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Spiritual  
Community  
Since 1978

# THE STAR

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**NOTE: The STAR is currently only available in digital format.**

The Digital Color Edition of The Star is available online. To view/download The Star and enjoy the benefits of hyperlinks, go to the Beth Chaim website: <https://www.bethchaim.com/news/beth-chaim-star>.

You can also find the link to the Digital Color edition on our Members Only Facebook page and in the weekly Happenings.

Follow us on Social Media:



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## Our Mission

At Beth Chaim Congregation, we are reimagining how we experience and celebrate Judaism, and how we are a source of belonging that enriches and uplifts the lives of our members. Our approachable, flexible worship, grounded in tradition yet modernized, embraces spirituality and soulful Jewish practice.

- We welcome with warmth all who seek a connection to Jewish life regardless of their religious beliefs and experiences. We **embrace Jews of all backgrounds** as well as those new to Judaism **and interfaith relationships** and meet our congregants wherever they are on their **Jewish journey**.
- We are your Jewish **community** in the East Bay. We celebrate your simchas, and we are there with chesed in your times of need. We are your people, your community, a place to belong.
- Our **Sisterhood, Brotherhood, youth opportunities, and events** for all can fill your Jewish soul.
- **We learn.** Our Tree of Life preschool, Beit Midrash, B'Nei Mitzvah program and adult education opportunities provide lifelong enrichment of your Jewish experience.
- We are a **tranquil place of togetherness** and Jewish spirituality in the beautiful Danville hills.

**Are you, or someone you know, being abused?**

**If you need help, please contact:**

### SHALOM BAYIT HELP HOTLINE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

**Helpline:** (866) 742-5667 (SHALOM-7)

Toll-Free within the Bay Area

(510) 845-7233 (SAFE) outside the Bay Area

(650) 574-7233 (SAFE) Peninsula office

For questions or support, contact:

Shalom Bayit

(510) 845-8874

[communities@shalom-bayit.org](mailto:communities@shalom-bayit.org)



## COMING SOON! Events not to miss in July and August

Mark your calendar for these upcoming events. *Check the weekly Happenings and [Beth Chaim website](#) for details, to RSVP, and for updates or changes.* Also visit our website for a full listing of [Worship Services](#).

| Date    | Event   | Day       | Time     | Where                  |
|---------|---|-----------|----------|------------------------|
| JULY 3  | Office Closed   | Monday    |          |                        |
| JULY 4  | Office Closed – Independence Day                              | Tuesday   |          |                        |
| JULY 6  | <b>Sisterhood Monthly Walking Group</b>                       | Thursday  | 9:30 AM  | Lunardi's Parking Lot  |
| JULY 7  | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| JULY 10 | <b>Genealogy Club</b>   | Monday    | 7:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| JULY 11 | <b>Brotherhood Lunch</b>                                      | Tuesday   | 12:00 PM | Pete's Brass Rail      |
| JULY 12 | <b>Sisterhood Lunch</b>                                       | Wednesday | 11:45 AM | Chow San Ramon         |
| JULY 14 | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| JULY 15 | <b>Bocce Ball in the Park</b><br>Sponsored by BCC Brotherhood | Saturday  | 7:00 PM  | Sycamore Park          |
| JULY 18 | <b>Sisterhood Book Club</b>                                   | Tuesday   | 7:00 PM  | Home of Fran Patterson |
| JULY 20 | <b>Chazzanut Monthly Circle</b>                               | Thursday  | 7:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| JULY 21 | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| JULY 25 | <b>Sisterhood Rosh Chodesh Av Gathering</b>                   | Tuesday   | 7:00 PM  | Home of Sue Friedman   |
| JULY 27 | <b>TISHA B'AV</b>   | Thursday  |          |                        |
| JULY 28 | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| AUG 2   | <b>TU B'AV</b>  | Thursday  |          |                        |
| AUG 3   | <b>Sisterhood Monthly Walking Group</b>                       | Thursday  | 9:30 AM  | Lunardi's Parking Lot  |
| AUG 4   | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| AUG 11  | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| AUG 14  | <b>Genealogy Club</b>   | Monday    | 7:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| AUG 15  | <b>Sisterhood Book Club</b>                                   | Tuesday   | 7:00 PM  | TBD                    |
| AUG 17  | <b>Sisterhood Lunch</b>                                       | Thursday  | 11:45 AM | Hazy BBQ               |
| AUG 18  | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |
| AUG 22  | <b>Sisterhood Rosh Chodesh Elul Gathering</b>                 | Tuesday   | 7:00 PM  | TBD                    |
| AUG 25  | <b>Sharing Shabbat Together</b>                               | Friday    | 6:00 PM  | BCC                    |

## Ongoing Weekly Activities

|                                 |            |         |         |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------|---------|
| <b>Brotherhood Hiking Group</b> | Wednesdays | 8:30 AM |         |
| <b>Mah Jongg</b>                | Fridays    | 1:00 PM | Virtual |

Looking for more activities? [CCJCC Under One Tent](#) offers a calendar of offerings in the East Bay area. Click on the image for details.



## Special Events and Workshops



**JULY 15  
SATURDAY 7:00PM**

**BYO Dinner  
& Drinks.  
Dessert will  
be provided**

### **BOCCE BALL IN THE PARK**

**Event sponsored by Beth Chaim  
Brotherhood and open to all adults**



**Location: Sycamore Park (opposite Beth Chaim)**

### **Religious School**

## **Registration Open**

For 2023-2024 school year  
Online Registration: [Click Here](https://bit.ly/BeitMidrashReg)  
<https://bit.ly/BeitMidrashReg>

Questions? Contact Alex at  
[schooladmin@bethchaim.com](mailto:schooladmin@bethchaim.com)



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**An Evening to Celebrate & Honor  
Rabbi Dan Goldblatt**  
for his 30 years of leadership, love,  
and dedication to our community  
and for the difference he has made  
in the lives of so many.

**Sunday  
November 5, 2023  
4:30 - 8:30 pm**

Cocktails, dinner and silent auction.  
Invitation and more information coming  
soon!

Round Hill Country Club | Alamo, CA  
For questions, call 925-736-7146 or email [info@bethchaim.com](mailto:info@bethchaim.com).

**FUNDRAISER BENEFITING  
BETH CHAIM CONGREGATION**

### **Silent Auction Donations Needed!**

On Sunday, November 5th, 2023, Beth Chaim will be having our biggest fundraiser of the year. At this event, we are honoring Rabbi Dan for his 30 years of leadership, love and dedication to our community! It will be an evening of celebration with cocktails, music, dinner and more at Roundhill Country Club.

We are looking for more silent auction items and large baskets to collect and make the package displays! So far we have received a Getaway in Mexico, a round of golf for four at Roundhill, \$100 dining gift card for Bridges, and more! **What exciting items do you have to donate to this event?** We can use sports tickets, fun experiences, travel getaways, gift cards, dining, Judaica, wine, and any merchandise that will make this silent auction extraordinary. To make an auction donation contact Debbie Roof at [debbie.roof@yahoo.com](mailto:debbie.roof@yahoo.com).

## Connecting to Israel: A Full Circle Moment

---

By Kim Thompson



With the rise in antisemitism over the past few years, I have found myself gravitating back towards all things Israel. While my core beliefs have always been to fight inequity and any form of racism, standing up for my own people has never been foremost in my thoughts - until recently. Having been raised with no real Jewish upbringing - no Jewish community, no religion, just a smattering of holidays and temple trips back East with the grandparents - I still always felt strongly tied to being Jewish. I just had no idea what that meant. So, it's been a lifelong journey of figuring that out.

My first real step was to embark on my college junior year abroad in Israel. My plan was to further my understanding of my Jewish connection, while trying to wrap my head around the never-ending Middle East peace crisis (no big goals here). Upon entering Israel at 20, I felt an indescribable connection towards this homeland. This completely foreign place, with young Israeli soldiers holding machine guns on every corner, abounding conversations in which everyone seems like they're yelling at one another, and Middle Eastern markets with animals hanging from racks, actually felt like home. I jumped into my effort to solve the peace crisis with intimate talks with Arabs in dorm rooms over Turkish coffee (against the will of my Jewish Israeli dorm roommate who shared her hate for the Arabs after her brother was killed). My goals were on track.

As my Jewish connections were being unveiled all around me, I hit a wall. Following a two-week trip through Turkey and Greece with some girlfriends, I began to experience an increased inability to think, feel, or breathe. Immediately upon returning to Israel, my house mother saw me looking white as a ghost and rushed me to a hospital. I learned my potassium levels were about to give me a heart attack as a result of having absolutely no kidney function. After a two week stay in an Israeli teaching hospital, with a young team of idealistic Soviet immigrants who tried to cure all that was wrong with me, I was sent back home to the states. Disappointingly, my Jewish journey of discovery came to a halt - in order for me to focus on a few more critical issues - like saving my life.

Fast forward some 33 years, inundated with negative Jewish images and messages from the political right and

left, I find myself hesitantly, but with full assurance, willing to proudly stand up for my own people. While radically against much of the actions of the recent Israeli government, the right of Israel to exist has never spoken louder to me. And my desire to connect to this homeland has returned with an even more powerful magnetism - feeling like a full circle moment.

After chatting with a few Beth Chaim friends, I learned about "Momentum" - kind of like a birthright trip for moms. I immediately applied and found out there were no local trips happening (a requirement for acceptance). The most recent partner of many of the local Momentum trips was an organization a lot of you probably know well called Hadassah. Many of your parents and grandparents may have been members of this over 100-year-old Women's Zionist Organization of America. With my lack of Jewish upbringing, I was hearing about Hadassah for the first time and a friend put me in contact with a California contact for Hadassah to seek more information about travel to Israel. I learned that Hadassah with its mission of "bringing more healing and justice to our world" had formed a new organization called "Evolve Hadassah: the Next Generation" with the goal of empowering young women to continue the mission of Hadassah. Evolve was sponsoring two brand new trips to Israel: Evolve Leadership Fellows (for women 45 and younger) and the Evolve Israel Experience (for women 55 and younger). Hearing this news, I immediately applied to Evolve Israel Experience (EIE). I knew the time was now as I'm approaching 54 this year. After a written application, letter of recommendation and zoom interview, I impatiently waited a very long two weeks to find out I was one of the 17 women in this country accepted to be part of the first cohort.

My excitement is immeasurable. A few decades older at 53, still idealistically wanting to do what I can to bring some peace to our crazy world, I cannot wait to share my next steps of this journey as I return to our Jewish homeland and find out how Hadassah and I can accomplish this feat together.

To be continued following my Israel trip number two...

To find out more about Hadassah and Evolve Hadassah, visit [www.hadassah.org](http://www.hadassah.org), contact [evolve@hadassah.org](mailto:evolve@hadassah.org), follow on Facebook or Instagram or contact me (925-787-8741).

## Why Tisha B'Av is Not Really About Mourning

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By Rabbi David Mevorach Seidenburg – adapted from [MyJewishLearning.com](http://MyJewishLearning.com)

We tend to think of Tisha B'Av, the fast day that commemorates the destruction of both ancient temples, as a time of mourning. But the traditional observances of Tisha B'Av — fasting, being unable to sit anywhere except on the ground, not washing, abstaining from sexual activity, not greeting other people, not wearing fresh clothes for the whole week before — are closer to the experience of being a refugee than to being a mourner.

When the Temple was destroyed, the people were thrown into exile. Jerusalem became a war zone and its people became refugees, forced to risk their lives to escape violence, famine, and devastation. The suffering was tremendous — “like deer, not finding a place to graze, walking without strength before a pursuer,” in the words of the Book of Lamentations [*Eicha* in Hebrew].

[The] idea that exile and homelessness were punishment for our sins seems alien to many modern Jews. But the ancients were not as far from us as we think. In *Eicha* itself, most of the chapters describe the punishment God inflicted as excessive and abusive. Only in chapter 3 is Zion's destruction consistently described as fair and just.

There is another way to understand the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of its people. According to the prophet Jeremiah, the traditional author of *Eicha*, the reason for the Babylonian exile was that the people did not let the land rest every seven years, as is biblically mandated Chronicles II 36:21. Since 490 years had passed without a sabbatical year, Israel had to go into exile for 70 years — one year for each sabbatical that was missed.

The Torah teaches that God will take the side of the land against the people if forced to, and that the land will “enjoy her Sabbaths” Leviticus 26:34 — even if that means the people are exiled or wiped out. What has intrinsic value is not humanity, but humanity's potential to do justice.

The Torah outlines six curses for not observing the sabbatical year, which describe how the relationship between the people and the land unravels.

But the idea that the destruction of Jerusalem came about because of how the Jewish people treated the land is not found in *Eicha*, where identification of the land with the people is total. Instead, Jerusalem's downfall results only from the moral downfall in relationships between human beings.

In Jeremiah too, the fate of Jerusalem is sealed only after the rich, who briefly set their slaves free, re-enslave them when it looks like the danger has passed Jeremiah 34. The overall message of these texts is that how we treat the stranger (the refugee, the foreigner, the convert) and the poor determines whether we have the right to remain in the land.

Even though most people are uncomfortable with the idea of divine retribution, in an age when our ecological “sins” are coming home to roost, the connection between disaster and divine retribution is not so farfetched. And since Creation is also compared to the sacred Temple in the Midrash, it is natural to connect the story of the Temple's destruction with the destruction of the earth and the sixth mass extinction initiated by human action.

But there is a very big difference: When the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed, there were other lands for the refugees to flee to. If we destroy the Temple that is the Earth, there will be no place untouched by tragedy.

As climate change puts more pressure on our ecosystems and our social systems, more and more people will become refugees like our ancestors, forced to flee areas no longer capable of sustaining human habitation. And for those fortunate enough not to live in such places, we will need all the spiritual resources we can muster to stay open to the humanity of the refugee and the stranger, while also taking care of our own communities.

All of these issues can become intertwined with the experience of *Eicha* and the story of Jerusalem's destruction. Reading *Eicha* is an invitation to remember what it means to be a refugee, and to think about how we can move towards justice for all people, for all species, and for the land herself.

# Rosh Chodesh: Honoring the Sacred Cycle of Time

Women Gather for fun, sharing, learning, ritual

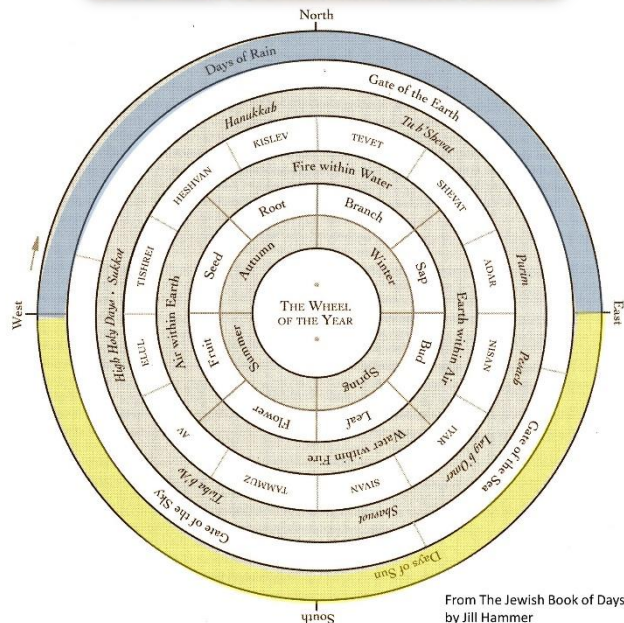
by Deborah Wechsler

*Rosh Chodesh* means the beginning (or head) of the month. *Chadash* means new. We celebrate the beginning of a new Hebrew month when the moon is visible in the sky as just a faint crescent. This has become **a day historically associated with women's renewal and celebration**. In many congregations it has become a time for women to gather together for learning, ritual, spiritual exploration, and marking life's transitions and cycles.

Rosh Chodesh gatherings and rituals can take many forms. At Beth Chaim we meet in the Beth Chaim Sanctuary or in members' homes, engaging in **ritual to mark the special time and space, learning something new, having fun, and sharing our individual and collective wisdom, challenges, and solutions**. Volunteers lead our gatherings. This drop-in group is open for all women of Beth Chaim, regardless of age, experience or background. Look for email notices each month.

Remaining Beth Chaim Rosh Chodesh gatherings for this Jewish year 5783 are:

- **July 25** for the month of Av, led by Kathie Bleier at the home of Sue Friedman
- **August 22** for the month of Elul, led by Judith Markowitz, location TBD



From The Jewish Book of Days by Jill Hammer



***Mazel Tov!***

to the families on the June 24 wedding of  
Brandon Heller and Maddie Brandel

Parents Catherine & Scott Heller and  
Stephanie & Steve Brandel

Brandon and Maddie had their Bar and Bat  
Mitzvah with Rabbi Dan at  
Beth Chaim Congregation.



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## Generosity

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*"It's not how much or how little you have that makes you great or small, but how much or how little you accomplish with what you have."* - Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

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### [GIVING FUNDS](#) | [Building Fund](#) | [Community Fund](#) | [Religious School Fund](#) | [Rabbi's Discretionary Fund](#) | [Torah Restoration & Sacred Objects](#)

If you would like to make a donation you now can do so online using this [link](#). Every effort is made to individually acknowledge each donation by letter. If a donation is made in memory of someone the family is notified and if a donation is made to honor someone he or she is notified as well. The generous support of the synagogue made by member and non-member contributions is very much appreciated. Donations are listed by the donor's name followed by the honoree's name.

---

### **Community / General Fund**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Rick Ferber             |  |
| Knights of Pythias      |  |
| Michael & Jessica Kolis |  |
| Brotherhood             |  |
| Larry & Barbara Candeub | In memory of Sandra Levine                   |
| Larry & Barbara Candeub | In memory of Grace Dublin                    |
| Ted Fagenson            | In memory of Sidney Fagenson                 |
| Susan Friedman          | In memory of Mark Friedman, husband of Susan |
| Carlos & Grace Munoz    | In memory of Lynn Katz                       |
| Barry & Laura Denenberg | In memory of Lynn Katz                       |
| David Hertzbach         | In memory of Lynn Katz                       |

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### **Rabbi Dan's Discretionary Fund**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Ira Book               |   |
| Seth & Stacey Blackman |   |
| William Katz           | In memory of Lynn Katz, Loving wife of William Katz |

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## Matchmaker, Matchmaker Make Me a MATCH!

By Evan Levy

Did you know that Beth Chaim is able to receive corporate matching gifts from your employer! Many U.S. corporations – both publicly traded and privately held – challenge their personnel to be philanthropic and they, therefore, establish matching gift programs to encourage employee generosity. Since Beth Chaim is a registered non-profit organization your contributions to Beth Chaim most likely will qualify for this opportunity. Your current donation(s) to Beth Chaim could be doubled.

Please check to see if your employer offers a Corporate Gift Match program and don't leave your generous employee benefit unused. The process for a match is usually very simple and only requires you to complete an on-line form, attach a receipt and hit the submit button. Voila, you will have significantly increased your donation to Beth Chaim at no additional cost to you! If you have any questions I would love to help. Please either email me [evanslevy@gmail.com](mailto:evanslevy@gmail.com) or call 925-998-1133.

## Beth Chaim Receives a Contra Costa Jewish Community Grant

By Debbie Roof

***A big thank you to the CCJCC for awarding Beth Chaim a \$3500 Community Impact Grant.*** We greatly appreciate it!

As you know, recently Beth Chaim has become a Reform Congregation! This has generated a lot of excitement - we have added many new member families as a result, and we want to continue to add more. We will use this CCJCC grant to revamp our Beit Midrash (religious school) curriculum to closely align with the Reform movement.

Shelby, our Beit Midrash Principal, is working with Jewish Learning Works to create a new and innovative K-7th grade curriculum. It will benefit our current religious school K-7 students, and hundreds of students who will attend our Beit Midrash in coming years. Our consultant from Jewish Learning Works will work with our teachers, our Beit Midrash Principal and our Education Committee to build on our current curricular strengths while introducing new and innovative learning modalities.

By the beginning of the 2024-25 school year, we will have a new Reform curriculum guide for all teachers, so there is consistency for student learning. The curriculum will build on itself each year to provide a more in-depth learning experience for students. We look forward to having this newly revamped Beit Midrash curriculum!

## A Simple way to support Beth Chaim Congregation

*Effortless and cost-free way to support our community!*



Do you shop at Draeger's or Lunardi's? Here is a fundraising opportunity to keep Beth Chaim Congregation going strong! It's easy to help our Beit Midrash! Simply visit [escrip.com/wheretoeearn](https://escrip.com/wheretoeearn) and get signed up with any of our participating merchants, including local stores Draeger's and Lunardi's.

## Sisterhood

by Lois Kamoroff and Suzie Homer, Sisterhood Co-Presidents



How lovely it was to start our summer season with a Sisterhood Shabbat led by our own Judith Markowitz. Judith always makes services so energetic and appealing to all who attend. She always engages participation and makes the service most enjoyable. We provided a bountiful appetizer dinner before and encouraged all to linger with a wine and cheese social after the service.

Many thanks to all those who came to this special Sisterhood Service and to Judith for her generous giving of her time, knowledge and beautiful voice. We are certainly blessed to have so many Sisters who were very generous in their time, skills, food preparation and donations to make June 23 such a successful program.

Throughout the summer Sisterhood will continue with our educational and social programs. We look forward to seeing you at our Rosh Chodesh programs, at the Ladies Who Lunch group, our Book Discussion group, our Healthy Walking Group and at our new Movie Group.

Thank you to all our sisterhood members who help make our programs so successful.

Shalom,  
Lois & Suzie



# Brotherhood

by Burt Feldstein and Paul Yamshon



Beth Chaim  
Brotherhood

What We Do Together Matters

Thank you to all who participated and visitors who came to the Brotherhood 1st annual car show on May 21. We had a great mix of autos, and everyone went home a winner!

**All are welcome to our next fun event:**



**JULY 15  
SATURDAY 7:00PM  
BOCCE BALL IN THE PARK**

Event sponsored by Beth Chaim  
Brotherhood and open to all adults

BYO Dinner  
& Drinks.  
Dessert will  
be provided

Location: Sycamore Park (opposite Beth Chaim)



## Chavurot at Beth Chaim Congregation

We currently have over 100 members connected through six active Chavurah groups. If you are looking to join a Chavurah group, please contact Debbie Roof at [debbie.roof@yahoo.com](mailto:debbie.roof@yahoo.com)



*\*chavurah* - a small group of friends who get together to socialize, celebrate and have fun. Joining a *chavurah* enriches your experience as members of Beth Chaim, through meaningful relationships and positive connections.

## Membership

“... Community - in the fullest sense: a place and all its creatures - is the smallest unit of health” – Wendell Berry

### Welcome New Members!

by Debbie Roof, Director, Membership



Since our last Star newsletter in May/June 2023, we have had more new members join Beth Chaim! Many factors, including our decision to be part of the Union for Reform Judaism, has created more interest and inquiries from local families

about joining Beth Chaim. The Union for Reform Judaism leads the largest Jewish movement in North America. Let's all continue to spread the word in our community, that Beth Chaim is now a Reform congregation.

The following families are new members who have recently joined Beth Chaim. When you see them at a Friday night service, religious school in the fall, and at Beth Chaim community events, please welcome:

**Lindsay & David Van der Bokke, and their son Logan (5)**

**Mally & Bob Netter**

**Tiffani & Joshua Doughtie, and their children Jaxson (6), Scarlett (3) and Blakely (5 months)**

**Todd & Cara Ostomel, and their children Barton (7) and Judah (5)**

Here is some interesting information about new members Lindsay, David and Logan Van der Bokke:

**Beth Chaim:** Tell us about your family:

**Lindsay:** My husband David went to Monte Vista High School and lived in Alamo. He attended UC Santa Cruz where he studied Engineering and is now an engineer at Google. I grew up in the Auburn area; my parents still live in Grass Valley. I came to the Bay Area to go to nursing school at USF. I have been a nurse for 15 years now.

Our son Logan will be starting kindergarten at Green Valley in the fall, and religious school at Beth Chaim. He will have soccer on Saturdays, and religious school on Sundays in September. Logan has been going to Tree of Life for preschool since he was three. We live in the Hidden Valley neighborhood in Danville.

**Beth Chaim:** How did you and David meet?

**Lindsay:** We met through my husband's best friend from high school. His best friend's wife is one of my best friends. I met her when I worked at Stanford Hospital for ten years. They set me and David up on a double date, where they invited each of us individually to join them for a weekend in Tahoe. We instantly hit it off, and realized we lived only a mile away from each other at that time, in Campbell, so it was easy to continue to see one another. Our friends were sneaky, fixing us up that way, but it worked out great! We dated about two years before we got married in the fall of 2016. We had a wonderful Reform Jewish wedding in Pleasanton, with a Rabbi, a Chupah, lots of yarmulkes, etc.!

**Beth Chaim:** Where did you both grow up?

**Lindsay:** David was born in Marlboro, New Jersey, and lived there up until high school. He was raised Jewish and had a Bar Mitzvah at Temple Rodeph Torah in Marlboro. His father's job brought his family to Alamo. I was raised Catholic, in Grass Valley, but I have been doing as much as I can to be a part of the Jewish faith. Before we were engaged or had children, I promised my father-in-law that if we had a son, he would have a Bar Mitzvah.



**Beth Chaim:** What hobbies, sports or activities do you like to do as a family?

**Lindsay:** We love to go to museums, and all the parks around here. Logan's favorite park is Rancho San Ramon. Another one of his favorites is Sycamore Valley Park – he calls it the biggest bigger park ever! We go there the most. We also like to ride bikes into downtown Danville. My husband rides his bike up and down Mt. Diablo all the time.

Our favorite place to travel to is Lake Tahoe. We have a cabin in Tahoe that we go to every summer and winter, usually with our best friends who introduced us. Last winter we went tubing at Stateline.

We also like to go to Balboa Island in Orange County. My great-great grandfather had a house there that we now own together. We meet there once a year as a family – all 25 of us.

My parents live on seven acres in Grass Valley, which is like a farm. My Dad does jeeping and is a member of the Auburn Jeep Club. Logan likes to ride the tractor with my Mom, and go in the jeep with my Dad, who he calls PopPop. We visit them often.

**Beth Chaim:** How did you choose Beth Chaim?

**Lindsay:** For the last three years I have been a Clinical Nurse Case Manager at Guided Health Care, working with Laura Benn and Zoe. Laura Benn mentioned that she was a member of Beth Chaim. When we moved to Danville from Campbell in Oct. 2020, I was looking for a preschool for Logan, so I signed him up at Tree of Life. Then I quickly met Lara Groch at Tree of Life, who signed us up for PJ Library, Torah Tots at Beth Chaim, etc. Her son Levi and my son Logan are very close friends and are excited to start going to religious school together at Beth Chaim this fall.

Rabbi Dan has made us feel so welcome, and his presence gives me a feeling of calm. It's such a blessing to be a member of Beth Chaim, which has brought our family community and friendship.

**Beth Chaim:** What are you looking forward to at Beth Chaim?

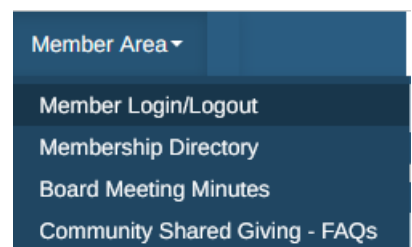
**Lindsay:** As soon as we joined Beth Chaim, we started getting involved with the Young Family Chavurah. From Tree of Life, we already have many friends at Beth Chaim. I am very artsy, and we are looking forward to having the kids play together and have play dates. That is going to be fun.



### How do I get a Beth Chaim Membership Directory?

Did you know that Beth Chaim has a Membership Directory? You can find contact information for your Beth Chaim friends! Available only to members, take the following steps to access the directory:

1. Go to the Beth Chaim website home page <https://www.bethchaim.com/>
2. Click on "Member Area" on the right side of the top navigation bar
3. Click on "Member Login/Logout". Please log in to access members-only content. If you don't have a login, click the "Don't Have An Account?" link to register. Note that only BCC members will be allowed to register and your name will be checked against the membership rolls. It may take several days to receive your login.
4. Once you have logged in you will be able to click on "Membership Directory" and download a pdf. The Directory is updated regularly.



## Social Action | Tikkun Olam

*"The greatest religious problem today is how to be both a mystic and a militant; in other words how to combine the search for an expansion of inner awareness with effective social action, and how to feel one's true identity in both."*

Ursula K. Le Guin

by Naomi Ehrlich, Director, Tikkun Olam



On May 7th, along with volunteers from Pleasanton Islamic Center, Hillcrest Church & First Christian Church, and ICARE Contra Costa Interfaith Council, our volunteers assembled 250

toiletry kits for Monument Crisis Center & Crossroads High School. A huge thank you to all who gave to this great cause! Thank you for your continued support for BCC's Tikkun Olam!

Our final spring Tikkun Olam project was on May 11th...thank you to our BCC donors for providing our community dinner for Garden Park Apts/Hope Solutions and a special shout to Laura and Barry Denenberg for the amazing desserts and to Grace Munoz! Thank you to my dedicated donors and servers, Trish Patricia Harley Slomowitz & son #2, Matt Ehrlich! It takes a village!



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## Milestones

*"In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or step back into safety."*

- Abraham Maslow

### Wedding Anniversaries

| Names                       | Date    | Years | Names                               | Date      | Years |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Matt & Marissa Gillette     | July 1  | 16    | Jerry & Laura Raney                 | August 5  | 33    |
| Michael & Sarah Karatov     | July 1  | 22    | Stacey & Seth Blackman              | August 6  | 18    |
| Mitchell & Jeannene Hertz   | July 2  | 28    | Ray & Susan Cherry                  | August 8  | 52    |
| Grace & Carlos Munoz        | July 3  | 29    | Bradley & Judith Colton             | August 8  | 47    |
| Josh & Tiffani Doughtie     | July 4  | 9     | Mark Shuster & Sofia Rahman         | August 8  | 3     |
| Rae & Jonathan Corr         | July 4  | 30    | Yoel & Julie Cohen                  | August 10 | 20    |
| Randall & Lisa Gross        | July 4  | 29    | Melissa & David Mann                | August 11 | 16    |
| Gregory & Kristen Heiden    | July 8  | 17    | Adam & Kelly Holden                 | August 13 | 28    |
| Sara Goldstein              | July 8  | 33    | Jeff & Heidi Becker                 | August 13 | 40    |
| Gene & Sarah Simpson        | July 10 | 13    | Yael & Yaniv Benaroya               | August 14 | 15    |
| Larry & Barbra Candeub      | July 11 | 31    | Dave & Kimberly Kamalman            | August 15 | 25    |
| Sanford & Joy Severin       | July 13 | 66    | Bobbi & Marty Bach                  | August 19 | 61    |
| Michael & Marlene Stelowitz | July 16 | 56    | Yana Greenstein & Boris Yankilovich | August 20 | 17    |
| Tony & Michelle Erlick      | July 16 | 34    | Hayuta & Maheesh Jain               | August 23 | 26    |
| Craig & Debbie Hertz        | July 18 | 31    | Craig & Melissa Rosenblatt          | August 27 | 17    |
| Glenn & Julie Sulzberg      | July 26 | 26    | Joe & Michelle Gabriel              | August 27 | 62    |
| Scott & Courtney Finder     | July 28 | 22    | Emily Bach & Thomas Moglia          | August 29 | 25    |
| David & Melinda Bandler     | July 29 | 34    |                                     |           |       |

### Membership Anniversaries

| Names                          | Years | Names                          | Years |
|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Alan & Kathleen Vengel         | 29    | Sanford & Joy Severin          | 10    |
| Michael & Mindy Murphy         | 27    | Harry & Judy Levin             | 9     |
| John Goldstein                 | 26    | Debbie & Richard Roof          | 8     |
| Jeff Reitzes                   | 25    | Tim & Keren Carter             | 8     |
| Brad & Rachel Goldblatt        | 23    | Scott & Courtney Finder        | 8     |
| Susan Friedman                 | 23    | Rabbi Pam Frydman              | 8     |
| Rob & Stacy Kadesh             | 23    | Karen & Phil Grenetz           | 8     |
| Marc Mazer & Susan Talon-Mazer | 23    | Adam Rubinfeld                 | 8     |
| Dave & Debbie Rosenberg        | 23    | Linda Engelman                 | 7     |
| John & Delia Verber            | 23    | Samantha & Brian Hanlon        | 7     |
| Peter & Vickie Eiges           | 22    | Mark Hopkins & Chrissy Wolfman | 6     |
| Janice Frankel                 | 22    | Sara & Dan Welch               | 6     |
| Savyon Plumb                   | 22    | Ashley & Adam Heller           | 6     |
| Heidi Levine                   | 20    | Leila Naslavsky & Kleber Sales | 6     |
| Burt Feldstein & Lynne Gross   | 18    | Damon Thornburg                | 6     |
| Ellen Severson                 | 17    | Sandi Morris                   | 5     |
| Elliot & Lisa Bloom            | 16    | Lara Groch & Jeremy Wall       | 5     |
| Brian & Morna Gersho           | 16    | James Sorhagen & Jean Lee      | 4     |
| Arie & Kelley Cohen            | 13    | Bradley & Judith Colton        | 4     |
| Lauren Herbstman               | 11    | Jane Sondel                    | 2     |
| Audra & Frederick Saul         | 11    | Mark Shuster & Sofia Rahman    | 2     |
| Bonnie & Keith Brors           | 10    | Marla & Zach Levy              | 1     |
|                                |       | Kofi & Kathryn Inkabi          | 1     |

## Milestones, cont'd

### Children's Birthdays

| Name                 | Birthday  | Age |
|----------------------|-----------|-----|
| Logan Van der Bokke  | July 1    | 5   |
| Chase Hall-Pinner    | July 6    | 13  |
| Adelah Shuster       | July 6    | 7   |
| Max Eisenberg        | July 13   | 12  |
| Maddox Fisher        | July 13   | 14  |
| Madeleine Becker     | July 15   | 16  |
| Levi Wall            | July 20   | 5   |
| Nathan Benaroya      | July 22   | 8   |
| Zoe Karatov          | July 25   | 11  |
| Gabriella Battermann | July 26   | 13  |
| Jack Heller          | August 4  | 11  |
| Riley Sacks          | August 7  | 18  |
| Arielle Benaroya     | August 7  | 14  |
| Hannah Binder        | August 8  | 17  |
| Noah Shapiro         | August 9  | 10  |
| Naomi Jain           | August 21 | 11  |
| Liza Corr            | August 25 | 18  |
| Gabriel Kolis        | August 25 | 16  |
| Orion Rhodes         | August 28 | 9   |
| Milo Gillette        | August 29 | 12  |

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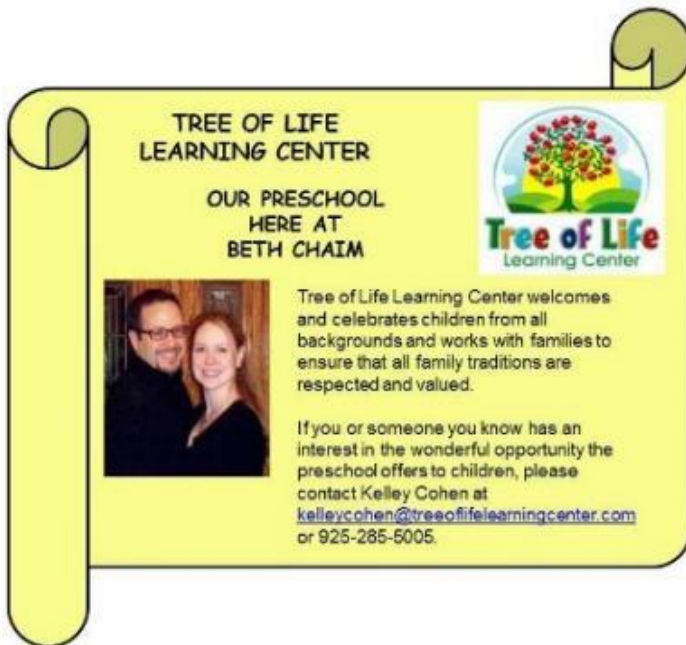
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## Education

*T'lamed Ve'Tilamed (You shall teach and you shall learn)*



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Tree of Life Learning Center welcomes and celebrates children from all backgrounds and works with families to ensure that all family traditions are respected and valued.


If you or someone you know has an interest in the wonderful opportunity the preschool offers to children, please contact Kelley Cohen at [kelleycohen@treeoflifelearningcenter.com](mailto:kelleycohen@treeoflifelearningcenter.com) or 925-285-5005.

Tree of Life Learning Center is a private, family-owned, developmentally based Jewish preschool, offering full-day, part-day, and school-day programs for children ages 2 – 5 years-old.


Director: Kelley Cohen

[kelleycohen@treeoflifelearningcenter.com](mailto:kelleycohen@treeoflifelearningcenter.com)


*Torah Tots and Tot Shabbat will resume in October!*



Join PJ Library Parent Connector **Ema Lara** and music leader Tkiya at Beth Chaim Congregation. For anyone with little ones ages 0-5!



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BCC is proud of its religious school program serving pre-school through high school. We offer Torah Tots, Sunday School for ages 5+, B'nei Mitzvah Program, Madrichim Program, and a robust teen program in partnership with Contra Costa Midrasha.

[Grades K-7](#)



Shelby Margolin  
Principal, Beit Midrash

Summertime at our Beit Midrash has a very different energy than the school year. While I miss seeing all of our kiddos, I have the time to have conversations with each individual family to talk about their school experience over the past year. I love hearing sweet stories of connection and

learning, and I appreciate hearing about places where we can improve our program. I'm especially grateful for feedback this year as we are planning to do a full-scale curriculum revamp built from the strength of what our teachers are already doing! Our family "visioning" session on the last day of Sunday School was incredibly fruitful, and the phone calls are validating the main takeaways from that session. I am excited to build a cohesive curriculum that is responsive to what our families are yearning for.

Speaking of planning, we are also holding our **3rd annual Summer Sing Out on Friday, August 25th!** Please mark your calendars for this fun event filled with community, singing and some of our favorite Shabbat rituals. Rana Rines, our beloved music director, will bring the beautiful, camp-like music, so I need all of Beth Chaim there to bring the *Ruach!* Be on the lookout for more information about the Sing Out, along with new offerings for Tot Programs and High Holy Day Services options.

With Love and Gratitude,

Morah Shelby Meyer Margolin  
Principal, Beth Chaim Beit Midrash



## Religious School

# Registration Open

For 2023-2024 school year  
Online Registration: [Click Here](#)  
<https://bit.ly/BeitMidrashReg>

Questions? Contact Alex at [schooladmin@bethchaim.com](mailto:schooladmin@bethchaim.com)



Contra Costa Midrasha functions as Beth Chaim's teen program, and Beth Chaim makes an annual per student contribution to augment the tuition and retreat fees of Midrasha.

## Grades 8-12

By Devra C. Aarons, Executive Director, CCM

We have two pieces of AMAZING news to share!

1. Contra Costa Midrasha is one of fifteen organizations to be in the 2023 national cohort of the "**Scientists in Synagogues**" grant! With it, **we are creating a series of workshops in 2023-24 for parents, teens, educators and community members to learn about the neuroscience of teen brain development.** Scroll down to learn more!
2. **Our Summer 2023 Mifgash program has new pricing options!** We've lowered the full program price to \$995 and added daily and mini-package options. Ready to check them out now? Visit our **Mifgash registration page!**

Finally, **Registration for 2023-24 is still open!** Sign up today to guarantee your chance to be a part of this brand-new initiative so we can all learn more about how the teen brain operates.

As we start to settle into our summer schedules, things are still quite busy for us at Midrasha as we plan for both our upcoming Mifgash adventures and Fall programming. That said, it's a great time for us to both look back at what we accomplished last year as we look forward to what we want to build in the future. Midrasha's 2022-23 year marked our 36th year, with a return to full programming with our community's teens.

Not only did we exceed pre-pandemic enrollment numbers, we also:

- Brought back our Mifgash Israeli and American exchange program.
- Hosted three full retreat/Shabbat weekends with three partners.
- Engaged our teens in numerous Tikkun Olam (repair the world) activities.

Looking forward - we are excited to :

- Help our teens make new connections to Israel through a larger Mifgash program this August,
- Continue growing our Be the Change programs.
- Launch new community programming through our Scientists in Synagogues grant.



Devra Aarons,  
CCM Director

As always, spread the love about Contra Costa Midrasha! Let the teens in your life know about Midrasha and our myriad of programs. Schedule a time to talk with our Director, [Devra Aarons](#) or check out our website at [ccmidrasha.com](http://ccmidrasha.com). There's something for every teen!

## Yahrzeits

### Zichronam L'vracha – May Their Memories be a Blessing

| Name                | Date   | Observed By          | Relationship          |
|---------------------|--------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Jean Levin          | Jul 2  | Sheila Kaplan        | Mother of Sheila      |
| Thomas E. Day Jr.   | Jul 3  | Mary & Tom Day       | Son of Mary and Tom   |
| Jack Zuckerberg     | Jul 7  | Janice Frankel       | Father of Janice      |
| Donna Perry Orr     | Jul 8  | Aaron Stagg          | Mother of Aaron       |
| Donald Morris       | Jul 9  | Sandi Morris         | Husband of Sandi      |
| Muriel Jencks       | Jul 9  | Tanya James          | Mother of Tanya       |
| Charlotte Hyman     | Jul 13 | William Katz         | Mother of Lynn Katz   |
| Robert Mueller      | Jul 13 | Jeffrey Mueller      | Father of Jeffrey     |
| Steve Chazin        | Jul 14 | David Chazin         | Father of David       |
| Rose Lederman       | Jul 15 | Herb Lederman        | Mother of Herb        |
| Frances Klein       | Jul 15 | Sally Klein          | Mother of Art Klein   |
| Jeannette Kandel    | Jul 17 | Sandi Morris         | Mother of Sandi       |
| Marilyn Taylor      | Jul 17 | Kelly Holden         | Mother of Kelly       |
| Susan Kolis         | Jul 17 | Michael Kolis        | Mother of Michael     |
| Morris Pearlman     | Jul 26 | Bonnie Brors         | Father of Bonnie      |
| Steven Corr         | Jul 26 | Jonathan Corr        | Father of Jonathan    |
| Rhoda Seltzer       | Jul 26 | David Seltzer        | Mother of David       |
| Mary Harley         | Jul 26 | Trish Slomowitz      | Mother of Trish       |
| William Levine      | Jul 27 | Heidi Levine         | Brother of Heidi      |
| Michael Prince      | Jul 31 | Stephanie Abramowitz | Father of Stephanie   |
| Marcia Amada        | Aug 2  | Naomi Ehrlich        | Mother of Naomi       |
| Anita Dodge         | Aug 3  | Lisa Goldberg        | Mother of Lisa        |
| Jack Portnoy        | Aug 4  | Joy Severin          | Father of Joy         |
| Estelle Yamshon     | Aug 7  | Paul Yamshon         | Mother of Paul        |
| Tecca Blankfeld     | Aug 8  | Deborah Blankfeld    | Mother of Deborah     |
| Raney Stanford      | Aug 10 | Morna Gersho         | Father of Morna       |
| Barton Heller       | Aug 10 | Scott Heller         | Father of Scott       |
| Pearl Siegal        | Aug 11 | Bobbi Bernstein      | Mother of Bobbi       |
| Norma Ciabilli      | Aug 15 | Serena Piazza        | Mother of Serena      |
| Milton Levin        | Aug 16 | Sheila Kaplan        | Step-father of Sheila |
| Minnie Pearlman     | Aug 17 | Bonnie Brors         | Mother of Bonnie      |
| Craig Perlmuth      | Aug 17 | Vickie Eiges         | Brother of Vickie     |
| Ilene Hoffman       | Aug 17 | Michelle Gabriel     | Sister of Michelle    |
| Michael Sondel      | Aug 22 | Jane Sondel          | Husband of Jane       |
| Gerry Creighton     | Aug 22 | Robyn Mizes          | Mother of Robyn       |
| Ruth Kasper         | Aug 22 | Denise Zavaleta      | Mother of Denise      |
| John Abraham Sandor | Aug 23 | Janet Freiman        | Father of Janet       |
| Muriel James        | Aug 26 | Donald James         | Mother of Donald      |
| John Mulrooney      | Aug 27 | Lisa Gross           | Father of Lisa        |
| Jack Katz           | Aug 28 | William Katz         | Brother of William    |
| Ralph Sacks         | Aug 29 | Andy Sacks           | Father of Andy        |
| Sally Goldberg      | Aug 30 | Martin Goldberg      | Mother of Martin      |
| Judy Robbins        | Aug 30 | Martin Goldberg      | Sister of Marty       |
| Harold Davidson     | Aug 31 | Darrell Davidson     | Father of Darrell     |

## Marketplace

Classified ads are free for Beth Chaim members. There is a nominal annual charge of \$30 for a seven-line insertion for non-members. If you would like to place an ad, call the Beth Chaim office at 925-736-7146, or send an email to [admin@bethchaim.com](mailto:admin@bethchaim.com).

The inclusion of any advertisement in this publication — including classifieds — or reference to any product, process, service, trade name, trademark, or manufacturer, is not an endorsement by Beth Chaim Congregation of any such advertisers, entities, persons, products, services, names or marks.

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**BAR/BAT MITZVAH VIDEOGRAPHER.** Recent graduate of the Art Institute of San Francisco Brian Hanlon is partnering with his wife and longtime BCC member and Hebrew School teacher Samantha Waxman to record your service or party. Contact us at [samanthabhanlon@gmail.com](mailto:samanthabhanlon@gmail.com) or [hanlon86@yahoo.com](mailto:hanlon86@yahoo.com).

**ACTIVITY THERAPIST.** Do you have a loved one living with MCI, or Alzheimer's or other dementia? Do you have a loved one living with a terminal diagnosis? We provide 1 to 1 ongoing support for people in need in Contra Costa County. 10+ years experience connecting with elders through music, art, spiritual care, emotional support and help with end-of-life planning. Contact Z\*O\*E Activity Therapies (510) 926-4329, [zoe@activitytherapies.org](mailto:zoe@activitytherapies.org); [www.activitytherapies.org](http://www.activitytherapies.org).

**"SPECIAL FOR SHABBAT"** is written by long time professional writer and Beth Chaim member, Michelle Gabriel. The book follows the story of a little girl who finds meaning in Shabbat and challah when she discovers the beauty of both, especially for the challah that was baked special for Shabbat. A sweet story with engaging illustrations for young children. [mjgwrites@yahoo.com](mailto:mjgwrites@yahoo.com) or [mjgpress.com](http://mjgpress.com)



**"ARI'S JOURNEY"** a novel by late Beth Chaim member Norman Binger, is now available on Amazon.com, including as a Kindle book. Ari Cohen, an Israeli Police officer, embarks on a perilous journey to save his son from terrorists. On his odyssey he meets friends and enemies, both Palestinian and Israeli, and encounters a long-lost love.

**MEMORY ALBUMS.** Do you need help organizing your photos? Would you like to preserve your family memories so they can be passed on to your children and their children? Whether it's baby's first year, B'nei Mitzvah, graduation, weddings, special vacations, and more, I can preserve these memories for you or teach you how to do it. Call Melinda Bandler on 829-0782, or e-mail [mhandler@pacbell.net](mailto:mhandler@pacbell.net), for a free 1-hour consultation.

**CUSTOM QUILTS.** One-of-a kind gifts of Jewish art. Great for B'nei Mitzvah graduation, anniversary, and wedding gifts. A letter of the Aleph Bet or Star of David quilted wall hanging, blanket, or chuppah that will last from generation to generation. Examples of each can be seen at BCC or my art studio. Choose your favorite colors or I can help you decide. Letters are \$324 for 28" x 31." Stars are \$486 approx. 55" x 59". \$54 will be donated to BCC for each piece purchased. Contact Barb Carpenter via email: [RenaZimmermanDesigns@gmail.com](mailto:RenaZimmermanDesigns@gmail.com) or 925-838-8371. <http://www.renazimmermandesigns.com>.

## Beth Chaim Board of Directors, 2023

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