

THE SHOFAR

February 2025



Congregation B'nai Israel

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Laurie Raps

Marty Eisenberg

Sandra Levy

Yolanda Zinn

Come Join Us!

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES – 8 PM

SATURDAY MORNING SERVICES – 9:30 AM

“Pearls of Wisdom”



Our Rabbi writes....

Distinguishing our calendar for February is Tu B'Shvat, New Year for the trees, which takes place on Thursday, February 13th. As part of our Friday night oneg on February 14th, I am planning to lead a Tu B'Shvat seder, in which readings and prayers relevant to the day are recited.

What is "New Year for the Trees"? In the Land of Israel, trees have special agricultural laws, related to the holiness of the land. One of these is that the fruit of a tree cannot be consumed for the first three years of its life, designating those fruits by the term "Arlah". In the fourth year, a special sacrifice is offered in the Temple, and thereafter the fruits can be consumed. While there is no Temple sacrifice today, the practice of refraining from eating the fruits during the first three years is still observed. The "birthday" of the tree is measured from Tu B'Shvat.

I once heard a very beautiful explanation of this holiday, from a Holocaust survivor. This man had been a student in a yeshiva in Nuremberg. He had escaped death by illegally crossing the border into Switzerland, a country that was not at all friendly to refugees. He was interned in a camp by the Swiss authorities. It was not at the level of cruelty of a concentration camp; the prisoners had adequate food, and the Swiss Jewish community supplied them with their needs, including books to continue their Yeshiva studies.

On Tu B'Shvat, the students organized a holiday seder, with fruits. One of their teachers spoke. "If you look at the trees around us, they are covered in ice and snow. How could this possibly be a day of birth and celebration for trees? One might think they are dead. But underneath, sap is flowing, life is continuing, and one day soon, they will bloom. Our lives are similar. We do not live under ideal conditions, and we wonder what the future will bring. Have faith, that the ice and snow of these difficult times will pass, and our lives will bloom under better circumstances".

All of us undergo winters in our lives, tough, discouraging, cold times. We must have faith that under the cover of ice and snow, life continues and will get better. New Year's for the trees means renewal and enduring life. Affirm your faith with this beautiful day.

If you're missing Rabbi Pearl's weekly Friday night sermon, you're missing (1) his opening joke; (2) his discussion of how the week's Torah reading is relevant to our lives today; (3) his inspirational blessing; and (4) our lively discussions & delicious treats at the Oneg. Services are one hour; congregation participation is welcome & rewarding.

Friday Night Candle Lighting

Feb 7th at 5:04 pm

Feb 14th at 5:13 pm

Feb 21st at 5:21 pm

Feb 28th at 5:29pm

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Marty Eisenberg



For the past five years it has been an honor to serve as the President of Congregation B'nai Israel of Staten Island. Although my term is over, I will be helping Kevin Brosnick as the Vice-President. I'm sure that he will do a wonderful job.

During this time, I have seen many changes to the temple and the congregation. We had members move away and pass away. We've had a few new members join and hopefully will bring new ideas and enthusiasm to the shul. I have seen the Preschool grow. The synagogue has had improvements to the facility and more are planned.

There are many people I have to thank for making my tenure successful and pleasant. Of course, Rabbi Pearl and Susan Finkelstein are stand outs for all they do. I really need to thank the whole Board of Trustees for their support. Sandy Levy and the Sisterhood are a tremendous group that have done wonderful things that we all have enjoyed and profited from. Reestablishing the Men's Club was helpful. Janice Rappaport, Laurie Raps, and the others who help the shul keep rolling. Yolanda Zinn needs to be thanked for the wonderful job she has done as Shofar editor. I wouldn't want to forget the people who attend services and help meet one of our primary responsibilities.

Thank you, Kevin and the other members just elected for stepping forward. Together our synagogue will continue to shine in the community.



SISTERHOOD UPDATE

Sandy Levy
President

As you all know, we began the new secular year with an exceptionally cold month. Hopefully, February will be kinder to all of us. One thing for sure, if you choose to come to B'nai Israel for services or to join in a zoom with sisterhood, a class or minyan, the warmth is always there. You are amongst welcoming people who are glad to see you.

A group of us went to see the movie, "A Complete Unknown", about the iconic Bob Dylan, during the years of 1961 to 1965, when he first came to NYC to the time of the Newport Music Festival. We all enjoyed it very much and appreciated the superb acting.

There has been a change to the show we are going to see at Wagner College on Sunday, May 4, at 2:00. Originally, the show was "Let it Be". It's been changed to "Rent", same day and time. Please let Susan or Laurie know if you are still interested in going or if you don't wish to go. Also, if you weren't going and would like to attend, please let one of them know. Thank you.

We are starting to plan for our Purim Shalach Manot fundraiser. Letters requesting your participation will be mailed during the next couple of weeks. Please give this letter your attention so that the tear-off gets mailed back to the shul in a timely manner. Much work goes into this effort. We need all of you to participate in this major fundraiser.

Stay well and warm and please join us. You will be glad you did.



UPCOMING EVENTS!

Mondays at 8:00pm

Hebrew Lessons, Part II

Join Rabbi Pearl via Zoom. Link sent by Susan from CBI Office.

Friday, February 14, 2025 at 8:00pm

Tu B'Shvat Seder

Celebrated by Rabbi Pearl at our Friday night Oneg

Rabbi Pearl will also conduct a Tu B'Shvat Seder at the JCC at 10am

Friday, March 7, 2025 at 6:30pm

Shabbat Across America Dinner

@ B'nai Israel

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Congregation 2nd Night Pesach Seder

@ B'nai Israel

Wagner College Theatre: "Rent"

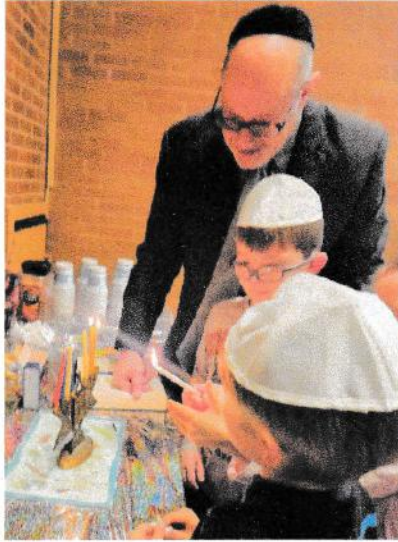
May 4, 2025 – \$32 per person. Contact Laurie or Susan.

**Sunday, April 27, 2025
Congregation B'nai Israel's
90th Anniversary Luncheon**

**Honoring
Our Hebrew School Graduates Through the Years**

News Around the Shul..

Hanukkah & New Year's Party at our Shul on January 1st was enjoyed by more than 40 attendees. Some photos –



**Congregation Annual Meeting & Election of Officers
January 26, 2025**

Congratulations

Incoming President **Kevin Brosnick**

Many thanks

Outgoing President **Marty Eisenberg** for 5 years of outstanding leadership

Welcome to the Board of Trustees

Marvin Cooper



CONGRATULATIONS



Marty Eisenberg exhibiting his artwork at the JCC.



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CONDOLENCES

Our deepest sympathy to Janice Rappaport and family on the passing of her husband, Neal. May you be comforted by his blessed memory.

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Celebrating Special Occasions



Birthdays:

- Lillian Brosnick on February 11th**
- Kevin Brosnick on February 16th**
- Susan Finkelstein on February 19th**
- Rabbi Pearl on February 22nd**
- Barbara Kanter on February 23rd**

Please let our editor know your birthday (month & day are sufficient. We don't require the year unless you want to brag!). Also, send anniversaries or other milestone events. We love acknowledging happy occasions. Information can be emailed to oceanview@si.rr.com.

Many Thanks for Your Generous Donation

Malvina Datnova - *in memory of Rita Shapiro*
Alice & Steven Frey - *in memory of David Frey*
Joel Ganzman - *in memory of Bertha Cohen*
Marilyn Goldstein - *in memory of Stuart Goldstein*
Gary Gordon - *in memory of Phyllis Gordon*
Gladys & Joel Graham - *in memory of Leo Ziegler and Roselle Graham*
Rita Hauser - *in memory of Miriam Epstein and Neal Rappaport*
Gloria Hirsch - *in memory of William Hirsch*
Daniel Katz - *in memory of Dorine Katz*
Lillian Phillips - *in memory of Emmanuel Goldklang*
Francine & Ira Sklar - *in memory of Irving Boxer and George Sklar*
Rhonda & Martin Zwirn - *memory of Neal Rappaport*

Yahrzeits for February 2025

Hebrew Date/ Calendar Date	Yahrzeit of	Member	Relationship
3 Shevat Feb 1 st	Arnold Graham	Joel Graham	Father
4 Shevat Feb 4 th	Herbert Rosner	Scott Rosner	Father
5 Shevat Feb 7 th	Ira Greinsky	Charles Greinsky	Father
6 Shevat Feb 8 th	Gussie Fingerman	Estelle Goldberg	Mother
6 Shevat Feb 8 th	Louis Goldberg	Alice Frey	Father
7 Shevat Feb 9 th	Louis Epstein	William Marin	Grandfather
8 Shevat Feb 10 th	Gussie Kalifowitz	Eileen Cooper	Grandmother
8 Shevat Feb 10 th	Rachil Reinish	Monique Datnova	Great Grandmother
10 Shevat Feb 10 th	Aaron Feldman	Ana Cramer	Nephew
12 Shevat Feb 14 th	Abraham Friedman	Melvin Fox	Father-in-Law
18 Shevat Feb 20 th	Anna Rapoport	Sophia Cohen	Mother
18 Shevat Feb 20 th	Paula Erdman	Charles Greinsky	Aunt
18 Shevat Feb 20 th	Irving Boxer	Francine Sklar	Father

Hebrew Date/ Calendar Date	Yahrzeit of	Member	Relationship
19 Shevat Feb 21 st	Solomon Stanley Dorfman	Jodi Siegel	Father
21 Shevat Feb 23 rd	Beatrice Kullback	Maxine Spierer Yolanda Zinn	Mother
22 Shevat Feb 24 th	Luba Reinish	Monique Datnova	Great Aunt
24 Shevat Feb 26 th	Mollie Levine	David Levine	Mother
27 Shevat Feb 29 th	Diane Schwartz	Harris Schwartz	Wife
28 Shevat Feb 26 th	Abraham Vatmacher	Ella Ligay	Father
29 Shevat Feb 27 th	Ida Norensky	Aviva Levine	Aunt
29 Shevat Feb 27 th	George Sklar	Ira Sklar	Father

*Yahrzeits begin on the evening before the given date. If you need to say Kaddish for a Yahrzeit, please call the office two weeks before and we will try to assemble a Minyan, most often via Zoom. It would be helpful if you had a few family members or friends attend the services to ensure there is a Minyan. For additions or corrections to this list, please contact Laurie Raps at 718-967-4975 or spar1012@aim.com.



From the Editor

Thank you to Marty Eisenberg for producing last month's Shofar during my vacation. Enjoy all the special February occasions. Stay warm and safe!

Best regards,

Yolanda

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