

# The Kibbitzer

**Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon**  
706 Bryan Road, Brandon, FL 33511  
Phone (813) 681-6547  
[www.BethShalom-Brandon.org](http://www.BethShalom-Brandon.org)

February 2023 Volume 33 Issue 9



Tu B'Shvat  
Painting by Oxana Zaika

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## From the Rabbi's desk...



Dear Congregation Beth Shalom,

Every day and every moment we are alive is a new beginning. As we turn again into a new cycle and look at our world, there are always reasons to be sad or frustrated. But, if we can focus our attention, there are so many things to be grateful for.

I feel immensely proud and grateful for so much. Serving this Congregation is a blessing. Having meaningful relationships and connecting with so many congregants has enriched my life. I have had the honor of leading this community alongside Sandi Santucci, who is celebrating 30 years as our Cantorial Soloist.

How incredible it feels to be in this position, continuing a family legacy of nurturing prayer with meaning and joy.

May we be blessed to hold our families close. May we continue to dance, learn, laugh, and be fulfilled with our lives. May this new year bring a multitude of blessings, joy, stillness, and change.

May we access our best selves and inspire our loved ones to do the same. May we continue to pray and sing in unison with all our heart.

B'ahava - in love,  
Rabbi Lefkowitz



Jacob wanted to tell his sons when they lived in the land of Goshen, in the lower Nile Delta, when the time of redemption would arrive. Jacob stated: "Assemble yourselves and I will tell you, what will befall you in the End of Days." (49:1). Jacob wants to ignite the souls of The House of Israel. However, God did not want them to know when the redemption would arrive. God wanted the House of Israel to anticipate their salvation.

So now, we must wait, till God sends someone, to free us and bring us to the land of Israel. This is the land which God has promised, to give to the Jewish people.

Jacob passes away at 110 years old and he requests that his body be brought back to the land of Israel. He wanted to be buried in The Cave of Machpelah in Hebron.

Joseph requests, that when he passes away, he too, wants to be taken to the Land of Israel, to Shechem. Nablus in Arabic. So, when Joseph passes away, the Israelites put him in a coffin, bring him to The Nile River, and sink him to the bottom of The Nile.

When The Exodus arrives, Moses goes to The Nile and says: "Pakod Yifkod" which means, that we will remember Joseph. Joseph, made The House of Israel take his bones with them when they left Egypt. At the reciting of these words of "Pakod Yifkod" Joseph's coffin, miraculously, rises to the top of The Nile River. It actually, floats to the surface. Then Moses and The House of Israel lifted the coffin out of the water and then, the Exodus had begun.

B'Shalom - in peace,  
Rabbi Lefkowitz



# The President's Corner



**Steve Billor**

Shalom Everybody

I want to start off by thanking one of our members who stayed on top of the Executive Board with the need to repair the lighting at the rear of Beth Shalom. Caren Magdovitz worked with me and the Board in making sure the lighting at the rear of the building was repaired/replaced and safe to walk around at night. She donated the funds necessary to get this job done, and that began the process of getting us more lighting around the building. So, as you see, each affirmative action cascades into further positive results. Every member of Beth Shalom can make a positive and wonderful difference to our Temple.

I also want to thank our Executive Board and General Board with their assistance of making possible our newest addition to Beth Shalom, Faith Family Church. They had their first service Sunday January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and they were very happy with the setup and the warm welcome that they have received from our congregation. I am hoping this is a long-term relationship with them. This obviously is a financial help to us, getting us closer to being in the black with our accounting. If you happen to see a member of Faith Family at the temple, personally welcome them to our family. With membership slowly increasing, we are getting closer to my dream of filling the building with members during our High Holiday Services and being financially stable. I am asking each of you to help bring in a new member to our Beth Shalom family.

As always, Todah Rabah (Thank you very much) for being a part of the Beth Shalom Family and your time in reading this article.

Steve Billor



"Tree of Seven Fruits" by chassidic artist Michael Muchnik

# CBS Business

## Shabbat Services

Meeting ID: 897 3400 8923  
Password: 770549

Our Shabbat services will take place Friday Nights at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary as well as online. Our livestream feed is available on Zoom and Facebook. For outdoor services, the Zoom link will not work, so please sign in to Facebook. Join us in the celebration of Shabbat and you are welcome to like, comment, and share.

We established a new Zoom link. You will be able to login from our weekly eNews. The process has not changed, just the link. For your information here is the new link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89734008923?pwd=WEtGZXN1UVVNM0lCa3BoTzJyZUc0UT09>

We are glad that you enjoy our shabbat services and hope to see you on the Zoom screen this Friday.

Facebook Information for Shabbat Service:  
<https://www.facebook.com/BethShalomBrandon/>



### Advertise in

## The Kibbitzer

Business Card—New Ads at \$10/month for the first six months, then \$20/month.

Get a 10% Discount by

Prepaying for one year.

To reserve your place in the next issue, e-mail John Zelatis at

[jjzelatis@zomesa.com](mailto:jjzelatis@zomesa.com) or call the

CBS office at

813-681-6547.

## CBS Office Hours

The administrative office is currently open by appointment only. We can be reached at [cbs-brandon@outlook.com] and 813-681-6547 or you may contact Rabbi Lefkowitz directly at 407-222-6393 or [rlefkowi@bellsouth.net](mailto:rlefkowi@bellsouth.net). Rabbi Lefkowitz will be available for in person meetings on Fridays. Call him at 407-222-6393 to schedule an appointment.



Although our hours are limited, we are always here for you. Do not hesitate to reach out with any needs, concerns or questions.



## SHARE A MAZEL TOV!

Do you have a family member, friend, spouse or congregant you would like to wish Mazel Tov to in our Kibbitzer? You can send an email to [the-kibbitzer@hotmail.com](mailto:the-kibbitzer@hotmail.com) with their name and accomplishment, engagement or birth. It's important during these times to see the good in our community.



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***The Kibbitzer***

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For current news and events

see the congregation's website:

<http://www.bethshalom-brandon.org>

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813-681-6547 • CBS-brandon@outlook.com

**Office hours:**

By appointment.

Voicemails and emails will be monitored daily.

Office is closed on holidays

**Weekly Email Blast submissions****Happy Tu B'Shevat!****MEMBERSHIP**

*Becoming a partner in our congregation offers an opportunity for enduring friendships and a personal spiritual journey. A place in our Jewish community.*

*Members also have free access to many of our educational and entertainment events.*



# Candle Lighting Times

Friday, February 3	5:48 PM
Friday, February 10	5:53 PM
Friday, February 17	5:57 PM
Friday, February 24	6:02 PM



## Oneg Schedule

### February Sponsors

*There can be no joy without food and drink.*

Talmud, Mo'ed Katan

February 3	<b>CBS Congregation</b>	Please bring a dish to share
February 10	<b>Anita Clifford</b>	Temple Mitzvah
February 17	<b>Carol Roberts</b>	In honor of her birthday
February 24	<b>CBS Congregation</b>	Please bring a dish to share

**If you'd like to sponsor an oneg, please call  
Judith Pliner at (856)816-2174**

# Our Newest Members

**Congregation Beth Shalom welcomes our newest members:**



Johara-Gemma (Jewel) Alfaya

Peter Horstman

Liz & Jason Howard

Cindy & Edward Kostelnik

Felicia & Marshall Melcer

Jodi & Johnnie Poindexter

Thelma Silber

Martino Stino





## Kyiv Diary 12/26/2022: Light in the Winter Darkness

December 26, 2022

**BY MOMENT**

Kyiv Diary, Latest

*American synagogues are stepping up to the plate to help Ukrainian Jews get crucial supplies during this time of war and winter.*

My American friends have been reaching out with the question of how they can help us in Ukraine, now that explosions in Kyiv have become routine. The situation here continues to be serious: People can hear missiles, and some of my friends have seen drones from their windows or the street. As of now, at least 500,000 apartments in the capital are experiencing power deficiency, and many are also without water. Many households have electric appliances, and this means that cooking is challenging and even heating up the meals is quite problematic. Those with gas stoves host relatives and friends. Others are barbecuing on the balconies, though it's forbidden by law.

We ourselves were without hot water for 10 days, and consequently without heating. And the winter has arrived—the streets and trees are covered with snow, and it's cold! Yesterday I asked a cab driver why the traffic is so heavy, and he said that it was how people (the ones with cars) get warmed up since the car is a mobile power generator. Kyiv mayor Vitaly Klitschko has opened special emergency heating stations. The supermarkets have slim pickings because they can't operate properly when open. It's all very hard to navigate, especially for the elderly, whose children and grandchildren are often scattered across Europe and have no one to take care of them.

So I thought it would be a great idea to get assistance from American synagogues to Ukrainian synagogues, especially considering the holidays. Solar rechargeable gadgets and power banks are completely sold out in Ukraine. Even if some gadgets occasionally appear on the local market, the prices are so high that most families just can't afford them. It would indeed be a great mitzvah if the synagogues could raise funds and provide solar lamps and power banks to Jewish families in Kyiv.

Seeking help to meet these challenges, I reached out to 20+ synagogues. The first one to respond was Paulette Black from Beth El Temple Center in Belmont, Massachusetts, a Reform synagogue. Actually, it was the sisterhood WRJ@BETC, the proud members of Women of Reform Judaism. Other synagogues have expressed eagerness to support Kyiv Jewish families during these horrific times as well, such as Congregation Beth Elohim in Brooklyn, where I'm corresponding with Rabbi Stephanie Kulin. They have organized a special committee and the fundraising has already reached \$17,000. Rabbi Annie Tucker from the Temple Israel Center in White Plains responded right away as well, and I've just recently got a reply from Rabbi Shuli Paso from B'nai Jeshurun in Manhattan.

I strongly believe that Jewish people should stay united in wartime. With all the electricity breakages and the cold winter ahead, the joint efforts in sending gadgets to Kyiv will help many Jewish families get through these challenging times. I hope this unity will last and will grow into a strong friendship in peacetime.

## Kyiv Diary 12/26/2022: Light in the Winter Darkness

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In addition to the outreach I mention above, I have raised \$3000 through the network of my daughter's friends (she works at The Vilna Shul, Boston's Center for Jewish Culture) and have placed orders (which took me hours and hours of research) for power stations, power banks, solar lamps, heaters, etc. (65 items altogether which are on the way.) The first parcel with portable room heaters purchased by my friend Ruth Wasser arrived on Friday, December 16th, and two power portable generators came on Tuesday, December 20th!

I'm passing these support items to Rabbi Reuven, who I've written about before, and he is going to distribute the goods among members of his congregation, many members of which are in Odesa, a big port city on the Black Sea about as far from Kyiv as Boston is from New York. The damage in Odesa is so severe that residents have been in a full blackout since December 7th, and 50% of residents are cut off from power. Reuven has organized Hanukkah Shabbaton, giur, Shabbat, and Hanukkah celebrations. Hanukkah was celebrated just with Hanukkah candles, no electricity, and people were praying for peace and for the "light not to go out."

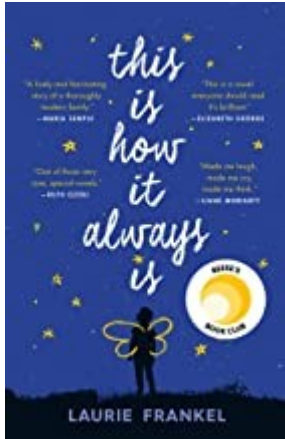
The more families the synagogues can help the better. Yet, life under missiles goes on and people do their best to continue with their everyday routines and stay strong in their spirits. As an example, we went to the Opera house to see a ballet last week. There were a lot of people, and the performance was wonderful!

*Editor's Note: If you'd like to get in touch with Helen, please email [editor@momentmag.com](mailto:editor@momentmag.com).*

Moment is publishing regular updates from Helen, a Soviet American Jew living in Kyiv. Read all the diary entries [here](#).



# Library News by Sandy Saviet

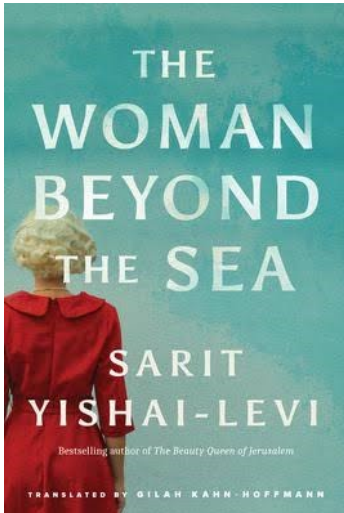


This is just a reminder that the temple library is open for you to view and borrow books anytime that the temple is open. Please feel free to browse.

I recently finished reading a book that might interest some of you. The title is “This Is How It Always Is” by Laurie Frankel. It is about how a loving family deals with and comes to terms with having their youngest child transition from one gender to another. It is a more common facet of life today than many of us realize. This subject matter may not be for everyone, but it might be a helpful place to start to understand what’s going on in the transgender community. There are a few copies available at the Hillsborough County Public Library.



## Books, Books, and Books



A mesmerizing novel about three generations of women who have lost each other—and the quest to weave them back into a family.

An immersive historical tale spanning the life stories of three women, *The Woman Beyond the Sea* traces the paths of a daughter, mother, and grandmother who lead entirely separate lives, until finally their stories and their hearts are joined together.

Eliya thinks that she’s finally found true love and passion with her charismatic and demanding husband, an aspiring novelist—until he ends their relationship in a Paris café, spurring her suicide attempt. Seeking to heal herself, Eliya is compelled to piece together the jagged shards of her life and history.

Eliya’s heart-wrenching journey leads her to a profound and unexpected love, renewed family ties, and a reconciliation with her orphaned mother, Lily. Together, the two women embark on a quest to discover the truth about themselves and Lily’s own origins...and the unknown woman who set their stories in motion one Christmas Eve.







Jewish  
Book  
Council

## 72nd National Jewish Book Award Winners



Additional information: [www.JewishBookCouncil.org](http://www.JewishBookCouncil.org)



# ‘Married to the Mob’

## ‘Married to the Mob,’ but under a chuppah: A new memoir details a Jewish family’s crime ties

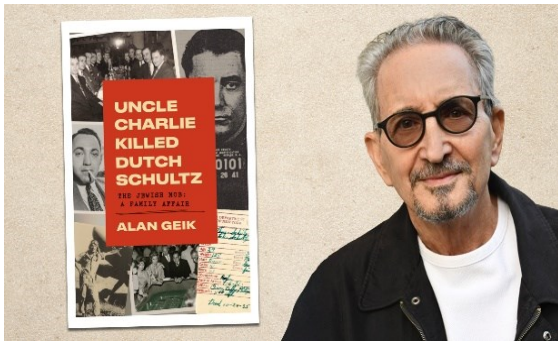
By [Jon Kalish](#) December 28, 2022 1:03 pm

The Geiks weren’t your typical Bronx working-class Jewish family. The father ran a mob-protected trucking company in Manhattan’s Garment District. One brother, an NYPD detective, chauffeured organized crime couriers around the city with illicit cash. A kid sister visited a Las Vegas casino where the tween was set up with a couple of slot machines in a private room. And a close family friend was sent up the river for killing a notorious Jewish gangster. Meet the family whose close ties to Jewish gangsters are chronicled in “Uncle Charlie Killed Dutch Schultz,” a memoir just published by Alan Geik.

Dutch Schultz was the mob name of Arthur Flegenheimer, the Jewish bootlegger and numbers racket kingpin who left this mortal coil in October 1935 at the Palace Chop House in Newark. The triggermen were two Jews, members of the organized crime group Murder Inc. Mendy Weiss and Charles “Bug” Workman, the Uncle Charlie of the memoir’s title, did the hit.

Workman, who reportedly killed more than 20 people before pleading guilty to the murder of Dutch Schultz, was not a blood relative of author Alan Geik. But Workman grew up with Geik’s father on the Lower East Side and was so close to the Geik family he was considered an uncle. The author was in his 20s when he first met Workman, after the hitman was released from a New Jersey prison in 1964.

“I would never think of calling him anything but Uncle Charlie,” said Geik, 80, a retired TV producer and radio host who lives in Las Vegas. In addition to diving deep into Workman’s story, the book also explores how Jewish mobsters and their hangers-on fought antisemitism, beat up Nazis and helped a fledgling Israel acquire arms for its War of Independence. “These were people, from the first generation of Jews in America, who fought back against antisemitism in the streets,” Geik said. “Their parents fled the pogroms of Eastern Europe. They were not going to let it happen again and they didn’t.”



Alan Geik's with his just-published memoir, “Uncle Charlie Killed Dutch Schultz.” (Sonador Publishing)

Geik’s book joins a crowded shelf of histories and memoirs of the Jewish mob, including “But He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters,” by Robert A. Rockaway, and “Tough Jews: Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams,” by Rich Cohen. Like those books, Geik’s family history provides a sort of reverse image of typical Jewish immigrant stories: Instead of scrapping their way up from New York’s Jewish enclaves into retail and the professions, Geik’s family joined a criminal counterculture.

Books such as Geik’s “really put a personal experience to this whole world that we all know about, the world of New York mobsters,” said Larry Henry, author of a monthly column for the Mob Museum in Las Vegas. “The public’s appetite for mob stories is insatiable.”

“Uncle Charlie Killed Dutch Schultz” describes a tangled family tree ripe with, well, rotten apples. Geik’s father, Lou, was not actually in the mob

but did reap benefits from his ties with organized crime, Alan concedes. Lou Geik was one of several individuals who delivered mob cash to Workman’s family over 23 years.

“Uncle Charlie felt indebted to my father,” said Geik.

The author’s father is cited as a source for many of the anecdotes included in the memoir. Geik said that while his father’s business relied on mob protection, Lou Geik didn’t have “that extra whatever-it-took to be a really hardened criminal” — a trait, he said, his own older brother Bernard also lacked.

“My brother always wanted to be a gangland figure,” said Alan Geik. “So, instead my brother became a policeman.” An ultimately very corrupt policeman. Bernard Geik joined the force in 1962 and resigned in 1971 after serving in the notorious Special Investigative Unit, which, as depicted in the book and the motion picture “Prince of the City,” devolved into an extortion ring. After resigning from the NYPD, Bernard Geik was arrested for bribery and bribe-taking in 1974. He reportedly pleaded guilty but served no time.

The disgraced detective went to work at his father’s trucking company. According to the author, his brother was one of the detectives provided by a supervisor to drive their Uncle George and other mobsters around town when they were transporting mob money in New York.

Uncle George Gordon *was* a real uncle. Gordon is allegedly one of the gangsters the actor George Raft modeled himself after for his roles in 1930s and ’40s crime melodramas. For decades, beginning at a casino and speakeasy near the Hudson River in midtown Manhattan, Gordon had a big hand in organized crime’s gambling operations, supervising enterprises in Florida, the Midwest, Las Vegas and Havana.

Alan Geik isn’t the only keeper of his family’s convoluted story. His sister Iris has her own memories of growing up mob-adjacent, such as when she and her parents were Gordon’s guests at the Stardust Hotel in Vegas when the mob was running its casino and skimming cash from the profits. Gordon wanted Lou Geik to work there.



*“Uncle Charlie” Workman, seen in 1941, pled guilty to the 1935 murder of mobster Dutch Schultz and was given a life*

According to Iris, Gordon posted a guard outside a private room in which she had been ensconced with a couple of slot machines. The 13-year-old was “mesmerized” by the slot machines. Her mother was initially unaware of what was going on. “I was having a blast,” Iris Geik said. “I’ll never forget when the door flung open and my itty-bitty mother came in with a big guard behind her. She immediately made me stop [playing with the slot machine] and give back the money I had won.”

Iris Geik, now a privacy lawyer in the Boston area, has written hundreds of pages of her own memoir about the wives and girlfriends of the Jewish gangsters, tentatively titled, “The View From the Women’s Table.”

“Their lives were complex but they were also heimische Jewish women,” she said, using the Yiddish word for cozy and familiar. She her mother and father eloped because they were a mixed couple:

Her mother Reba was a Sephardic Jew and her father was Ashkenazi.

Geik remembered that as a child she noticed a newspaper article about a family friend being arrested. She said, “Mom! Mom! Look, we’re famous.” To which her mother replied, “That’s infamous, dear.”

Geik said that on several occasions her mother observed: “There are no second-generation Jewish mobsters. Jews don’t make gangsters out of their children.” Reba Geik had been involved in caring for two of Iris’ aunts who lived in Brooklyn while they were dying. Those acts of kindness had a profound impact on Uncle George, the casino supervisor.

After the aunts passed away, Gordon always stood when Reba entered a room, Iris said. “My mother was very honored by that because he was such a big shot.” Throughout her life, Reba Geik remained close to Sylvia Lorber, a friend from her teenage years. Lorber was the only mob mistress her mother would spend time with, said Iris. Lorber was the paramour of two Jewish gangsters: Benny Kassop, the brother of Murder, Inc. gunman Sammy Kassop, and Sam “Red” Levine, an observant Jew who wore a kippah under his fedora. Levine won the affection of Lorber while the Kassop brothers were in Sing Sing, the maximum-security prison in Ossining, New York.

“Sylvia was a hell of a lot of fun but my mother worried about her,” Iris said. “Sylvia told me her stories, which were kind of glamorous when she was young but sad when she was older.” After spending 20 years with Levine, Lorber couldn’t attend his funeral. Sylvia Lorber stopped talking to Reba Geik in her last years.

## ‘Married to the Mob’ page 3



*Author Alan Geik's father-in-law, Lou Lenart, left, and other fighter pilots in front of Avia-S-199 plane. Lenart was part of the group of men transporting surplus fighter planes and other weapons to the Holy Land for use in the War of Independence. (Courtesy of Boaz Dvir)*

Jewish gangsters do, on occasion, display some altruism in Alan Geik's memoir. Take Moe Dalitz, the head of the Cleveland Syndicate. He was a major bootlegger during Prohibition whose flotillas of illegal liquor on the Great Lakes came to be known as The Little Jewish Navy. His family ran legitimate laundry businesses in Boston and Detroit. Too old to be drafted during World War II, he enlisted at the age of 42 and was commissioned as a lieutenant. Dalitz ran the military laundry service on New York's Governor's Island — but declined to bunk in the island's barracks, opting instead to stay at a swanky hotel overlooking Central Park.

Then there was Johnny Eder, a major source for Geik's narrative. Eder was part of the Lower East Side teenage crime crew that included Uncle Charlie and Uncle George. As an adult he was a major fence for stolen jewelry and always had a bag of stolen rings on him. Eder also had many connections at City Hall and in the Brooklyn District Attorney's office. According to Geik's account, Eder was the mob's representative to the Haganah, the Jewish paramilitary force in Palestine. Eder arranged meetings in the noisy kitchen of the Copacabana, a mob hangout, between Haganah agents and mobsters and others described as "former wartime U.S. intelligence agents" working to secure weapons for Israel's War of Independence. (The late Teddy Kollek, Jerusalem's longtime mayor, would tell a story about passing cash to an intermediary at the Copacabana, who brought the money to an Irish sea captain with a ship full of munitions bound for the Holy Land. The bagman, according to Kollek, was Frank Sinatra.)

Alan Geik has a very personal connection to the creation of the Jewish state. His late wife Nina was the daughter of Lou Lenart, a World War II fighter pilot who served in the U.S. Marines. Geik's memoir details how the elder Lenart was part of the group of men transporting surplus fighter planes and other weapons to Palestine for use in Israel's War of Independence. Lenart's story was featured in Nancy Spielberg's 2014 documentary "Above and Beyond," about the creation of the Israeli air force.

The story of how Jewish gangsters used some violent muscle against Nazi sympathizers in New York has been told before in historical accounts, but one episode in Geik's memoir is particularly dramatic. A pair of Jews attended a Bund rally at Camp Siegfried on Long Island, a summer camp that taught Nazi ideology, and were offered a ride back to the city by a Nazi sympathizer who they ended up beating senseless in Brooklyn.

Alan Geik was not really hungry when he met Meyer Lansky at a Central Park hotel in the late 1950s. The gangster asked the 15-year-old nephew of George Gordon if he wanted a pastrami sandwich. Geik declined. Then Lansky, who struck Geik as an "older Jewish man who I knew was really powerful," suggested that they split one. It was an offer that Geik did not refuse.



# Super Bowl



Myron Feldman



Tailgate with the Tribe

Calling all special teams for a huddle on Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm-4:00pm for a Super Bowl showdown! We will be holding a "big game" get together with food and games. This will prepare you to return home and watch the battle of the pigskin in the comfort of your own home. So dress in your football attire (any team works!) and plan to bring a covered dish (more to come on this!) and come tailgate with the tribe.

Any questions, please reach out to Myron Feldman (813-361-9590) or Jackie Feldman (813-361-9337)



CBS Members enjoy dinner at the Latin Grill.

## Amazon Smile Program Ending



Online shopping giant Amazon announced on Jan. 18, 2023, that it would be closing its popular AmazonSmile charity program.

After launching in 2013, a letter from Amazon addressed to customers said, "the program has not grown to create the impact that we had originally hoped." With so many eligible organizations, "our ability to have an impact was often spread too thin."

The company plans to "wind down" the AmazonSmile by Feb. 20, 2023, according to the letter: To help charities that have been a part of the AmazonSmile program with this transition, we will be providing them with a one-time donation equivalent to three months of what they earned in 2022 through the program, and they will also be able to accrue additional donations until the program officially closes in February. Once AmazonSmile closes, charities will still be able to seek support from Amazon customers by creating their own wish lists.



# Dinner with the Tribe



Anita Clifford

**Yummy House**  
Chinese Restaurant  
美味



**Yummy House**  
2620 E Hillsborough Ave  
Tampa, FL 33610  
813/237-3838

**Saturday,**  
**February 18th**  
**at 6:30 PM**

Who doesn't love Chinese food? This is not New York, but it's the closest we come to New York Chinese food by going to Yummy House. We have a reservation for 20, and no doubt this number will be filled. Come and join us as we get together. Send an email to Anita [niewdnarb@yahoo.com](mailto:niewdnarb@yahoo.com) to reserve your place.

## Building and Grounds



Gabe Lifschitz

Twenty-two years ago, CBS fulfilled its objective of a dedicated temple for its congregation. Back then when members walked in the doors of our building, I can only imagine how it felt to have our temple. I can only be in awe of those who spent countless hours getting the land, fundraising, and working with the architects and engineers to shape the temple before the builders placed the blocks.

Back then when the building was finished, a phone line connected CBS to the world. Fluorescent lamps were better to save electricity, and the fire alarm system was new technology. Cell phones were a new way to communicate, but a phone line was needed.

In a past Kibbitzer article, our Rabbi talked about Hebron as the site of the world's oldest Jewish community. It was the first parcel of land owned by the Jewish people. I see a connection between CBS and Hebron. CBS is something to hold on to for identity and to share our beliefs with others. What will keep CBS alive is to provide meaning to the next generation. Now having a cell phone is a must-have, or you feel disconnected. The fluorescent lamps have been mostly replaced by LEDs, and having internet and Zoom is what keeps those who are far away or sick connected with CBS. What a difference this makes from 22 years ago to have these changes. There is more. CBS has a large open space to hold outdoor activities and for kids to run around and play. CBS offers a bridge, a temple, and an opportunity in its meaning for L'Dor Vador.

Toda,

Gabe Lifschitz



# Tu B'Shevat

*In 2023, the "birthday of the trees" begins at sundown on Sunday, Feb. 5 and ends at sundown on Monday, Feb. 6.*

BY MY JEWISH LEARNING



In 2023, Tu B'Shevat begins at sundown on Sunday, Feb. 5 and ends at sundown on Monday, Feb. 6.

Tu B'Shevat or the "birthday" of all fruit trees, is a minor festival. The name is Hebrew for the 15th of the Hebrew month of Shevat. In ancient times, Tu B'Shevat was merely a date on the calendar that helped Jewish farmers establish exactly when they should bring their fourth-year produce of fruit from recently planted trees to the Temple as first-fruit offerings.

## The Tu B'Shevat Seder

In the 16th century, the Kabbalists (mystics) of Tzfat (the city of Safed) in the Land of Israel created a new ritual to celebrate Tu B'Shevat called the Feast of Fruits. Modeled on the Passover seder, participants would read selections from the Hebrew Bible and Rabbinic literature, and would eat fruits and nuts traditionally associated with the land of Israel. The Kabbalists also gave a prominent place to almonds in the Tu B'Shevatishvat seder, since the almond trees were believed to be the first of all trees in Israel to blossom. Carob, also known as bokser or St. John's bread, became another popular fruit to eat on Tu B'Shevatishvat, since it could survive the long trip from Israel to Jewish communities in Europe. Participants in the kabbalistic seder would also drink four cups of wine: white wine (to symbolize winter), white with some red (a harbinger of the coming of spring); red with some white (early spring) and finally all red (spring and summer).



Complete with biblical and rabbinic readings, these kabbalists produced a Tu B'Shevatishvat Haggadah in 1753 called "Pri Etz Hadar" or "Fruit of the Goodly Tree."

## Zionism and Tree Planting



The early Zionists seized upon Tu B'Shevatishvat as an opportunity to celebrate their tree-planting efforts to restore the ecology of ancient Israel and as a symbol of renewed growth and flowering of the Jewish people returning to their ancestral homeland.

In modern times, Tu B'Shevatishvat continues to be an opportunity for planting trees — in Israel and elsewhere, wherever Jews live. Many American and European Jews observe Tu B'Shevatishvat by contributing money to the Jewish National Fund, an organization devoted to reforestation in Israel (the purchase of trees in JNF forests is also customary to commemorate a celebration such as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah)

## Environmentalism and Tu B'Shevatishvat

For environmentalists, Tu B'Shevatishvat is an ancient and authentic Jewish connection to contemporary ecological issues. The holiday is viewed as an appropriate occasion to educate Jews about their tradition's advocacy of responsible stewardship of God's creation, manifested in ecological activism. Tu B'Shevatishvat is an opportunity to raise awareness about and to care for the environment through the teaching of Jewish sources celebrating nature. It is also a day to focus on the environmental sensitivity of the Jewish tradition by planting trees wherever Jews may live.





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---



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Kitchen

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# Our Congregation

## Yahrzeits



2/2	Jack	Vandeventer	Step-Father	Of	Christina	Frye
2/2	Pearl	Brill	Grandmother	Of	Myron	Feldman
2/2	Sol	Zweibach	Father	Of	Stephen	Zweibach
2/2	Lawrence	Gould	Brother	Of	Sandy	Saviet
2/8	Vivian	Kay	Grandmother	Of	Iylene	Miller
2/9	Florence	Workman	Mother	Of	Anna	Feldman
2/9	Vincent	Garafola	Father	Of	Christina	Frye
2/9	Ann	Rogovin	Mother	Of	Richard	Rogovin
2/17	Maurice	Goldman	Father	Of	Sharon	Aronson
2/18	Leon	Pliner	Father	Of	Gerald	Pliner
2/21	Louis	Kay	Grandfather	Of	Iylene	Miller
2/21	Daniel	Workman	Nephew	Of	Anna	Feldman
2/23	Joan	Ratner	Sister	Of	Ira	Ratner
2/25	Rose	Sandberg	Mother	Of	Sandy	Santucci

## Birthdays



2/2	Larry	Kaler
2/10	Thelma	Silber
2/23	Bruce	Sperry
2/26	Helene	Rosenbaum
2/28	Felicia	Melcer





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Carol Plesure

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Aunt – Esther Lubofsky

Mother-in-Law – Florence Plesur

Judith and Gerry Pliner

Gail Verlin

In Memory of:

Sally Bloom

Lou Verlin

Meyer Bloom

Sharon Leibowitz



# The Public Reaction to an Injury on the Football Field Suggests That the Decline of Religion Has Been Greatly Exaggerated

[JONATHAN SILVER](#) January 6, 2023 Mosaic Magazine

Since Monday, the attention of much of America has been focused on Damar Hamlin, a Buffalo Bills safety who suffered cardiac arrest on the field after a seemingly routine tackle, and remains in critical condition. **Jonathan Silver** reflects on this sport's martial nature, and on the reaction to it of a supposedly secularizing society:

In football, the life of the player is not usually on the line, whereas in the actual field of battle, armed soldiers consciously attempt to take the very life of their adversaries. The players and the audience are used to seeing sprains and tears and even broken limbs, and to watching years later when retired players break down. But Hamlin's immobile body, furiously pumped by doctors attempting CPR, revealed where the sport's analogy to life and death ends, and how different it feels to be confronted with the real thing.

We read and hear much talk of how Americans are losing the religious impulse. But it was in that instantaneous transformation of a sporting event into a matter of life and death that America heard the whisper of angels. Religious people believe that the world we live in is englobed by a larger reality. Without knowing what else to do, or to say, and when confronted with the limitations of their own abilities to help a fallen comrade in arms, the Buffalo Bills, the Cincinnati Bengals, and millions of Americans all closed their eyes, and bent their heads in prayer.

**REFUAH SHLEMA** רפואה שלמה  
JEWISH PRAYER FOR "A COMPLETE CURE/HEALING"

Mi-sheberakh avoteinu v'imoteinu, Avraham v'Sarah, Yitzhak v'Rivkah, Ya'akov, Rachel v'Leah hu y'varekh et (recite the English and Hebrew name)  
v'yavi aleihem refuat hanefesh u'refuat haguf yachad im kol cholei amo  
Yisrael. Barukh atah Adonai, rofeh ha'cholim.

May the One who was a source of blessing for our ancestors, bring blessings of healing upon (recite the English and Hebrew name), a healing of body and a healing of spirit. May those in whose care they are entrusted, be gifted with wisdom and skill, and those who surround them, be gifted with love and trust, openness and support in their care. And may they be healed along with all those who are in need. Blessed are You, Source of healing. Amen.





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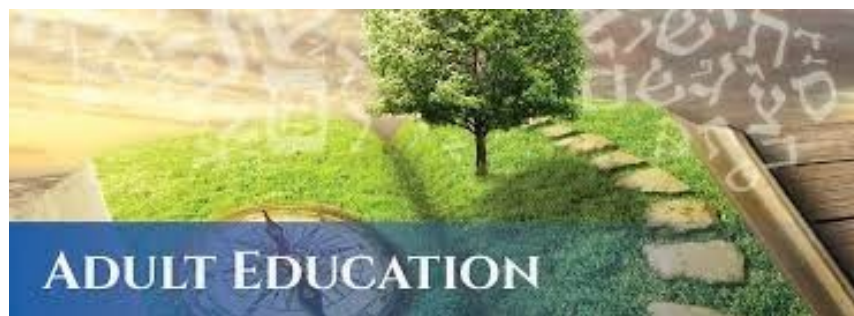
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# Happy Tu B'Shevat!



## Education in the Community Series

All events occur 7:00-8:15 PM

This monthly series will feature local clergy and other Jewish thought leaders presenting workshops on a variety of topics.

To register: <https://www.jewishtampa.com/jll>

**Tuesday, February 7, 2023 | 7:00-8:15 PM**

**Speaker:** Rabbi Jason Rosenberg

**Topic:** “Radical Judaism – A Mystical Theology for Rationalists.”

**Description:** Many people believe that rational, scientific thinking are at odds with religious faith. And, all the more so, they think that mysticism is the least rational of all. But, there is a modern theology usually referred to as Neo-mysticism, which is grounded in Jewish tradition, but fully compatible with rational thought. Come and learn a bit about this new way of being devout!

**Location:** Congregation Beth Am, 2030 W. Fletcher Avenue, Tampa

**Tuesday, March 14 | 7:00-8:15 PM**

**Speaker:** Rabbi Mendy Dubrowski

**Topic:** Outsmarting Antisemitism: How to Beat it with Purpose, Positivity and Jewish Pride

**Description:** Through illuminating source texts and captivating case studies, this lecture considers the sources of this ancient scourge, along with the appropriate strategies for overcoming it. It's time to find the confidence to fight hate with hope and to stand tall against antisemitism with positivity, purpose, and plenty of Jewish pride!

**Location:** Bryan Glazer Family JCC, 522 N. Howard Avenue, Tampa





**The Jewish Arts & Culture mini-fests will be presented in two extended weekends continuing in February 22-26, and April 27-30.**

**The mini fests will include live author events, award-winning films, exciting musical concerts, vibrant visual art exhibitions, interactive culinary experiences and entertaining theatrical performances all showcasing a Jewish lens. Most events will be held at the JCC on the Cohn Campus and the Bryan Glazer Family JCC, with a few occurring at various other venues in the Tampa Bay area.**

**All events are open to the public and All-Inclusive.**

For more information contact [brandy.gold@jewishtampa.com](mailto:brandy.gold@jewishtampa.com)

# Time for a Nosh

Updated on January 22, 2021 by Tori Avey 8 Comments  
Recipe from [ToriAvey.com](http://ToriAvey.com)



## Tu B'Shevat salad



Tu B'Shevat, also known as “New Year for the Trees,” takes place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shevat in the Hebrew calendar (late January – early February on the Gregorian calendar). Tu B'Shevat marks the beginning of spring in Israel; it is one of four annual “new years” described in the Mishnah. It's a time to celebrate the natural world. Gratitude is given for the fruits of the earth and everything that grows.

This salad was created especially for Tu B'Shevat. Traditional holiday ingredients are included... pomegranates, raisins (grapes), and sliced toasted almonds decorate the salad, adding sweetness and crunch. Three of the seven species are used: pomegranates, grapes, and olives (olive oil) in the Pomegranate Dressing. The dressing is creamy yet pareve thanks to a little added mayonnaise and a slow emulsion in the blender.

Edible flowers are a lovely and elegant touch... you can find them in specialty markets or gourmet grocers. If you can't locate any, don't worry, they're optional. Please don't go cutting flowers in your garden without knowing that they're edible and pesticide free!

### salad ingredients

- 1 head butter lettuce, torn into pieces
- 1 ripe pear
- 1 sweet apple (Gala, Honeycrisp, and Pink Lady work well)
- 1/3 cup golden raisins
- 1/3 cup sliced toasted almonds
- 1/3 cup pomegranate seeds
- Edible flowers for garnish (optional)

### pomegranate dressing ingredients

- 1/4 cup pomegranate juice
- 2 1/2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

### to make salad

Place the torn butter lettuce in a salad bowl.

Chop the pear and apple into small chunks; keep the skin on, do not peel.

Add fruit chunks to the salad bowl along with the golden raisins. Toss ingredients together till combined.

Divide the salad between six salad plates. Sprinkle each portion of salad with sliced toasted almonds and pomegranate seeds. Garnish with edible flowers, if desired.

### to make dressing

In a blender, combine pomegranate juice, mayonnaise, lemon juice, sugar, salt, and black pepper. Blend for a few seconds to mix.

Open the pouring spout on the top of your blender and turn blender on to medium. Drizzle the extra virgin olive oil very slowly through the pouring spout into the dressing. It should take 60 seconds or longer to drizzle the entire quarter cup of oil.





Pour thickened dressing into a serving dish. It should be a lovely pink color.

Drizzle about 1 tablespoon of dressing over each portion of salad before serving.





# February 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3 7:00 PM Shabbat Service	4
						 BESHALACH
5	6 TU B'SHE- VAT'SHEVAT	7 6:30 Executive Board Mtg 7:00 Board Mtg	8	9 7 PM Learning with Rabbi	10 7:00 PM Shabbat Service	11
						 YITRO
12 SUPER BOWL PARTY 1-4 PM	13	14	15	16 7 PM Learning with Rabbi	17 7:00 PM Shabbat Service	18
						 MISHPATIM
19 FOOD BANK 1 PM - 3 PM 	20	21	22	23 7 PM Learning with Rabbi  4 - 9 PM Jewish Arts & Culture Mini Fest	24 7:00 PM Shabbat Service  9 - 4 PM Jewish Arts & Culture Mini Fest	25  5 - 9 PM Jewish Arts & Culture Mini Fest
						 TERUMAH
26 1:00 PM Hamantaschen Baking  11 - 9 PM Jewish Arts & Culture Mini Fest	27	28				