

BETH EMETH CONGREGATION

13702 W. Meeker Blvd... Sun City West, AZ 85375 623-584-7210 bethemethaz@gmail.com www.bethemethaz.org Office hours Mon-Fri - 9 AM - 12 PM Hazzan Lev Ettelson, Spiritual Leader/ **Director of Education**

Beth Emeth Observer

Tevet - Shevat 5784 January 2024

"More Than Just The Conservative Congregation of the West Valley, We Are A Community"

Latke Feast A Big Success More than 80 people in attendance Over \$1,200 raised for Israel

in raffle













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SHABBAT CANDLE **LIGHTING**

January

01/05	5:16
01/12	5:22
01/19	5:29
01/26	5:35

Volume 2024 Number 1



FROM THE DESK OF TOM BEHRENDT, PRESIDENT



WOW!! The Chanukah Latke Party was truly amazing!! 80 people, largest social gathering since the pandemic. Rev Lev was his dynamic self explaining all the nuances and customs. Great singing with Rosemary, Sharon, Gary, Natalie and others. Amazing food by Ketzi and her band of phenomenal volunteer helpers in making 100's of latkes, Tuna salad, cranberry slaw, salad, cookies and more. It was so gratifying to me and the Board the ruach and joy of coming together in support of Israel. We had 2 non-Jewish people come to the Party and made a large donation as Friends Of Israel. We need to keep the momentum going with meaningful programs and outreach projects if we are to grow and sustain our Synagogue.

Rev Lev and I are working to start B'Nai Mitzvah classes for the families in the West Valley. We are the only Conservative Synagogue and will be the only Synagogue offering B'Nai Mitzvah classes.

Our Sisterhood, led by Ketzi and Marlene, is now a vibrant and integral part of Beth Emeth with 40 plus members. NOW it is time for Men's Club to be brought back to life. I am hoping that someone will step up and become the focal point to restore Men's Club. Hot Dog Sunday is waiting and hope that we can make it happen. The friendship of Men's Club plus the good that it does in the community makes it worthwhile. I hope we can have 40 members also.

Important dates

Please mark your calendars for the congregational meetings coming up in January 2024. It is very important that all the members come to both these meetings.

January 7th at 1:00pm will be the meeting to approve the budget for 2024.

January 21st at 4:00pm will be the meeting to elect new board members and directors for 2024.

Words from the heart: Reflections on Torah and Tradition by Hazzan Lev Ettelson



"Beit Hillel says: the New Year for trees is on the 15th of Shevat."

(Mishnah Rosh Hashanah)

"G-d caused to grow every tree that was pleasing to the sight and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden..." (Genesis 2:9) "Is a human being like a tree in the field?" (Deuteronomy 20:19) "She (Torah) is a tree of life for those who grasp her." (Proverbs 3:18)

From the Garden of Eden to the Torah scrolls in our Holy Ark, trees figure prominently in our tradition. It is a symbol of growth, renewal and sustenance. Like a tree, we have our roots, trunk, branches and fruits. This is true in both the material and spiritual sense. Just as a tree is rooted in the earth with her branches reaching skyward, a human being is the nexus between heaven and earth. As Shakespeare wrote, "What a piece of work is a man? How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, In form and moving how express and admirable, In action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals."

This Tu B'Shvat marks the second yahrzeit of my mother Patricia Elan Burkenroad (peace be upon her). Her Hebrew name is Elana which means tree, her parents names were Leslie and Sylvia which also have meanings relating to trees. I have an interest in genealogy and have traced my family tree back many generations. There is a famous Hasidic story about Rabbi Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezritch. When he was eight years old, his family's house burned down. His mother began to cry. "Why are you crying mother?" "My son, I am crying for my father's genealogical record that traced our ancestry back to King David." "Don't worry mother, I promise that a new family tree will begin with me." That boy grew up to be the successor of the Baal Shem Tov and to disseminate his teachings far and wide.

Each one of us is a branch of the mighty tree which grew from the seed planted by Abraham and Sarah rooted in Moses' encounter Burning Bush at Mount Sinai and now bearing fruit in the wondrous rebirth in the Land of Israel. Here at the very precipice of our people's struggle for survival in our sovereign land is a wonderful and life affirming opportunity to express our solidarity. By partaking of the seven species of the land: Grapes, olives, pomegranates, dates, figs, wheat and barley, we are internalizing the spiritual qualities of the Holy Land. Come join us on the evening of January 24th as we celebrate the New Year of the Trees and our connection with the land of Israel at our Tu B'Shyat Seder.

As our community continues to grow, it is important to water our roots so that they remain strong. Our roots (as it says in Pirkei Avot) are Torah, Prayer and Acts of Kindness. As we branch out to attract new members let us not lose sight of our essential mission as a warm and welcoming refuge, providing shade and sustenance. This world of ours can seem a cold and inhospitable place at times, let's work together to cultivate a forest in which trees (and saplings) of all varieties can find the optimal conditions for growth.

From the Editor's Desk

Whatever happened to the Men's Club? It is not as simple as a lack of interest. Could lack of activities be at least part of the answer? Perhaps.

Let's compare the Men's Club with the Sisterhood. Or simply compare the genders of their members:

Most of our wives and significant others learn from their mothers what I call "Women's Work." They learn to cook and sew and take care of children. Their male partners endeavor to earn enough through their employment to pay for the groceries, utilities, mortgages and other expenses of maintaining the household which, as husband and wife, they share.

Which partner has the responsibility of meeting their child's Grammar School teacher? Who becomes the Den Mother? Who bakes cupcakes when a child's birthday falls on a school day, so that every kid in his or her class can partake? Which parent makes sure their son or daughter has all their immunizations, delivers the child to medical appointments, after school activities, Cub Scouts or Brownies and still ensures that dinner is on the table when Daddy gets home?

You get the picture. Mommies are accustomed to being busy. They also have learned to budget their time so that everything expected of them gets done. When their husbands finally retire, their kids have already grown into responsible adults and no longer need Mommy to kiss their boo-boo or intervene in their squabbles.

It's retirement that seems to be the culprit here.

As a retiree, I have found that volunteering more than adequately fills the time once allotted to employment. There is also a feeling of accomplishment, knowing that what I have done has made a difference.

Now is the time for us men to roll up our sleeves and get to work for Beth Emeth Congregation. A program which helped bring money into our treasury also helped cement relations with the members of the churches nearest ours. Of course, I refer to the Cactus Kosher Hot Dog Day.

Although I remember Hot Dog Day as a once-a-year program, I have been told the program was previously conducted twice yearly and utilized minimal manpower except on the day of the actual event. This is only one volunteer opportunity, but there are others. Let's not forget assembling and disassembling our Sukkah, helping to lead religious services, tightening the legs on chairs in the sanctuary, becoming greeters for religious services, and other projects I have not even thought of.

Let's show the Sisterhood that they are not the only people who are accustomed to being busy!



Let President Tom know that you, too, are interested in our Men's Club!!!



Rhoda Lessner and Marilyn Newberg No longer Twins

REMEMBERING RHODA LESSNER



Beth Emeth Congregation recently mourned the passing of Rhoda Lessner, a well-known and prominent member of our community.

Rhoda Barbara Pinkus was born in Bronx, New York on June 20, 1936, but moved to upstate New York as an infant because of her father's Asthma. The family lived with her grandmother Anna and her aunt Ray, who owned a small hotel, plus a chicken farm, later returning to live in the Bronx.

Upon graduating from Public School 118, she attended Roosevelt High School where she entered a co-op commercial course which allowed her to work bi-weekly. She was able to secure a job with Household Finance.

When she met Harold Lessner, it was love at first sight and their marriage resulted in the birth of three boys: Alan, Craig and Lee. When Harold died in 1983, Rhoda was left with three teenagers.

Not a quitter, Rhoda was incredible at doing jobs most women shunned, including her own lawn cleaning, shoveling snow and climbing to the roof of her home to clean gutters. The latter was her downfall and she found herself calling one of her sons to help her down from the roof.

She painted her home, and when she moved to Arizona, painted the inside of her new house. The edges of the ceiling looked as if they were done professionally. The quality of her work was obvious to observers after she, and her sister Marilyn, painted the Rabbi's office at in Beth Emeth's building.

Although there is a difference in age, Rhoda and Marilyn at one time looked and dressed so much alike that strangers thought they were twins. Dressing alike was always by accident, never by design.

Rhoda was the consummate volunteer, working with her sister Marilyn in hospitals, at Surprise Stadium and, most importantly, at Beth Emeth Congregation after moving here in 2005. She served as Sisterhood Treasurer as well as Kitchen Coordinator, and was co-chair, with her sister Marilyn, of the group we know as the "kitchen elves".

People will always remember her sitting on the Bimah as Beth Emeth's ritual chair.

Rhoda was there to help in any capacity. She will be missed, but always remembered.

Beth Emeth Congregation of the West Valley Special Event!

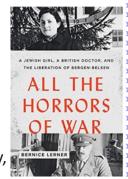


Sunday, January 28, 2024, 2:00 pm

Author Dr. Bernice Lerner of Cambridge, MA will be reflecting and sharing stories from her book:

"All the Horrors of War: A Jewish Girl, a British Doctor, and the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen."

Rachel Genuth was a 15-year-old girl from Sighet, Hungary, when British forces liberated her from the Bergen-Belsen con-



centration camp on April 15, 1945. Seventy-five years later, her daughter, Dr. Bernice Lerner from Boston, MA has published Rachel's story, as well as that of Rachel's liberator, Brigadier Hugh Llewellyn Glyn Hughes, in one volume. Although Rachel and Hughes never met, their stories naturally align in Lerner's meticulously researched and compelling book.

Lerner spent 15 years researching "All the Horrors of War," a project that involved mapping out the various battles that Hughes and the 8th Corps fought on their way to liberating Bergen-Belsen. Intertwined with the story of Bergen-Belsen's British liberators is Rachel's time at Auschwitz, the Christianstadt labor camp and a forced five-week march across the Sudetenland, during which she nearly died.

In choosing to focus her book on the last year of the war, Lerner presents the history of the Holocaust in thorough detail.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day Reflections: The Meaning of Liberation

The United Nations General Assembly chose January 27, the date on which Auschwitz was liberated, as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. What happened on this historic day? And what happened three months later, when the British Second Army confronted unprecedented horrors in Bergen-Belsen, the largest concentration camp at the war's end? Among astonishing stories Dr. Lerner will share are those of her survivor-mother, Rachel Genuth.

Dr. Bernice Lerner is the author of **All the Horrors of War: A Jewish Girl, a British Doctor, and the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen**, and other writings on the Holocaust and on virtue ethics. As director of Boston University's Center for Character and Social Responsibility, Bernice lectured widely and taught courses on character education and on the Holocaust. As dean of adult learning at Hebrew College, she created a host of adult learning programs, including the acclaimed Me'ah, a two-year journey through Jewish history. Bernice earned a bachelor's from Stony Brook University, a master's from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and a doctorate from Boston University.

We look forward to having you join us!

Open to the public free of charge – donations appreciated!

bethemethaz@gmail.com 623-584-7210 13702 W Meeker Blvd, Sun City West bethemethaz.org



 Lew Samuels
 1/02/2024

 Susan Hersch
 1/11/2024

 Melvyn Friedman
 1/13/2024

 Joy Epstein
 1/16/2024

 Jan Heidecker
 1/18/2024

 William Kram
 1/30/2024



Elliot & Brenda Kleinman

1/25/2024







Important Reminder

- 1. The January 14th Program has been canceled!
- 2. Mah Jongg Card Order Deadline is January 8th
- 3. The January planning meeting is on January 9th at 10:00am
- 4. RSVP for the Tu B'Shevat Seder by January 18th, See flier on page 10
- 5. Plan to attend the Holocaust lecture January 28th 2:00pm

Thank you to everyone who supported Israel we raised over \$1200. Heart felt appreciation to everyone who helped with the Latke Feast! Especially Adrienne Kirshner, Carol Madvig and Sherry Lapham who fried Latkes for 2 days!!!!

We ran out of space in the previous issues of the Observer to properly thank Sharon Rothzeid for her box making and earring making classes during November. Sharon, please accept the heartfelt thanks of Sisterhood and a grateful congregation.

Our sincere thanks for the following donations

Yahrzeit Fund	Yizkor Donation	Kiddush Fund	General Donations
In Memory of Albert Barnett	Diane Freilich	Rosemary Abrami	Alice Mason
Susan Barnett	Reva Litt	In honor of Tom Behrendt	Marisela Erichsen
In Memory of Sophia Franek	Brad and Sherry Davidson	Rachel Behrendt	Allen Gimpel
Susan Hersch			In Memory of David Phillips
In Memory of Hyman Kornheiser	Torah Fund		Sonia Marshall
Beverly Merchant	In Memory of Richard Ettelson		Suzanne Shlian
In Memory of Rachel Korofsky	Susan Barnett		In Honor of Barb and Arthur
Marilyn Newberg	Diane Freilich		Bennett
In Memory of William Pinkus	Michael Weinberg		Morrie Hesch
Marilyn Newberg	Leah and Charles Tarnor		
In Memory of Gloria Greenberg			
Marilyn Newberg	Israel Donations		<u>Torah Fund</u>
In Memory of Morton Samuels	Carol Dystra		In Memory of Richard Ettelson
Lew & Cheri Samuels	Susan Barnett		Susan Barnett
In Memory of MaryAnn Becker	Kathryn Moore		Diane Freilich
Arnold Becker			Leah and Charlie Tarnor
In Memory of Irving Hesch Morrie Hesch			Michael Weinberg
In Memory of Jacob Lee	In memory of Rhoda Lessner		<u>Cards</u>
Joan Jacobs	Cheryl Bookman		Ketzi Toney
In Memory of Julis Merchant	Jordan and Rosie Colbert		
Beverly Merchant	Susan Barnett		
In Memory of Chaya Ben Yosef	Susan Hersch		
Shoshana Perlmutter	Sheldon Koven		
	Denise Landes		
	Sonia Marshall		
	Beverly Merchant		
	Natalie Morrison Phil Gillenson		Donations Received
y warming	Linda Ziegler		11/21 through 12/26
	Esther and Jim Toney		
	Amanda Dobanton Joan Rothfeld		
	Saul and Sharon Rothzeid		
	Mort Berman		
	Morrie Hesch and Joanie Jacobs		
	Arnold Becker		
	Jamie Rothschild		

Marvin and Rita Wachs



The following Yahrzeits will be observed during Tevet—Shevat -5784

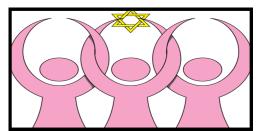
Kaddish may be said on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings.

El Malei Rachamim, the memorial prayer, may be said on the Thursday preceding the Yahrzeit at 9:00 a.m. Minyan.

Date Obse	erved	<u>Deceased</u>	Observant	Relationship
1/1/2024	Tevet 20,	Maryann Becker	Arnold Becker	Wife
1/1/2024	Tevet 20	Julius Merchant	Beverly Merchant	Father-in-law
1/2/2024	Tevet 21	Maurice Morrison	Natalie Morrison	Father-in-law
1/3/2024	Tevet 22	Laura Shimshi	Gail Punyon-Kuhns	Mother
1/6/2024	Tevet 25	Melba Harlin	Karen Overton	Mother
1/6/2024	Tevet 25	Selma Kleinman	Elliot Kleinman	Mother
1/7/2024	Tevet 26	Siegmund Paul	Ronald Paul	Father
1/9/2024	Tevet 28	Wyllis Dorman-Ligh	Paula Forster	Sister
1/12/2024	Shevat 2	Irving Hesch	Morrie Hesch	Father
1/12/2024	Shevat 2	Sarah Leibovitz	Leah Tarnor	Mother
1/13/2024	Shevat 3	Ida Feinstein	Arnold Becker	Sister
1/15/2024	Shevat 5	Gabriel Batavia	Susan Hinton	Father
1/15/2024	Shevat 5	Aryh Silverman	Iris Silverman	Brother
1/16/2024	Shevat 6	Jacob Lee	Joanie Jacobs	Father
1/16/2024	Shevat 6	Leslie Merchant	Beverly Merchant	Sister-in-law
1/17/2024	Shevat 7	Ludolf Heidecker	Andrew Heidecker	Father
1/18/2024	Shevat 8	Hilda Wachs	Marvin Wachs	Mother
1/21/2024	Shevat 11	Harriet Dubin	Elliot Kleinman	Sister
1/27/2024	Shevat 17	Joseph Fineberg	Sonia Marshall	Father
1/27/2024	Shevat 17	Irving Segall	Owen Segall	Uncle
1/27/2024	Shevat 17	Reyna Wachs	Marvin Wachs	Late Wife
1/28/2024	Shevat 18	Marty Feldman	Iris Silverman	Brother-in-law
1/28/2024	Shevat 18	Clara Perlmutter	Myron Perlmutter	Mother
1/30/2024	Shevat 20	Mary Pinkus Halperin	Marilyn Newberg	Mother
1/31/2024	Shevat 21	Mania Boxer	Stanley Debber	Grandmother
1/31/2024	Shevat 21	Jeanette Fisher-Roth	Shelly Moschel	Mother









Beth Emeth Tu B'Shevat Seder

Celebrate the Birthday of the Trees

Note Date changed to Erev Tu B'Shevat

To accommodate more people

Wednesday January 24th 6:30

Evening Service, at 6:15 pm

Evening Service at 6:15 pm to allow individuals to say Kaddish



Please help us make a minyan!

Join us after your dinner for services and program.

Look forward to sampling different kinds of fruits and nuts, learning about Kabbalistic symbolism, expressing appreciation to HaShem, and pausing for awe in the totality of our blessings.

Cost \$18 per person for members \$20 per person for non members Make your reservations today! RSVP Deadline is January 18th

Make Checks payable to Sisterhood Beth Emeth Or pay by credit card by calling our office

All are welcome!

For more information, questions or RSVP call our office

M-F 9:00 - Noon 623-584-7210

13702 W. Meeker Blvd, Sun City West, AZ 85375



January 2024 Tevet - Shevat 5784



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5 Light: 5:16pm	6
7	20 Tevet 8	21 Tevet 9	22 Tevet 10	23 Tevet 11	24 Tevet 12 Light: 5:22pm	25 Tevet 13
26 Tevet	27 Tevet	28 Tevet	29 Tevet	1 Shevat	2 Shevat	3 Shevat
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Day		Observer Deadline		Light: 5:28pm	
4 Shevat	5 Shevat	6 Shevat	7 Shevat	8 Shevat	9 Shevat	10 Shevat
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			Tu B'Shevat Seder	Tu B'Shevat	Light: 5:35 pm	
11 Shevat	12 Shevat	13 Shevat	14 Shevat	15 Shevat	16 Shevat	17 Shevat
28	29	30	31			
18 Shevat	19 Shevat	20 Shevat	21 Shevat			

Our logo is a Shield of David made up of a calligraphic interpretation of the Hebrew initials of the Congregation, BETH EMETH, which means House of Truth.





To all those dedicated and loving people who stepped up and committed their time to be board members, directors, and club presidents. You are so appreciated!

Beth Emeth Congregation Board

Tom Behrendt Marilyn Newberg Iris Johnson Natalie Morrison Jordan Colbert Paula Forster Irene Lehrer Susan Hersch President 1st Vice President 2nd Vice President 3rd VicePresident 4th Vice President Treasurer Financial Secretary Recording Secretary

DIRECTORS

Arnold Becker Arthur Bennett Leah Tarnor Esther Toney Men's Club President

Sisterhood President

PICK UP A GIFT AT THE JUDAICA SHOP



Do you have a <u>tzedakah box</u>? Get one at the Judaica shop, fill it up and donate your savings to the Synagogue as a gesture of kindness and faith.

Big Sale!! Yahrzeit Candles!! \$1.00 for one \$5.00 for six



Also Shabbat Candles on sale - Box of 72 for \$8.00

We also now have several fine art pieces for sale.

Stop in anytime Monday - Friday 9am to 12pm

(Payment accepted by check or cash or credit card)