The SCOOP

The Happenings of Congregation Beth Israel

December 2022

In the spirit of the Chanukah season, look around for the miracles in your everyday life. A newborn baby smiles. A fragrant flower blossoms. A gravely ill patient recovers. While it may not have the same cachet as a tiny jug of oil lasting eight days, we encourage you to welcome the Jewish holiday of miracles this month and take a minute to reflect on the miraculous events in your own lives.

Wishing you a joyous eight-day festival with love, laughter, and light.... oh, and some latkes, too!

The CBI Scoop Editorial Team

By Craig Schneider (Newsday, October 30, 2022)
To celebrate the 98th birthday of Eli Soblick on Saturday his Hempstead synagogue and area veterans honored the man wounded in World War II with a Purple Heart flag.

The ceremony was held at Congregation Beth Israel of Cathedral Gardens, where a handful of veterans draped the purple flag around his shoulders. Some 40 members of the congregation burst into applause and a congratulatory chant of "Mazel tov, mazel tov, mazel tov."

The flag, bearing the distinctive symbol of the Purple Heart medal, read, “Honoring America’s Combat Wounded Veterans.”

Soblick, speaking in a low, wheezing voice, had a simple yet profound reaction to the honor.

"Overwhelmed," he said. "Overwhelmed."... To read more of this article, click here.

Make Your Chanukah Elegant with Bite-Sized Latkes

Click on the photo for the delicious recipe

Our dear member, Irv Miljoner, shares his twist on his personal Chanukah miracle.

Hanukah Miracle (and how hope and faith were rewarded)

By Irv Miljoner

In August 1999, my son David and I took a trip to Israel. It was a special trip for many reasons. We were both in the midst of some very difficult and challenging times, and the trip to Israel was a wonderful diversion and an affecting experience. We had some great fun along with being educated and inspired. After visiting with long-lost cousins for a couple of days, we went on a formal tour of the country, visiting magnificent places of historical and religious significance.

After our formal tour, we spent 2 days at a Kibbutz in the Golan Heights, getting a sense of what it's like to live a truly communal life of personal interdependence. Along with growing its own food, and other means of self-sufficiency, this particular kibbutz operated its own apiary, raising bees and producing a variety of bee products. We purchased some honey and other products to take home.

Within a day of arriving back home, I got violently ill and underwent emergency gallbladder surgery. Shortly after coming home from the hospital, I started taking this high-potency Royal Jelly I had brought home from the apiary in Israel. It came in a six-sided jar with a royal blue- colored label. I had 3 jars.

My recovery was almost immediate, and… I not only got better -- I started getting in better physical condition than I'd been in many years. I lost some weight, got in tremendous shape, and found myself with renewed strength, energy, and stamina. I started biking and playing tennis,
and I joined a basketball league. I felt vibrant and had great confidence. I was giving dynamic presentations at work, undertook ambitious new projects, started to write a column for a national publication, got involved in new charitable activities, and was even inspiring others. I WAS POWERFUl !! Then… The Royal Jelly ran out.

For weeks before it ran out, I started cutting back on the amounts I was taking in tea and spreading on bread and bagels. Seeing the supply dwindling, I started contacting the apiary in Israel, to try to order additional supplies. At the same time, I bought Royal Jelly products in a few different health food stores around here – but it lacked the same potency, and was not having the same effect. For months I repeatedly sent e-mails to the kibbutz apiary, trying to order more supplies of the potent Royal Jelly in the six-sided jar with the blue label.

Every one of my e-mails was returned with a message of "UNDELIVERABLE" or "FATAL ERROR." That phrase kept popping up as if to mock me and warn me of my impending return to… mortality. I consulted with health food stores, computer guys, and even the Israeli consulate. No one could provide an equivalent product, a computer solution, or a way to reach the kibbutz apiary. I gave up trying to contact the kibbutz, and with my supply of the holy nectar now gone, I started losing that physical and mental edge that made me feel powerful. Oh, I was still adequately healthy, exercising some, and working well enough most of the time… but that intensity and power and a higher level of performance and energy… were all but gone.

Two years passed, with life's usual ups and downs, new endeavors, and journeys of the spirit and soul. All the while I yearned for more – more of what I knew could be possible. Then, on December 17, 2001 – the last day of Hanukah – the eve of the 18th day of the month, a parcel arrived at my door. It had no return address, only some postmarks from… Israel. Who, of a right mind those days (shortly after 9-11, and anthrax scares), would open an unidentified and unexpected package, with no return address, from the middle east? Me, that's who! I remembered one of the stops on our tour in 1999 was the old city of Safed.

At the highest elevation in Israel, at the end of a steep and winding road up a mountain, a whistling wind surrounded that place, where thousands of Jews settled after being driven out of Spain in the 16th century, bringing their scholarship and mysticism, which, along with the altitude, is felt in the air.

Artists' studios and craft peddlers proliferate here, along with medieval synagogues, remaining on narrow cobble-stoned streets, beyond stone archways, wherein we entered and listened to a bearded mystic explain some of the complexities and mysteries of Kaballah. As we were torn away from the mystic to necessarily rejoin the tour group, his last words echoed, and now again resonated as I contemplated the package on my doorstep: "It is not for you to know. It is for you to be… and go forward."

So I opened the package and sifted through the shredded paper packing to find a six-sided jar of Royal Jelly, along with six smaller circular jars. There was no letter of explanation and no bill; only a small piece of paper with a picture of a bee on it, and two words: "Happy Hanukah."

The labels were green (not blue) this time (in my excitement and whimsy, I thought: " funny, you don't look blue-ish") …But the product was unmistakable, as was the message also delivered… that this was a gift not to be questioned, a plea answered by the universe, and a renewed reason to have hope and faith for better days ahead.

If you'd like to contribute something compelling to the Scoop, please send it to info@cbicg.org for review for consideration. Word limit: 400

SEASON OF SKINNY CANDLES **by MARGE PIERCY**

A row of tall skinny candles burns
quickly into the night
air, the shames raised
over the rest for its hard work.
Darkness rushes in

after the sun sinks
like a bright plug pulled.
Our eyes drown in night
thick as ink pudding.
When even the moon
starves to a sliver
of quicksilver
the little candles poke
holes in the blackness.
A time to eat fat
and oil, a time to gamble
for pennies and gambol.

The Rabbi Speaks

Dear Congregant and Friends,

Sometimes people begin essays by writing "I can't believe we reached this time of year," or something of that nature. This is not going to be that kind of essay. Because I do believe that we are at this time of year, this time of Chanukah and the Festival of Lights. We are due for this holiday and I welcome it with open arms. No surprise here.

What does surprise me is the new spirit that CBI seems to have brought into its doors. If you have not been to a Shabbat service in the last few months, it seems like a different congregation. You need to check it out. The feelings of spirit abound, the conversations at Kiddush are a cut above, and the Friday Night Musical Kabbalat Shabbat evenings have been a smashing success.

We want to keep this spirit going, and the spirit of the lights. Chanukah is one way to help with that.

Chanukah is literally a festival celebrating light and growth. What better theme can a holiday have? 8 days and nights proclaiming that light always wins out over darkness. It's a holiday where we are encouraged to open up and reveal that illuminated part of us that we like to keep hidden a lot or some of the time.

At a time in the world where darkness and hatred abound, where people walk into gay nightclubs and shoot indiscriminately, where famous celebrities spread the scourge of antisemitism, and where people like to point their finger at the Other to blame for their problems, Chanukah is here to shine on that darkness with bright, beautiful light.

This spirit of Chanukah is exemplified in our shul with a spirit of togetherness, love, brotherhood, and sisterhood. That is some good light right there.

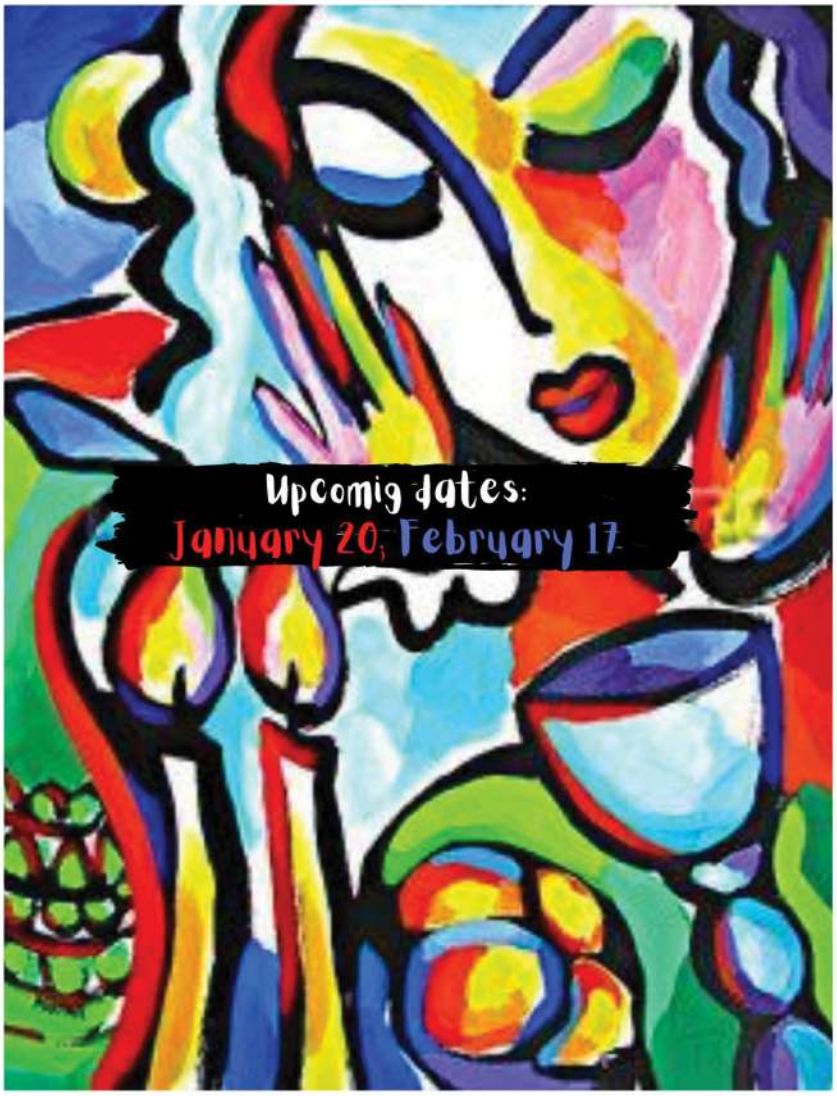
Let's bring more light into our place of worship and gathering and bring it to the world outside its walls.

Please join me on December 8 as I kindle the Menorah (electric and pre-Chanukah) with the mayor of Hempstead and the rest of our brethren in our community as they kindle their holiday lights.

Light begets more light. Let's keep the light of the menorah burning all winter long.

Warmly and with blessing for a great new year.
Rabbi Abe

Upcoming Events



Musical Kabbalat Shabbat @CBI

December 23

Special Chanukah Service

Followed by sing-a-long, trivia, latkes and more!

@7:30 PM

Registration required by December 20
by clicking here
or calling 917.446.7983

Bring a friend and family

Happy
Chanukah
Hanukah
Hannukah
Chanukkah
Hanukkah
Chanuka
and, of course,
חנוכה

CBI Game Day: MAHJONG
Every Tuesday @noon at CBI
All Levels Welcome
Cover: $5
Bring your lunch and friends
Must be Vaccinated
RSVP by Monday to
Judi Slatsky at
jels244@aol.com or
917-575-5443

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CBI Clothing & Housewares Drop Box
Get rid of your clutter and help CBI with your donations
Drop box located in CBI's parking lot.

December Yahrzeits

- Leon Benedict 12-01
- Hal Friedman 12-02
- Ruth Goldberg 12-05
- Rachel Gutman 12-05
- Yetta Ginsberg 12-07
- Max Miljoner 12-10
- Nessim Reboh 12-11
- Sadie Zaum 12-16
- Jacob Frank 12-23
- Theresa Frank 12-26
- Sarah Fricklas 12-26
- Hanna Herscovicci 12-26
- Rabbi Harvey Weil 12-27
- Samuel Soblick 12-28
- Howard Mandell 12-29
- Melvon Zucker 12-29
- Meyer Widlitz 12-31

Contributions

In Memoriam & Yahrzeits

Vicki and Ken Goldberg, (yahrzeit of mother, Ruth Goldberg)

Marianne Baker--(in memory of Claire Schoenfeld)

Susan Bass--(in memory of Claire Schoenfeld)

Dana and Kevin Brandes--(in memory of Claire Schoenfeld)

Muriel Levine--(in memory of Claire Schoenfeld)

Alan Mantis--(in memory of Claire Schoenfeld)

Marsha Mandell--(in memory of Claire Schoenfeld)

Robin Cinnamon--(in memoriam)

Gloria Moss--(in memory of my dear niece, Robin Krauss)

General Donations

Marianne Baker--(in honor of Eli Soblick's birthday and his purple heart award ceremony)

Susan Bass--(in honor of Eli Soblick's birthday and his purple heart award ceremony)

Muriel Levine--(in honor of Eli Soblick's birthday and his purple heart award ceremony)

Alan Mantis--(in honor of Eli Soblick's birthday and his purple heart award ceremony)

Muriel Levine, (to wish Alan Mantis a speedy recovery from his recent surgery)

Ilene and Robert Rothschild--(The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund)

Frieda and Alan Brodsky--(The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund)

Lois Glanzer--(The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund)

Bonnie Serle--(donation)

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