevat.

Tu B'Shevat is a newer holiday, but a wonderful holiday to celebrate the land of Israel. We often retell the story of Honi and the carob tree and sing songs about the first almond trees blooming in Israel. We eat special foods that come from Israel such as grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates. Another great way to participate in this holiday is to donate money to plant trees in Israel.

For over 100 years, the JNF has been collecting money to cultivate the land of Israel. More than 250 million trees have been planted throughout the state of Israel. They continue to do great work by helping to support Israel's environment, security, education and much more.

As our family's JNF tzedakah box filled with coins, my children were excited to offer their support to Israel. They had participated in this beautiful and important act each week, and were eager to begin this process again.

After several weeks, my family received certificates for our participation in helping to support the land of Israel. Now our certificates hang proudly in my children's rooms and their connection to Israel continues to grow.

*For most people, especially children, connectivity and learning come from tangible experiences.*

It is customary in our home to give tzedakah every Friday night before we light the Shabbat candles.





# A Priceless Israel Experience

By Mary Baumgarten, Education Director

I have loved Israel since I was a child. My grandparents on both sides lived there, and I would visit them during some summers from the time I was seven years old.

My love for Israel grew, and I went there on numerous occasions, studied there during my junior year of college and earned a master's degree in ESL so that I could move to Israel and teach English. That didn't happen, but I have continued my connection with Israel by being part of summer teacher seminars or just going there to visit friends and family and "recharge my batteries." It is very important to me to share my love of Israel with my students in the hope that they, too, will grow to love Israel.

That is why I am always delighted to teach about Israel, to give out scholarships to our teens for Israel travel and to help families, in any way that I can, celebrate a Bar or Bat Mitzvah in Israel.

We have heard from families in our Fiterman B'nai Mitzvah Program that having their service and

Simchah in Israel was the best gift they could give their child and their family. All of them expressed a desire to return to Israel at another time.

Truly, there is no better way to develop a love of Israel than to visit Israel. Go there yourselves and you will understand why.



*Pictured: Mary Baumgarten teaching about Israel to her fifth grade class at Talmud Torah*

## STUDYING THE SIX-DAY WAR

By Dan Weiss, Talmud Torah President



When 8th graders at Talmud Torah were asked to list ten things that they know about Israel, they wrote that Israel "has been attacked" and "fights with Arab countries," but none specifically mentioned the Six-Day War. Their responses highlighted Talmud Torah's responsibility to fill in these knowledge gaps, to explain why Israel went to war with neighboring Arab countries 50 years ago and how that war shapes the prospects for peace today.

Talmud Torah students learn about the Six-Day War in 8th grade as part of their year-long study of modern Jewish history focusing on the Shoah and Israel. We teach 8th graders the timeline of Jewish history from pre-WWII to the present, so they can connect that history to news and current events in Israel. Teacher Kara Rosenwald explains, "in order to understand why borders are fought over, one must understand history."

We recognize that our families' perspectives on Israel differ. Our goal is to equip our students with the historical knowledge that will enable them to participate intelligently in their family conversations about Israel. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "The more you know about the past, the better you are prepared for the future."





## Heschel Shabbaton 2017: THE JEWISH VERSION OF THE CHICKEN VS. EGG ARGUMENT

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By Andrew Freeman, Youth Director

This past January, we spent a Shabbat at Herzl Camp for our annual Heschel Honor Society Shabbaton. This Shabbaton was an amazing and special opportunity for a select group of USYers to connect with Judaism and have meaningful and education conversation on a variety of Jewish topics. We spent this weekend in particular exploring the idea of “Jewish Identity Within a Community.”

In one of our sessions, we explored the concept of Israel as a land and as a people. When we refer to Israel, which are we talking about? Are we referring to the Land of Israel or the Sovereign State of Israel that includes Jerusalem and Tel Aviv today? Or, are we speaking about the people of Israel, the Jewish People? And of course, which came first? One might argue that the Land of Israel was first, as it was the land that God showed Abram to test his faith. You could also argue that the people were primary, as the Land had been under much change and many different rulers throughout its history.

The next part of our discussion explored which was more important to the identity of the Jewish community. The Talmud outlines the ways in which a Jewish community could be redeemed as a community while in Egypt. It says, “They became a nation...the Israelites were distinct there, in that their clothing, food, and language was different from the Egyptians.” In this way the Jewish community can survive outside of the homeland of Israel—this, in a sense, defined our Diaspora community.

However, we also explored a text written by Theodor Herzl about Zionism and the necessity for a Jewish State. One statement he makes is that, “Nothing prevents us from being and remaining the exponents of a united humanity, when we have a country of our own. To fulfill this mission, we do not have to remain literally planted among the nations who hate and despise us.” Herzl’s mission and ideology spoke to the Jews’ need of a sovereign state in order to govern themselves and guarantee their safety. In his mind, the Jews must survive with a viable homeland. This represents some of the goals of the state of Israel today.

As we concluded our conversation, the answer we came to was that we need both the land and the people. We decided that it is important that we have the State of Israel to be able to call a home no matter what happens in any other country, a place that we as Jews can feel comfortable in our Jewish skin. But it is just as important that we as Diaspora Jews are here to be able to advocate and support our homeland so that it continues to thrive.

These are the kinds of conversations that our Heschel Honor Society facilitates. It was an incredible experience to be able to take a step back and really think about these things critically. This type of atmosphere is special, and we are so blessed to be able to sit down and reflect on these topics.



*Left to Right:  
Lily Smith, Emma Feinberg,  
Andy Weisman and Maya Smith*



# Bringing Israel Home

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By Deb Deutsch, Women's League President

Though Israel is thousands of miles from Minnesota, it is easy to bring the beauty of Israel into our home and our holidays. The Women's League Gift Shop carries a wide array of Judaica from many accomplished Israeli artists and vendors.

- Looking for a talit? Check those from Galilee Silk, Gabrielli, Ronit Gur, Yair Emanuel and Mishkan Hachelet.
- Need a bridal or housewarming gift, bar or bat mitzvah present? Check out our large display of kiddush cups, kippot, yadiim, candlesticks, havdalah sets, challah boards and covers, and mezuzzot from Israeli artists such as Lily Art, Agayof, Caesarea Arts and Safed.
- Don't see what you want? We can special order it for you.

The colors, materials and designs of these objects tie us to the Holy Land. But there is something more. Jewish tradition teaches that we should enhance the performance of mitzvot by beautifying the mitzvah. Called Hiddur Mitzvah, we create beautiful ritual objects, build beautiful sanctuaries, joyously singing songs of praise.

Certainly at Beth El we have a beautiful sanctuary, services and ritual objects. Thanks to Nancy Garber, the Women's League display cases are frequently changed and arranged with exquisite, contemporary and traditional ritual objects that reflect each approaching holiday (check out our Pesach display!)

But Hiddur Mitzvah doesn't have to stop at the shul. The Gift Shop, so ably run by Linda Estrin and Sara Zuk, with the help of many Women's League members, allows you to bring that same beauty to your home.

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**For more information on Hiddur Mitzvah, I recommend *The Women's League Hiddur Mitzvah Project* by National Women's League. The book is organized by holidays and Shabbat and offers a fresh approach to enhancing Jewish practices. Each section contains short study pieces and craft projects that you can do at home. This book provides new ways to celebrate old rituals and create a great aesthetic experience.**

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Open Sunday and Wednesday mornings to members and non-members.

Please consider becoming a member of Women's League and receive  
10% off all regular priced items.

For more information, contact Linda Estrin at 763.545.4301 or  
lindaestrin512@gmail.com.

# B'nai Mitzvah



**April 1, 2017 / 5 Nisan 5777**

Vayikra

**OLIVER WILLIAM SCHACHTMAN**

יצחק נס בן אלימלך וגדולה משה

Son of Nicole & Todd Schachtman

*Oliver has worked hard to explore what it means to become a Jewish young man and the importance of living your truth. We are looking forward to sharing his bar mitzvah with the Beth El community this spring.*



**April 20-21, 2017 / 24-25 Nisan 5777**

Shmini

**MITCHELL ETHAN PASTER**

מיכאל איתן בן חיים ועמי

Son of Amy & Howard Paster

*Mitch is a bright student and has a kind heart. We look forward to watching him learn and grow in his Judaism and in his life*



**April 29, 2017 / 3 Iyyar 5777**

Tazria/Metzora

**SAMUEL "WYATT" GREENBERG**

שמשון יעקב בן אברהם חיים ויוכבד חנה

Son of Janice & Michael Greenberg

*Wyatt enthusiastically experiences Judaism in many ways including Shabbat dinners, Herzl camp, family events, attending synagogue and Talmud Torah. We look forward to watching him respectfully enter Jewish adulthood.*



**April 29, 2017 / 3 Iyyar 5777**

(Shabbat Minchah)

**April 30, 2017 / 4 Iyyar 5777**

(Sunday Morning)

Achare Mot/Kedoshim

**LEXI GREENBERG**

חווה יסמין בת יעקב וטובה

Daughter of Lori & Jeff Greenberg

*Lexi is a fun, independent, strong-willed individual who takes her own approach on everything. Preparing for her bat mitzvah was no different. We look forward to her reaching this and many more milestones on her Judaic journey.*



**May 20, 2017 / 24 Iyyar 5777**

Behar/Bechukotai

**ANDRE JAY KRISTAL**

עמית ירמיהו בן דניאל ואביבה

Son of Joey & Danny Kristal

*Through hard work and effort, Andre has succeeded in his bar mitzvah education. This lesson will greatly benefit him in all he sets out to achieve in life.*

# B'nai Mitzvah



May 27, 2017 / 2 Sivan 5777  
Bamidbar

**JOHNNA MADELINE PARKS**

יעקבה חנה בת ברוך ציפור וחיה

Daughter of Michelle & Steven Parks

*Johnna brings dedication and passion to her bat mitzvah preparation. We are so proud of her accomplishments, and we look forward to watching her enter Jewish adulthood.*



June 3, 2017 / 9 Sivan 5777  
Nasso

**MOLLY SARAH SCHOCHET**

מלכה שרה בת זאב ושירה

Daughter of Sheryl & Wesley Schochet

*Molly is bright, creative and insightful. She has a beautiful positive energy that radiates from her to those around her.*



June 10, 2017 / 16 Sivan 5777  
Beha'alotcha

**LAUREN ALEXANDRA VEGAS**

ליאורה עמיה בת יעקב ורחל

Daughter of Rachael & John Vegas

*Lauren has demonstrated great energy and passion in preparing for her bat mitzvah; we are so proud of the responsible young woman she has become.*



June 29, 2017 / 5 Tamuz 5777 (In Israel)  
Chukat

**EMILY ROSE HOFFMAN**

חווה בת שלמה ואסתר

Daughter of Ella & Shawn Hoffman

*Emily's love for Israel ties her to the land. Having her bat mitzvah there further anchors her connection to Israel and the Jewish people.*

*BEMA presented Bat ella Birnbaum who performed at the Coffeehouse concert and sang with the Beth El Choir for Shabbat Services*



*It may have been cold outside, but it was elegant and warm at our annual Tu B'Shevat Seder*



*USY presents: Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*



*Care packages  
to support our  
National Guard  
troop stationed  
in the Sinai  
Peninsula*





*Fiterman Mitzvah Corps visiting with Michelle Horovitz at the Breaking Bread Café*



*The Center for Learning presented Professor David Schultz who spoke on President Trump's first 100 days in office*



## MAZAL TOV TO MEMBERS WITH UPCOMING MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

| NAME                               | DATE    | YEARS |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| Daniel & Beth Rodich               | June 9  | 15    |
| Ohad Ludomirsky & Arielle Kaufman  | June 10 | 10    |
| Alicia Phillips & Jason Blumenthal | June 10 | 10    |
| Allan & Roz Salita                 | June 10 | 55    |
| Soni & Michael Cohen               | June 12 | 40    |
| Nan & Jim Greenfield               | June 13 | 30    |
| Dr. Michael & Michelle Appleman    | June 13 | 35    |
| David & Kathy Cooper               | June 14 | 30    |
| Sam Schinazi & Mariana Quiroga     | June 15 | 20    |
| Bruce & Janice Waller              | June 15 | 65    |
| Heather & Drew Schwartz            | June 17 | 10    |
| Stanley & Marsha Finkelstein       | June 18 | 50    |
| Marty & Kay Harris                 | June 18 | 50    |
| David & Randi Fogel                | June 21 | 25    |
| Harvey & Harriette Katzovitz       | June 21 | 75    |
| Ruben & Toots Vodovoz              | June 22 | 35    |
| Charles & Surrie Desnick           | June 24 | 55    |
| Jay & Ilene Goldberg               | June 26 | 40    |
| Sholly & Jill Blustin              | June 28 | 30    |

*If you would like to ensure your (or your loved one's) simchah is acknowledged in future publications, please contact the Beth El Office at 952.873.7300 or info@bethelsynagogue.org.*

## Mazal Tov to...

Pia & Max Mulder on the birth of their son, Alex Mulder, born December 1, 2016.

Sara & Zack Chazin on the birth of their daughter, Sofia Chazin, born on December 12, 2016.

Ori & Tal Tzafrifi on the birth of their son, Gil Tzafrifi, born in December, 2016.

Melanie & Dmitriy Vinokur on the birth of their daughter, Marigold Harriet Vinokur, born on January 5, 2017.

## Condolences to...

**Sharon Kaplan** on the loss of her husband, **Eli Kaplan**

**Friends and family** on the loss of our member, **Sylvia Shink**

**Judy Meisel** on the loss of her sister, Rachel Levitan

**Lizzie (Stephanie) Carlson** on the loss of her mother, Nancy Carlson

Michelle (Steve) Waller on the loss of her father, Jack Poncher

**Simon (Gretchen) Glaser** on the loss of his sister, Mindy Beth Friedman

**Barbara Chase Proosow** on the loss of her husband, **Sanford "Sandy" Proosow**

**Friends and family** on the loss of our member, **Ruth Kasdan**

**Josh (Ali) Berdass** on the loss of his father, Daniel Berdass

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**Friends and family** on the loss of our member, **Claire "Pokey" Katz**

**Simon (Leah) Temkin** on the loss of his father, Isaak Temkin

**Julie (Steve) Rose** on the loss of her father, Abraham Rosenthal

*With heavy hearts we mourn the loss of these loved ones within our community. This reflects the losses in our community through January 14, 2017.*

# Beth El Synagogue Foundation

*Ensuring the vitality of our congregation now and in the future*



## Scholarships Impacting Our Youth

By Matt Walzer, Director of Charitable Giving



Experiencing and exploring Judaism is something we all hope that our young people will pursue. We want them to question, learn, and continually add to their Jewish journey. One of the ways that Beth El has provided such opportunities for exploration is through granting scholarships.

Isabel Leviton (pictured left) was a Beth El USYer who did not always feel connected to her Judaism. As a third-generation Beth El member, she went through TaRBuT, had her bat mitzvah, and continued to teach in the TaRBuT program and enhanced her Jewish learning outside Beth El. But it was her sister, Shoshana's trip to Eastern Europe that encouraged Isabel to apply for a scholarship in 2016. Her past involvement qualified her for a scholarship, and in the summer of 2016, she participated in the USY Eastern Europe/Israel Pilgrimage trip.

Forty teenage travelers embarked on the six-week voyage that included two weeks in Prague, Berlin, and Poland before spending the last four weeks in Israel. By making this trip Isabel hoped that she would learn more about Judaism and to better develop her leadership skills – her hopes were fully realized.

Among her most poignant memories from the trip were the group's prayer experience that included a post-prayer swim near the sea port of Haifa, feeling a connection to people she didn't know during Shabbat services and how easily she felt a rapport with the person who sat next to her on the plane – simply because they were both Jewish.

With her eyes wide open, Isabel recounted how this trip exceeded her hope of feeling connected to Judaism. Since returning from her trip, she has already enrolled in a new Yachad class and feels that she developed a more informed perspective on Israel. She talks graciously and humbly about the importance of her travel in deepening her ties to Judaism and Israel.

Isabel's experience is 1 of 11 scholarships that were granted to our youth in 2016. Because of the continued generosity of families who value the impact of such travel experiences, students like Isabel can have the same opportunity that she had.

Such support of Israel scholarships matter, and your support can too.

One of the ways that Beth El has provided opportunities for exploration, is through granting scholarships.

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Tribute donations to Beth El funds honor friends and family, commemoration of significant events, memorialize loved ones and provide essential support to the congregation. Endowment funds provide permanent funding where needed most or for a specific purpose. Endowment funds are held in the Beth El Foundation. Funds for immediate use are used to support specific programs or projects, are for general use and are spent in their entirety. To make a donation, or to establish a new fund through our Foundation, please contact Matt Walzer at 952.873.7309 or at foundation@bethelsynagogue.org.

## TODAH RABBAH (THANK YOU)

Beth El gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

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*This list reflects donations made from October 18, 2016 – January 11, 2017*

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We honor our loved ones through donations that support their values and continue their lives.

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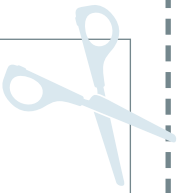
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# UPCOMING AT BETH EL

Below is a sampling of only some of the upcoming events at the synagogue. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. Look for more details in future *Hakol* and *Kesher* publications, and as always, feel free to call the Welcome Desk at 952.873.7300 for additional information.

| APRIL |                                                                |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10-18 | Pesach                                                         |
| 11    | Pesach 2nd Night Seder                                         |
| 23    | Yom Hashoah Remembrance Service                                |
| 30    | Beth El Blood Drive                                            |
| MAY   |                                                                |
| 1     | Yom Hazikaron                                                  |
| 2     | Yom Ha'Atzmaut                                                 |
| 10    | Inspiring Minds: An Evening with Sarah Koenig and Julie Snyder |
| 14    | Lag Bomer                                                      |
| 14    | Mother's Day                                                   |
| 19    | Aleph Preschool Spring Shabbat Dinner                          |
| 21    | Trucksploration                                                |
| 29    | Memorial Day                                                   |
| 30    | Shavuot                                                        |
| JUNE  |                                                                |
| 1     | Shavuot                                                        |
| 18    | Father's Day                                                   |

## SUMMER LOOKING AHEAD

| JULY   |                              |
|--------|------------------------------|
| 4      | Independence Day             |
| AUGUST |                              |
| 1      | Tisha B'Av                   |
| 28     | Beth El End of Summer Picnic |

### ONGOING SERVICES

**EREV SHABBAT****(Friday evening)**

Kabbalat Shabbat ...5:45 pm

**YOM SHABBAT****(Saturday)**

Shacharit .....9:00 am

Minchah .....5:45 pm

**SUNDAY**

Shacharit .....9:00 am

(Chevrah Breakfast)

Maariv .....5:45 pm

**DAILY MINYAN**

Shacharit .....7:00 am

Maariv .....5:45 pm



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FAMILIES**



**Beth El**  
SYNAGOGUE



*truck&splosion*  
at aleph preschool

**Sunday, May 21, 2017 ★ 11am-2pm**

Beth El Synagogue Parking Lot, St. Louis Park

*What is truck&splosion?*

An innovative and fun event that will blend the excitement of big machines and imagination along with the opportunity for the youngest members of our community and their families and friends to share a day of exploration.



*What will be there for us to do?*

Trucks and other vehicles of all sizes, fun for boys & girls, parents & grandparents! High-energy, interactive vehicles, fun guests & entertainment! Food vendors!



**FREE & OPEN TO  
THE PUBLIC!**



INSPIRING MINDS SERIES

**AN EVENING WITH SARAH  
KOENIG & JULIE SNYDER**

Wednesday, May 10, 2017  
7:00 PM

Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as Sarah and Julie (co-creators and hosts of the Serial podcast) open our minds to the problem of wrongful conviction in our criminal justice system, and bring the stories and struggles of the actually innocent closer to our Minnesota community-empowering us to make a change and correct this injustice.

Tickets available at  
[www.besyn.org/serial](http://www.besyn.org/serial).