

The Star

Bi-monthly newsletter from
Congregation Beth Elohim
in Acton, Massachusetts



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November/December 2024 • Tishrei/Cheshvan/Kislev 5785

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In this issue...

Shalom and welcome to The Star. In our last issue Rabbi David introduced us to "Joyfully Jewish at CBE." With that in mind, we hope to share what we are joyful about in our special community, starting with a shout-out to our newest members as well as memories from two who joined us in 1969. Add to that the joy of Jewish camp and wonderful simchas. Enjoy!

Message from Our Co-Presidents



Dear CBE Family,

Fall is an extremely exciting time at Congregation Beth Elohim. We have ushered in the new year, our students have become re-engaged in their learning, and our community has gathered to socialize, learn and grow through amazing programming. This is also the season where we see many new faces around the synagogue. CBE is a growing community with 19 new or returning families joining us in the past six months. As we enter the season of gratitude, we are grateful that these families have chosen to be a part of the CBE community. As you see new members around the synagogue, at events and services, please take the time to introduce

yourself and share your experiences. It is so helpful for new members to have seasoned folks to help them navigate CBE's many wonderful events and programs.

We extend a hearty *B'ruchim Haba'im* ("Welcome") to:

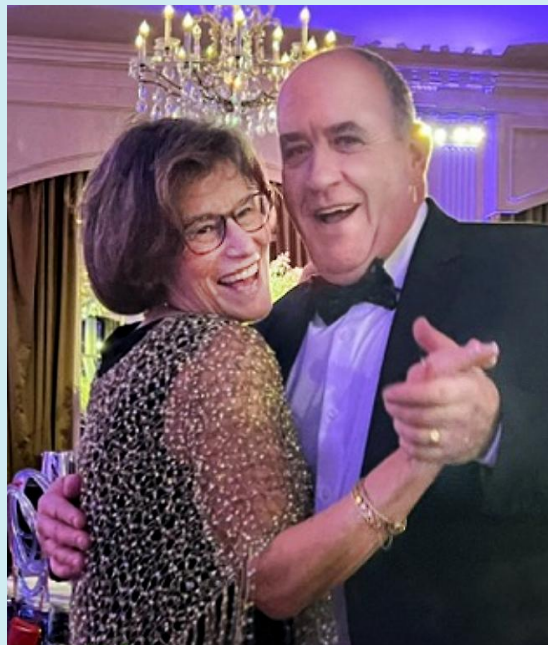
Stan, Qingna, Ray and Faye Barsky of Carlisle
Jeff and Marlene Bergart of Acton
Leah, Michael, Annie and Max Birnkrant of Littleton
Ed and Selma Cutter of Hopkinton
Rebecca Dreifuss, Jaymes Tambeau, Noah and Micah of Acton
India, John, and Felix Goodridge of Harvard
Hannah, Mike, Oliver, Benjamin and Theodore Gruar of Littleton
Limor Hochberg, Benjamin Horev, Aviv and Stav of Littleton
Richard and Nancy Housman of Concord
Adrien, Victor, and Zachary Khelemsky of Carlisle
Michael Linker of Boxborough
Mirit, Isaiah, Shira and Abigail Livshin of Boxborough
Will Manning, Aveca Mack, Mariam and Isaac of Acton
Seth, Cynthia, Joseph, and John Noble of Boxborough
Marc, Belina, Seth and Rebecca Rosenblum of Littleton
Lauren Shapiro, Asher Levi and Ezra of Acton
Ian Silverman, Kathleen Wood, Hazel and George of Acton
Daniel, Jenna and Ezra Venooker of Acton
Rayna Zacks, Brian Licciardi, Aria and Husdon of Concord

We can't wait to see you around the shul!

As always don't hesitate to reach out to us at president@bethelohim.org

Laura Kelmar and Lindsay Rosenman
CBE Co-Presidents

CBE Volunteers Marcy and Don Hoban



We are thrilled to profile long-time CBE members and volunteers Marcy and Don Hoban. This much-beloved couple brings their energy and love of fun with them wherever they go. (you may recall the photo of Don as one of the Blues Brothers, alongside Rick Green in our last issue). Here they tell how they found CBE in 1990 and how their relationship with our community has grown over the years.

We moved to Acton in January 1990 and the first time we set foot into CBE was Purim time of that year to take a peek at the synagogue. We were immediately warmly welcomed into the community and encouraged to partake in the festivities.

Our next interaction was January 1991 when, sadly, Marcy, was saying Kaddish after recently losing her dad. Once again, a stranger to CBE, people came up and introduced themselves and embraced this new community member.

Once we had a family, Marcy joined Sisterhood so that we could attend Holiday PreSchool with our daughter, Hannah. We continued our journey with CBE by attending Holiday PreSchool with Ben.

After joining CBE in 1996 our engagement with CBE slowly launched as we volunteered to be class parents, served on the school committee and helped around clean-up days.

Our involvement with CBE truly launched after being recruited to participate in CBE's very first Purim Shpiel, initiated and directed by Leann Shamash. This wonderful community event led to us meeting many wonderful people; many of whom became lifelong friends.

Since the first Shpiel we have been immersed in the CBE community through a variety of volunteer opportunities.

Over the years, between the two of us, we have been active in Sisterhood and Brotherhood as well as other committees such as Operations, Chesed, School, Family Education, Auction, Social Action and Hospitality committees to name a few.

Don is most proud of his involvement in facilitating the upgrade of the front of the building, resulting in a safe and attractive sidewalk and entrance. We are both proud of seeing the idea for the Faux Food Truck Festival (which we spearheaded with Barbara Frank Michaelson) come to fruition. This festival was a true community effort, engaging all the various committees of the synagogue.

Currently, you will find Chef Don whipping up delectable treats for the monthly Brotherhood breakfasts and Marcy chairing the Hospitality committee, recruiting our Greeters, Zoom Hosts, and Oneg Hosts for Shabbat Services. We have both found that we get more out of volunteering and becoming involved than what we put in. Many friends and family have commented that they wished they had a community like ours.

We truly love our CBE family.

Recalling the Early Days of CBE: Paula and Ken Kopelman



We recently initiated a new feature: interviews of members who helped bring CBE into being in 1969. In asking these folks to tell us about their origins with CBE, we hope to also learn more about our congregation's humble beginnings -- and what it meant to have a Jewish community born in Acton. This month we feature Paula and Ken Kopelman:

When we moved to Acton in 1970, we joined Congregation Rodoff Shalom in Maynard. There were about 25 families in the congregation at that time, and a part-time rabbi held a Friday night service every other week. Our son was 11 months old, and we enjoyed the camaraderie of the Jewish families who lived in Acton and other surrounding towns.

As the congregation grew, we decided we needed a full-time leader. In 1976 we voted to hire Lewis Mintz, who was the chaplain at Wellesley and Bentley College, to become our leader.

After a few years Lewis Mintz decided to attend rabbinical school with the encouragement of the congregation.

When our two sons were four and six we attended services regularly. We fondly remember that Lewis could remember what time it was by seeing our youngest son fall asleep about 8:00 pm. At one Friday night service a big black spider was seen walking back and forth on the wooden railing in front of the bimah. The kids were amused as their eyes followed the traveling spider. Lewis was perplexed not knowing why the kids were laughing until after the service.

During our time at Rodoff Shalom, Ken served as gabbai and religious chair for a few years. When the decision was made to build a new synagogue in Acton, we remember signing the original mortgage and wondered if we would be able to pay it off. As the congregation grew, we were able to burn the first synagogue mortgage.

Joyful Memories of Jewish Summer Camp – by Jess Rosenblatt, CBE Ritual Chair



Amanda Abramovich, second from left, on her USY On Wheels trip

While I did not go to Jewish summer camp, I have heard many campers and alumni share joyful memories from their time there. In starting to plan for CBE's Camp Shabbat service in December, I asked a number of CBE teens and adults to share a joyful memory of Jewish summer camp with me. Here is what they had to say:

Connection and friendship for teen campers Ben, Leah (both Camp Young Judaea, NH), and Isabella (Camp Tel Noar, NH). These moments of connection can arise unexpectedly: Leah and Isabella both mentioned times when bad weather forced campers indoors and they just enjoyed hanging out with friends, listening to music or talking about life. Ben shared a memory of sitting around a beach campfire the last night of camp: "It was lots of fun because everyone was there and we were watching the sunset."

Joy from competing with other camps or with other teams in Color War, giving them a sense of pride and a chance to take on meaningful leadership roles. Teen camper Finley (Camp Young Judaea, NH) was proud that his basketball team won the tournament over other nearby Jewish camps. Sharon Jelinsky (Camp Frank A. Day, MA) really enjoyed learning and competing in lots of different sports with other Jewish campers. Alexa Kushner (Camp Kingswood, ME) fondly

recalled all the work she put in for a Nickelodeon-themed Color War, adding: “it was so much fun, and the team building and friendship forming that came out of it made it all worth it.” Emily Blumberg (Camp Akiba – Reeders, PA) remembers being Color War captain as a counselor, getting joy from the effort and honor of organizing the activities and cheering everyone on.

Prayer and Jewish identity outside a synagogue, sometimes in very special places. Evan Shechter (Camp Ramah – Berkshires, NY) remembers learning to put on tefillin for morning prayers, even on camping trips: “We would do it in the morning out on a mountain overlooking everything and it was so beautiful.” Amanda Abramovich (USY On Wheels) went on a 6-week bus trip around the US with 50 other Jewish kids and remembers the joy of praying together at unique places like the Grand Canyon and the Mall in Washington, DC. Teen camper Seth (Camp Young Judaea, NH) remembers the end of a camp trip to Israel, where they had a “beautiful sunset adventure where we set up a picnic and reflected on our trip through the Holy Land.”

Celebrating the start of Shabbat on Friday nights. Rabbi David (Emma Kaufmann Camp – Morgantown, WV, Camp Harlam – Poconos, PA, and staff at Akiba & Camp Ramah New England) remembers everyone wearing white and coming down to the beach to swim. Rabbi David’s children (Camp Eisner, MA), Naomi Anderson (Camp Yavneh, NH) and Lindsay Rosenman (Camp Young Judaea, NH) recalled the joy of spending Friday evenings with everyone gathered together after Shabbat dinner for music, song sessions, and Israeli dancing. As Lindsay said, there was “so much ruach!”

Thank you to everyone who shared their camp memories with me, and I hope you will join us to celebrate the Joyfully Jewish camp experience on Friday, December 6, for CBE’s Camp Shabbat.

Teen campers Finley, Ben, and Seth at Camp Young Judaea



Teen camper Finley (left) plays spikeball at Camp Young Judaea



Teen campers Seth and Ben at Camp Young Judaea



The People of Chelm Want to Know...



Illustration by Maurice Sendak.

In our busy lives, we do not often take time to reflect on the rich history and wisdom contained in the enormous body of Jewish texts. But, thanks to Bob Ferrara and Waky, the "People of Chelm" column challenges us to grapple with questions drawn from the long and rich history of Jews and Judaism.

QUESTION:

It's all in the name, and this is especially true for Jewish books. For example, we are quite familiar with the fact that "Torah" means teaching, or instruction in Hebrew. The common names of many other great Jewish works are also quite appropriate in the original Hebrew. Can you match the name of the work in the first column with a translation of its literal Hebrew meaning in

the second column?

Zohar – the major work on Jewish mysticism
Mishnah – the Law Code compiled about 200 CE
Ketuvim – the third division of the Bible
Siddur – a prayerbook for services
Talmud – the great dialogue of Jewish sages

Order
Study
Radiance
Repetition
Writings

Ponder your response – and find the answers below.

Lifecycle and Milestone Events in Our Community

B'nai Mitzvah:

On September 14, Maddy and Eila Nelson celebrated becoming B'not Mitzvah. Below are (top) Maddy and Eila on the bimah; (middle) Maddy and Eila carrying the Torah; and, (bottom), Maddy and Eila with proud parents Ben Nelson and Meghan Blute-Nelson





On October 26 – just as we were heading to press – Owen Clements celebrated becoming a B'nai Mitzvah at CBE. Although the official photos aren't back yet, we are so happy to have this wonderful family photo of Alana, Mia, Owen and Nathaniel Clements in front of our CBE sukkah.



A new baby:

Wendy and Jon Linden became grandparents on September 12 when their son, Josh, and his wife, Nora, welcomed Dorothy Lorelei Linden. Welcome little Dot! Congratulations to the new parents and grandparents. We hear that grand-parenting is great fun!

Has your family celebrated a recent simcha or milestone? Send us up to 5 photos with a brief description; and we will make a selection to include in our next newsletter.

Email communications@bethelohim.org.

What's happening at CBE this month?

Visit our [online calendar](#) for up-to-the-minute programming.

Donations

The congregation thanks our members, their relatives and friends, and the larger community for recent donations to CBE. If you do not see your donation, please look for it in our next donations email, or contact communications@bethelohim.org. *Note: The list that follows acknowledges two months of donations, instead of the usual one month. We will return to one-month lists next month.*

Adult Education Fund

Jon & Wendy Linden / In honor of Waky, with thanks for all her help with Jon's recovery from knee surgery

Amy Naparstek Israel Scholarship Fund

David & Chips Naparstek / In honor of Bob Widman on the occasion of his very special birthday, given with love and best wishes

Leslie & Bill Schroeder / In memory of our daughter, Deanna Mary-Hope Schroeder

Cantoral Fund

Benjamin & Meghan Nelson / In honor of the Nelson B'nai Mitzvah

Leslie & Bill Schroeder / In memory of our daughter, Deanna Mary-Hope Schroeder

Capital Fund

Susan Welt / For the mold remediation project, to support a healthy indoor space and community

Chesed Fund

Eva & Howard Jakob / From Emily Blumberg's parents, with best wishes for a happy healthy and peaceful new year

Jon & Wendy Linden / In honor of Emily Blumberg and the CBE Chesed Committee for all the wonderful meals and support during Jon's recovery from knee surgery

Lauren & George Morton / In memory of Iris Stutman

Risa & Chuck Brooks / In memory of Iris Stutman

Lauren & George Morton / In memory of Ruth Morton

Choir Fund

Roberta Torman / In honor of Jai Gluckman Thomas, with wishes for a happy birthday, and In appreciation of all she does for her family and friends

Tina Torman / In honor of Jai Gluckman Thomas's birthday

Lauren & George Morton / In honor of Judy Kramer

General Fund

Mark & Linda Sagor / In appreciation of Rabbi David and our Choir, and in loving memory of our parents, Sylvia & Kenneth Davidson

Alana & Nathaniel Clements / In honor of Owen's Bar Mitzvah

Kathie & Bob Becker / In memory of Iris Stutman

Lois (Libby) & Steven Ellin / In memory of Iris Stutman

Lucy Miskin / In memory of Iris Stutman

Nancy Best / In memory of Iris Stutman

Polly & Gregg Ribatt / In memory of Iris Stutman

Ronni Kenger / In memory of Iris Stutman

Sheila Thaler / In memory of Iris Stutman

Michael Biales & Sarah Coletti / In memory of Karl Biales on his Yahrzeit

Shelley & Rick Green / In memory of Katrina Fowler, Kathie Becker's sister

David & Gena Manalan / In memory of Marty Hirsch

Ronni Kenger / In memory of Ronni's parents, Jerome & Stella Saks, and her son, Adam Kenger

Rabbi Sion David & Helaine David / L'shanah Tovah Nikatev! With our very best wishes for a Happy New Year to the Congregation Beth Elohim family, and in honor of our son Rabbi Braham David

Jaymi & Joe Formaggio / To help support the Community Rosh Hashanah Luncheon

High Holiday Appeal

Richard & Nancy Housman / As a Joyful Gift

Lauren & George Morton / In gratitude to our co-presidents and Rabbi David

Karen Coll / In memory of Zolman and Ruth Helfand

Dan & Shelley Klein / With thanks to Rabbi David, Cantor Sarra, the choir, and all who made our High Holiday services meaningful and inspiring

Alan & Peggy Berko
Chuck & Lauren Pollak
David & Sari Kelly
Gary Mauser & Barbara Mokler
Jon & Wendy Linden
Joseph & Rosalie Oliveri
Ken & Jessie Klein
Leslie & Andrew Knight
Mara & Jonathan Epstein
Mark & Elaine Kahan
Matt Liebman & Amy Michelson
Michael & Emily Blumberg
Michael Biales & Sarah Coletti
Robert Grappel & Lynda Cohen
Stacey & Matthew Briggs
Susan & Andrew Gruskay

Iris & Gerson Stutman Memorial Beautification Fund

Carole & Bruce Smith / In honor of Iris Stutman / Mom
Denis & Linda Friedman / In loving memory of Iris Lefko Stutman from her dear friends
Bob & Deena Ferrara / In memory of Gerson's beloved wife, Iris Stutman
Arlene & Alan Weiss / In memory of Iris Stutman
Chips & David Naparstek / In memory of Iris Stutman
Dan & Shelley Klein / In memory of Iris Stutman
David & Gena Manalan / In memory of Iris Stutman
John Groustra / In memory of Iris Stutman
Adrian & Vicki Tribick / in memory of Iris Stutman, given with love

Joan Snyder Library Fund

Lynne Snyder and Stephen Garber / In memory of Joan Snyder

Na'aseh Social Justice Fund

Barbara Bender / In memory of Marty and Jo-Ellen Hirsch. May their memories be for a blessing.
Karen Levy

Rabbi Lewis Mintz Fund

Dan & Shelley Klein / In memory of Grandpa Louis Berkwitz
Shelley & Dan Klein / In memory of Marty Hirsch
Leslie & Bill Schroeder / In memory of our daughter, Deanna Mary-Hope Schroeder
Paul Linet / In memory of Sanford Linet, Paul Linet's father, on the occasion of his Yahrzeit

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Carole & Bruce Smith / In honor of Iris Stutman / Mom
Benjamin & Meghan Nelson / In honor of Nelson B'nai Mitzvah
Leslie & Bill Schroeder / In memory of our daughter, Deanna Mary-Hope Schroeder

Religious School Fund

Leslie & Bill Schroeder / In appreciation for all the donations and support as we mourn our daughter, Deanna Mary-Hope Schroeder
David & Gena Manalan / In honor of Linda Friedman's education service

Scientists in the Synagogue Event

Joe & Jaymi Formaggio

Yahrzeit Plaque

William & Leslie Schroeder / In memory of Deanna Schroeder

The People of Chelm Want to Know...

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS POSED ABOVE:

Their Hebrew names do indeed say much about the purpose of our most important Jewish texts. At the foundation is the **Torah**, which means “teaching” or “instruction” in Hebrew. The **Zohar**, the central work of Jewish mysticism that was written in the 16th century CE, translates to “radiance”, a reflection on its many brilliant insights. The Jewish Law Code, the **Mishnah**, means “repetition”; the Mishnah was the written recording of earlier generations repeating the oral law over and over, passing it from teacher to disciple. The last of three great sections of the Bible – after the Torah and Nevi'im (prophets) – is called the **Ketuvim** or “writings” in Hebrew. The writings consisted of an assorted set of 13 books from Psalms through Ruth and Daniel and concluding with Chronicles. Our familiar prayerbook, the **Siddur**, defines the sequence or “order” of prayers in the service. Both the Siddur and the Passover Seder are derived from the Hebrew root for “order”. Incidentally, the Hebrew expression for “OK” is “B'Seder” meaning. [everything's] “in order”. The **Talmud** contains interpretations and commentaries on the Mishnah, intricate discussions by sages of many generations and viewpoints. This enormous collection has been the preoccupation of scholars for centuries, so it is very fitting that the Hebrew root of Talmud is “study”. A related Hebrew word is “talmid” or “student”.

Resources

[CBE's Chesed Committee](#) | [Contact us in a time of need](#)
[18 Doors](#) (formerly InterfaithFamily of Greater Boston)
[Anti-Defamation League incident reporting](#)
[CJP \(Combined Jewish Philanthropies\)](#)
[CJP SeniorDirect](#)
[Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life](#)
[Hadassah of Nashoba Valley Facebook](#)
[Hebrew College events](#)
[Jewish Bereavement Support Group](#)
[JewishBoston.com](#)
[Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston](#)
[Jewish Family Service of Metrowest](#)
[Keshet](#) | A national organization that works for full LGBTQ equality and inclusion in Jewish life
[Mayyim Hayyim | Living Waters Community Mikveh](#)
[Oneinfifty.org](#) | BRCA awareness, education, and support
[Yad Chessed](#) | Emergency financial assistance to Jewish individuals and families in need
[Yerusha.com](#) | A Website for Older Childless Jews

Visit the [Resources](#) page on our website for our complete resource list.

Feedback/get in touch with us!

Let us know what you think! What do you like or not like about our format or content? If there is someone or some effort or group you'd like to see featured, please write to communications@bethelohim.org.

Until next time,

The Star editorial and design team — Gary Budiansky, Maida Fund, Rick Green, Miriam Beit Aharon, Beth Schrager and Lauren Solomon

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