The SCOOP

The Happenings of Congregation Beth Israel

February 2025 | שבט תשפ"ה

Tu B'Shevat, the New Year of the Trees, is a time to reflect on our own connections to nature and our responsibility as stewards of the Earth. In the Torah, trees symbolize life, wisdom, and sustenance. Deuteronomy 20:19 teaches, "For the tree of the field is man's life," reminding us that human survival is intertwined with the health of the natural world. The Torah also instructs us against the sin of wastefulness, emphasizing our duty to care for the environment and our precious world--the only one we have.

On Tu B'Shevat, we celebrate the fruits of the Land of Israel, but the holiday also serves as a call to action. Planting trees, reducing waste, conserving water, and supporting sustainable agriculture are modern ways to honor this day. By embracing eco-conscious choices, we fulfill the Torah's vision of eco-friendly responsibility, ensuring that future generations inherit a world rich in resources, just as we have received it.

How can our CBI community help with this Jewish vision of responsibility to our precious earth?

Join us for our Tu B'Shevat seder on February 8, following services, for more discussion, along with a tasty celebration of a variety of fruits, symbolizing the agricultural cycle (see flyer for more details).

See you there!

The CBI Editorial Team

In the spirit of Tu B'Shevat and its connection with ecology and sustainability, the editors of the Scoop present an essay by our own Monte Leeper describing his brush with almost spearheading a Federal program in his youth--if only.....

Thank you, Jimmy Carter
by **Monte Leeper**

When I was a student in Florence, Italy, in 1979, I was invited to a fellow student's home in Munich. I was awakened to loud sounds out in the street and witnessed a huge truck with giant arms and claws that was lifting several odd-shaped bins from two street corners at the same time. My friend explained that this was something called "re-cycling." The truck was gathering separated bins of brown, green and clear glass and paper, all at the same time. I was intrigued and further investigated this new idea, writing six pages of notes.

After I returned to the U.S., I hand-wrote that six page letter to the President of the United States. Then, a strange thing happened. Our office secretary, in Monroe, Michigan, walked to my desk and said a man named William Ruckleshaus, chairman of the U.S Environmental Protection Agency was on the phone and wanted to speak to me. He explained that the President received my letter and wanted to meet. I was 22 years old.

As it was election time, the President was doing "town hall" meetings across the country and selected a high school near my home in Toledo, Ohio. I was sent a special pass to give to secret service agents and on October 25th, 1980, at 9:42 am, in a crowded gymnasium, I presented my pass to a tall Marine-like agent who seemed to be aware of the arrangement. He didn't hesitate. I was walked behind a backdrop by two agents, down a hallway and seated in a classroom. In walked Jimmy Carter who came over, shook my hand and sat at a school desk next to me. I kept answering "yes, Mr. President" and he kept saying "call me Jimmy." He was holding my six-page detailed letter on re-cycling and we discussed the many specific things he was interested in implementing, starting with the government, to reduce waste in the United States.

As we talked, he smiled that big Jimmy Carter grin and I kept thinking he was too genuinely sincere, too nice to be the president, too down-to-earth and how surreal this moment was. But the most surreal of all was when he asked me if I would come to Washington, D.C. and work with him to implement this program from the White House. I immediately answered "yes, Mr. President," still unable to call him Jimmy. Then he smiled at me one more time and said, "of course I have to get re-elected." He lost to Ronald Reagan and the rest is history.

I always wonder how my life would have been, working with the President, overseeing a new program that never materialized. I wouldn't have crossed paths with the young lady who has shared my life for 43 years, never enjoyed the two daughters we raised or the grandchildren we fuss over, would have not necessarily opened my own architectural practice, moved to Long Island or started writing a column for the Herald. I wonder…

Thank you, Jimmy Carter!

IMPORTANT: Please Read

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The CBI Community
141 Hilton Avenue
Hempstead, NY 11550

Abraham Lebovic
Rabbi

Jan. 30, 2025

Dear CBI Family,

The Board of Trustees, over the last few months, has been faced with many serious issues regarding the future of our synagogue. After many hours of careful thought and discussion, the board has come up with several solutions.

However, according to our bylaws, it is imperative that the congregation vote in order to implement the board's recommendations. Your attendance at this meeting is very important

The congregation meeting will be held on Sunday, February 23, at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary.

I'm looking forward to a large turnout! We do need your support and input.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Krauss, President

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR DEVICE

DURING OUR SERVICES AND EVENTS

The Rabbi Speaks

Dear friends,

Our congregation recently had two beautiful events in our precious sanctuary.

The first was a group of youth who were being confirmed in their local church and came to see how a Jewish prayer service was conducted, and as their Pastor Philips told me, "I want them to see what the source of their religion is."

The second was the celebration of Adele Murphy's 70th birthday celebration, as she invited many of her friends from all walks of life—many of them not Jewish or religious—to participate in the Jewish Shabbat service that is so dear to her.

Both events had great feedback and made me so proud to be able to share our Jewish traditions with members of other faiths—or with those with no faith at all.

We live in a time in America where division and schism are rampant and encouraged. These weekends and moments of unity and cohesion are essential to keep our human spirit and Godly souls alive and well.

In Judaism, there is a concept called "Kiddush Hashem," which translates as the "sanctification of God's name," which means that Jews are supposed to be representative of a paragon of excellence in their behavior that will impress those around them. Jews, with their historical mission of introducing monotheism and morality to the world, are expected to utilize this great responsibility and teach this to others by behaving well and ethically. When others see how we live and behave, we are essentially advertising the Jewish people, our Houses of Prayer, and our culture and mores, and those that see it hopefully say, "That's something to admire and to emulate."

Those two Shabbatot were an excellent example of the above, and I hope we have more services and events like it down the road.

Religion is, after all, about highlighting the fact that we all poses an image of God, and if we look a little deeper than all the mishigas we hear about and see in the political news, then the world can and will be a much better place.

Let us hope these two events will beget similar events, and let us hope that our congregation continues to be a light to our local community and those we encounter each day, coming each week from a spiritual and uplifting Shabbat.

I look forward to seeing you there each Shabbat to bring this message to the fore—and to develop it further.

Warmly,
Rabbi Abe

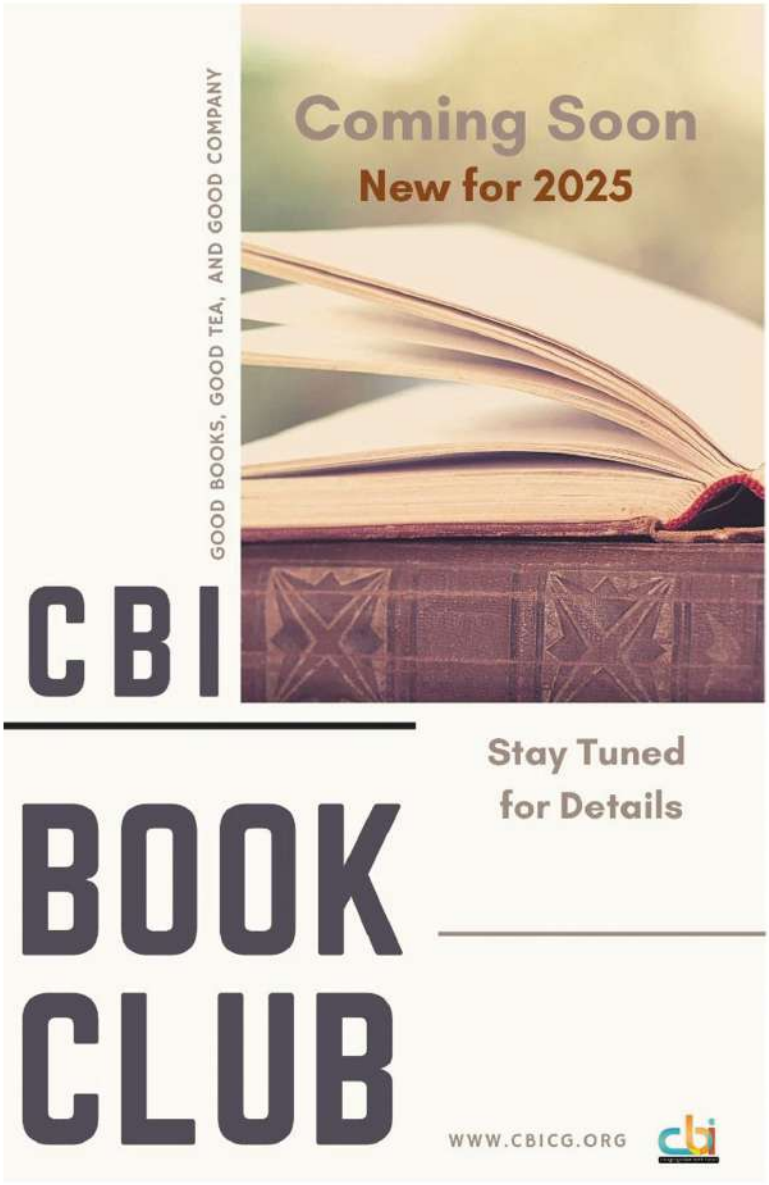
Upcoming Events

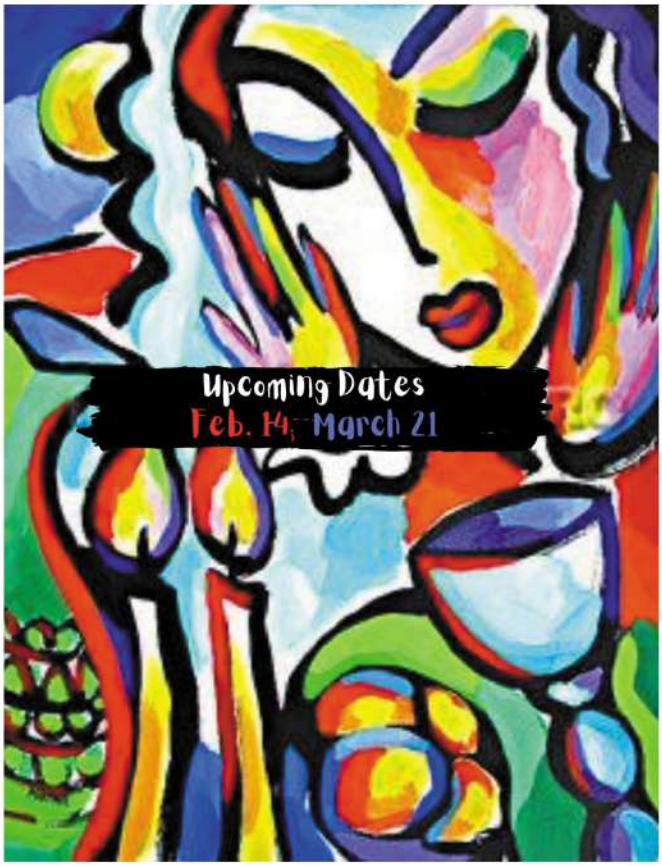
Join us for our

Tu B'Shevat Seder

February 8, 2025
following
Shabbat Services

Learn about this beautiful, ecological Jewish Holiday, and partake of a bounty of fruits and nuts, and sing some songs about our precious earth and all the gifts that it gives us





Musical Kabbalat Shabbat @CBI

Join us these Friday nights

February 14

March 21

April 25

@7:30 PM

Oneg to follow services

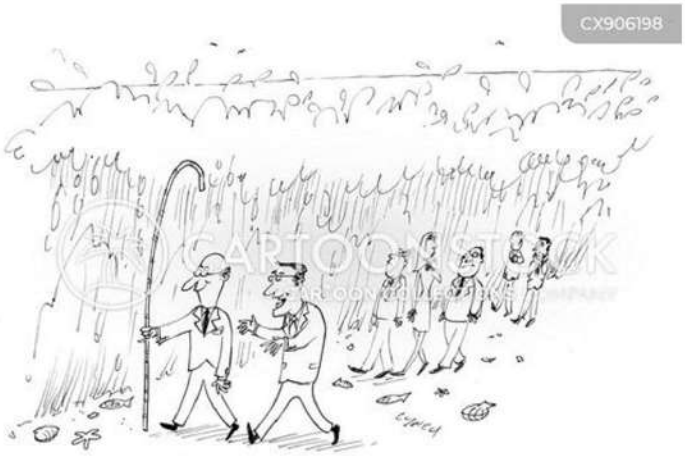
Bring your friends and family

Presents
BACK TO JEWISH SCHOOL
WITH RABBI ABE
Wednesdays @ 8 PM
On Zoom by clicking here

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

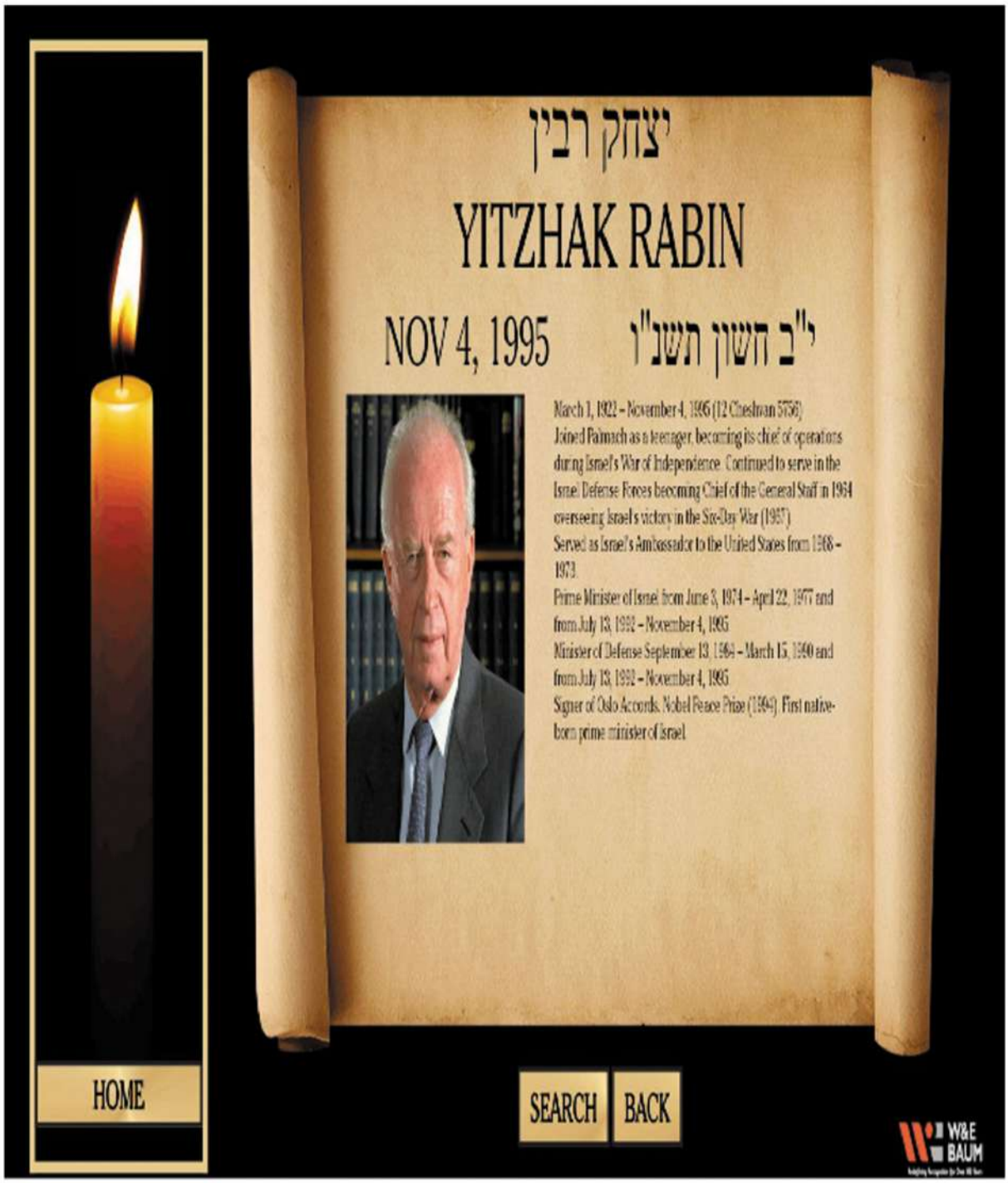
A BIG thank you to:

Ellen Zimel and Mindy Leeper
for preparing sumptuous Kiddushes in the month of January



"And, after they see you do this, the 'promised land' can be whatever you say it is."

Come on, laugh a bit. It will do you good— and then some.



Honor the memory of your loved one on CBI's Digital Memorial Board

Share a bio, photo, or anecdote as shown above

(Click here to see the board online)

For more info, please contact Marianne Baker at 516-486-5140

February Yahrzeits

Victor Feldman	2-3	Louis Weitzman	2-7
Claude Herscovicci	2-3	Max Abo	2-8
Sol Schacter	2-3	Rhoda H Rossman	2-15
Sarah Brodsky	2-6	Ada Broder	2-16
Barbara Friedman	2-6	Harriet Neider	2-18
		Samuel Drexler	2-22

In Memoriam & Yahrzeit Donations

Marsha Mandell (yahrtzeit of of Howard Mandell)
Monique Reboh (yahrtzeit of Nissim Reboh)
Sondra Bernstein (in memory of my parents, Ruth & David Volin)
Marianne Baker (yahrtzeits of sisters Barbara friedman and Lillian Rozansky)
Tilda Lovinger (yahrtzeits of my mother, Hanna Herscovicci)
Roberta Bouer (remembering my mom, Rita, on her first yahrtzeit)
Aileen & Lenny Goldberg (yahrtzeit of Lenny's mom, Ruth Goldberg)

Donations

Agnes & Jerry Bedor (donation, Krauss anniversary)
Debbie & Richie Krauss (To thank CBI for the beautiful kiddush and treating us as a family and wishing all a wonderful new year)
Freida & Alan Brodsky (In honor of Dr. & Mrs. Krauss's anniversary celebration, and Rabbi Abe and Allie's new baby boy, Ezra)
Ellen Zimel (in honor of the Krauss' and Lebovic's special events)
Robin Cinnamon (For the two special temple Simchas)
Ilene & Robert Rothschild (To thank the Weills and Roberta for the beautiful oneg)
Ilene & Robert Rothschild (to thank Rabbi Abe for his prayers)
Roberta Bouer (in celebration of Hanukkah with my CBI family; in honor of Debbie and Richie's first wedding anniversary and in celebration of Ezzi's Pidyon Haben)
Aileen & Lenny Goldberg (In honor of the Krauss's first anniversary and the Pidyon Haben of Ezra Joshua Lebovic)

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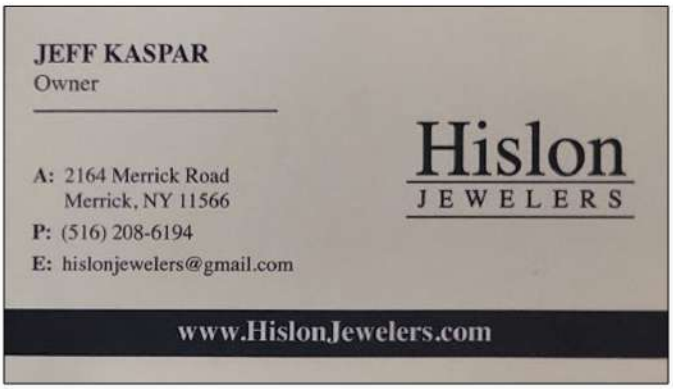

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