

Newsletter of Temple Beth Torah
Wethersfield, CT
Vol. 19 No. 2

Special Interest Articles:

- Message from
Rabbi Seth
Riemer
- New Year's
Greetings 5776

Friday Night
Services now
start at 7:00 pm

Chanukah Party
December 13

Message from Rabbi Seth

November 4 marks the 20th anniversary of a tragic occasion: the assassination of Israel's prime minister, Yitzchak Rabin, a warrior turned *rodef shalom* / peace seeker. He was struck down at a peace rally by a fanatical Israeli opponent of the peace process. Today, by most accounts, Israelis still yearn for some sort of accommodation with Palestinians but are pessimistic about the prospects for a negotiated settlement to this century-long conflict. The reasons for that sense of gloom are complicated.

Not least of all is the fact that the "moderate" Palestinian (PLO) leadership, backed by the Arab League, refuses to accept the existence of Israel as a *Jewish* state. Influencing this attitude is widespread rejection, by HAMAS and among the Arab and Muslim masses, of Israel's right to exist in any form. However, Israeli policy too is implicated in the breakdown of hope. Increasingly strident rhetoric and intransigent policies from a right-wing, Likud-led coalition that has governed Israel since 2009 leave little room for Palestinians to feel they can trust in a negotiated settlement.

In my opinion, however, the chief reason for failure to move forward with negotiations and, perhaps, for their complete breakdown, is undue international pressure on Israel. More specifically, western European governments and NGOs (including institutions of higher learning) hypocritically, and repeatedly, turn a blind eye to Palestinian incitement and violence while singling Israel out for condemnation. Many in Europe are jumping on the bandwagon of declaring the corrupt and largely ineffectual Palestinian Authority an official, *de jure* government whose authority presumably matches that of the State of Israel.

These gestures—on their face a well-meaning attempt to redress the political balance between Jews and Arabs in the Holy Land—only further aggravate the inflamed, festering wound of Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A self-righteous attitude encourages efforts to stigmatize Israel and Israelis, in turn spurring more attacks against Israel and leading to the inevitable paranoid reaction these governments and organizations denounce as proof of Israeli racism toward Palestinians!

The United States is one of the few places remaining where sympathy toward Israel remains widespread among the citizenry—and not just among right-wing Christian Zionists. Given the fashionable collegiate trend to label Palestinians heroes and Israelis villains, we should not take our fellow citizens' pro-Israel sentiment for granted, yet let us gratefully acknowledge that here, in America, it is possible to be public in support of Israel without having to fear we could be marginalized for expressing that support. Yes, as we prepare for our Thanksgiving festivities, let's not lose sight of this important fact: it's certainly something to be thankful for.

Rabbi Seth

Executive Committee Article

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation-at-large, we are moving ahead with some maintenance projects that had been put on hold for several months.

As previously announced, the social hall floors will be professionally sanded and refinished during the week of Thanksgiving. Our renters have been notified and are pleased with our decision to proceed with this project.

The front steps have been repaired and are in far better condition than before we took action to re-set the flagstones on a firmer base. We are awaiting the services of a carpenter to repair the base of the front of the Temple; that job should be completed before month's end. And, thanks to Harold Nevins, we have a new railing at the front steps.

We are currently interviewing contractors to re-paint/re-finish the outside of the building; a much needed job after the horrific winters we have experienced over the past few years. Also, we are looking to go ahead with the repair to the front tower, a portion of that cost to be

covered by the settlement received from our lawsuit against the insurer.

A Spring fund-raiser is being planned which will include the services of our own "Chefs in Residence" Barry Scott and Marty Gold, featuring a gala feast to be professionally served at our Social Hall. We are looking for our best turnout ever for such an event, and YOU can make that happen by your participation and enthusiasm. In the past, we have done "Progressive Dinners," but while that is popular, we can only include 24 individuals, we would like to try something different. So, we will bring the Congregation together at our own Social Hall and fete you with excellent wine and food prepared by folks who know and appreciate a good meal!! More on that event as we get closer to the time.

Eliot & Kathi Mag, Barry & Sallyanne Scott, Karen Klein

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS 2015/5776

BARBARA CHECKNOFF AND RABBI SETH
RIEMER AND FAMILY

CECILE AND BARRY BRONFIN, MICHAEL,
LESLEY, IAN AND TABITHA; WENDY, BRIAN
AND ELEANOR; JOHN, BARBARA, WILLY
AND JOHNNY

ALICE BURSTEIN AND FAMILY
MARA DRESNER

MARLENE ELLENBERG AND FAMILY
CAROL ANN GERSHENSON

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

BARRY GOLDBERG, MICHELLE AND BILL
CYR

ELLEN SUE MOSES AND MARK A. GOULD

DEB, JOE, SAM AND LILY HAMMER
RALPH, MAUREEN AND HANNAH HOROWITZ
SUSAN JAMES

KAREN AND BOB KLEIN
RHODA AND FRED LONDON AND FAMILY
PHIL AND GERALDEEN LOHMAN
KATHI AND ELIOT MAG AND FAMILY
HAROLD AND RITA NEVINS

SUSAN. JONATHAN AND KAYLA REUBEN
HARRIET AND LEO ROSEN AND CHILDREN
HELENE ROSENBLATT

MIRA AND BARRY SCHLEIN AND FAMILY
SALLYANNE AND BARRY SCOTT, TODD,
JACKIE AND AARON

AZ AND EVELYN SOFORENKO
KAREN AND GERRY WALTMAN AND FAMILY
VALERIE AND EVELYNE CARPENTER

IN MEMORIAM
IN LOVING MEMORY OF ANDIE GOLDBERG
THE LOVE OF MY LIFE, FOREVER.
BARRY

Attention All:

The Executive Board of TBT has decided that Shabbat services will now be starting at **7:00 p.m.** Hopefully, our new start time will allow more families with young children to attend on a more regular basis.

Found: A Couch

While we weren't looking, someone carried a futon couch into the Social Hall. Who did that?

Shiny, Refinished Floor Guidelines

We will be having the floor in the social hall refinished the week of Thanksgiving. To keep the floor shiny, we ask that everyone help. We plan to put a rug in the side entrance, and in the area just inside the Social Hall. Please wipe your shoes to avoid tracking dirt, leaves, snow and salt into the Hall. When moving furniture, please lift it with one person on each end so the floor doesn't get scratched. We will put felt pads on the legs of the tables but lifting will minimize damage.



Calendar

November

- 1 Sunday school, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah - Rice
- 6 Erev Shabbat, Friday night
services 7:00 p.m.
Oneg - Ellenberg
- 8 Sunday school, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah - Evans
- 13 Erev Shabbat, Friday night
services 7:00 p.m.
Oneg – Moses & Gould
- 14 Torah Study 9:30 am
- 15 Sunday school, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah - Sondik
- 20 Erev Shabbat, Friday night
services, 7:00 p.m.
Oneg – Latorra
- 22 Sunday School 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah – Lev

December

- 4 Erev Shabbat, Friday night
Services 7:00 p.m.
Oneg – Mag
- 6 Sunday School 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah – Rose
- 11 Erev Shabbat, Friday night
Services 7:00 p.m.
Oneg – Hoss
- 12 Torah Study 9:30 a.m.
- 13 Sunday school, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah – Rice
- 13 Chanukah party 11:00 am
- 14 Board Meeting 7:00 pm
- 18 Erev Shabbat, Friday night
Services 7:00 p.m.
Oneg – James
- 20 Sunday school, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Challah – Evans

Tips for Oneg or Challah Host

As the Oneg Host, you will need Kedem Grape Juice and a challah. You can also bring cake, brownies, fruit, soda, seltzer, cider or whatever you feel like sharing. If you cannot participate on your "Host" date, please switch with someone else or find a substitute. There are signs in the kitchen to help you locate paper goods and tablecloths.

As the Challah host at School, please bring in a Challah. Place it on a platter, sliced. Please pour some grape juice from the refrigerator into enough cups for the students and teachers. Just before you take your kids home please help with cleaning up.

Please save the date!

Our Annual TBT Chanukah Party is Sunday, December 13th from 11:00-1:00. Chanukah games and activities are planned for the children. A dairy lunch with latkes, egg salad, tuna salad and desserts will be served! Hope to see all of our TBT families there! The cost is \$7.50 per person, \$20.00 max per family.

We need you to RSVP by December 6th. After December 6th, the cost will be \$12 per person, \$30 per family. **We also need volunteers to set-up and clean-up!** Please RSVP to Sallyanne at 860-828-3377 or by email to batsps53@gmail.com. Checks should be made out to TBT and send to Sallyanne at 105 Sunmeadow Drive, East Berlin, CT 06023.



Temple Beth Torah

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 SethRiemer@aol.com

Executive Committee

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 Kathi and Eliot Mag,
 Karen Klein

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Deb Hammer

Ways and Means

Judy Gold

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 Mag, Carol Gershenson, Fred
 London, Sallyanne and Barry
 Scott, Rabbi Seth Riemer and
 Barbara Checknoff

Grounds

Kathi Mag

Artist-in-Residence

Phil Lohman with Ralph
 Horowitz

TBT BOOK CLUB NEWS

The TBT Book Group is seeking new members. The two books that current members have expressed interest in reading are listed below. If you would like to read either of these books (or any other book that you'd like to add to the list) and join us for discussion, please contact Bert Woodcock (860-529-7575) and he will try to schedule the next meeting at a time convenient for you.

Suggested Books:

“Who Wrote the Bible?” by Richard Elliott Friedman. (A scholarly and readable presentation of Biblical authorship, history, personalities, and the politics of ancient times.)

“The Gifts of the Jews- How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels.” by Thomas Cahill

Instead of necessarily having an assigned book to discuss at each meeting, a few of us have been talking about the idea of getting together periodically to discuss any current events, concerns, issues, or other topics of interest related to the Jewish community or Israel. If this is an idea that appeals to you, please RSVP to Bert Woodcock (see above) so that he can arrange it.

Mazel Tov

Congratulations to Barry Goldberg on being elected to the Rocky Hill Board of Education.

Thank you

We would like to thank Gary Evans and Leonard Lev for their help on maintaining the Temple. We heard they are planning to look at the Temple’s gutters next.





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Help Wanted

Seeking: New Editor for the STAR. One individual or two working together.

Task: Collect articles from the Rabbi, the executive committee, the corresponding secretary, the adult ed coordinator and input them into the Star. Format the newsletter, add calendar items, add previews of events and post- event articles.

Timing: Publish the newsletter every other month. The editor's job is done in mostly small blocks of time, as input arrives, over a 2 week period.

Skills required: Familiar with a word processor and e-mail. Need to keep up with the events of the Temple, especially by attending the monthly board meetings.

Benefits: Become a part of the group that helps plan what is done at the Temple, events, education for adults and children, what is done to take care of the building

Contact: Sallyanne and Barry Scott

TEMPLE BETH TORAH

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