



# The STAR (light!)

A Temple Beth Torah Newsletter  
Late Fall 2025:  
Kislev 5786



Temple Beth Torah  
130 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT

You and your family are cordially invited to a  
Chanukah Lunch  
December 21, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.



The event will be mostly kosher-catered by  
Yosi, featuring their famous latkes.

There will be candle lighting, sing-alongs,  
dreidels, story sharing and more!

The cost is \$25 per participant.

RSVP to [TBT.w.ct@gmail.com](mailto:TBT.w.ct@gmail.com) before Dec. 14

*Other menu items include:*

*Egg Salad*

*Tuna Salad*

*Assorted Bagels and spreads*

*Israeli Chopped Vegetable Salad*

*Special Dessert*

*And did we say latkes?!*

*Of course we did!!!*

*With all our favorite toppings?!*

*Yes, don't be silly!!!*

*Family and friends are all*

*welcome – invite them!*

*Don't forget to RSVP*

# Rabbi Alan's Message...

## Bubbemeisers, Oldwives tales and Superstitions

I am very often asked about witchcraft and superstitions, and what does Judaism have to say about that. In light of the Harry Potter phenomenon of the past 20 years, here are some thoughts to ponder.

Witchcraft, like idolatry, is condemned in the Torah. Sorcery and communications with evil spirits is likewise prohibited, as it is taken from paganism and not in accord with the belief in One God. Maimonides said, "That those who follow and practice superstitions are false and deceptive, and those who follow them are fools."

As for the number "13" Judaism does not subscribe to the notion of unlucky numbers; nor do we "cross our fingers" or "cross my heart," as crossing refers to the 'cross!'

How often do we use the term "knock on wood?" Knocking on wood, while some jokingly hit their heads, is a cultural habit, or at least it seems so. While in the course of conversation, "knock on wood" refers to 'something that has gone well.' However, "knocking on wood" is untenable as a Jewish expression. The idea of touching wood is related to the wooden cross, where the cross brings good luck. It is Christian in origin, not Jewish.

**Continued next slide**

## Rabbi Alan's Message... cont'd.

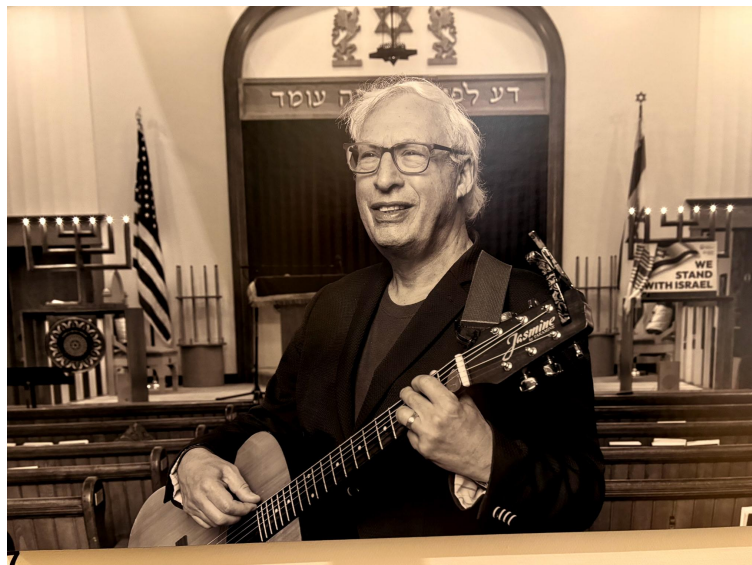
Many Yiddish speakers use the expression “poo poo” as their way of hoping that everything will be fine. Jews are best off using the phrase “bli ayin hara” (without an evil eye); expressing the desire that no one will cast an evil eye when things have gone well.

We have all grown up with all kinds of superstitions. Do you still believe in Santa Claus? What are your superstitions? Someone recently told me that they come to the synagogue on the High Holy Days, just in case; whatever that means.

We would like to collect a list of the many old wives tales and superstitions. Email or send them in. We will send out the compiled list (with names withheld if you desire) for your reading pleasure. If you do not, do you know what will happen?

Wishing you a Shana Tova ezrachi, A Happy secular New Year!

Rabbi Alan





# Many Thanks to Our Holiday Card Fundraiser Supporters!!



Marc Chagall, The Shofar

MAY YOUR NEW YEAR  
BE HAPPY, HEALTHY  
AND SWEET !

L'SHANA TOVAH  
FROM THE  
TEMPLE BETH  
TORAH FAMILY

## *L'Shana Tova Tikateva A Happy Healthy New Year*

Rabbi Alan and Jody Lefkowitz

Alice Burstein and Family

Valerie Carpenter and Evelyne Carpenter

Ingrid F. Chorchos

Debbie Ehrlich

Feltman Family

Carol Ann Gershenson

Judy and Marty Gold;  
Monica, Lee, Jack and Adam Gold;  
Deborah, Aaron, Ryan and Zachary Jainchill

Deb and Joe Hammer; Sam and Lily

Maureen Horowitz;  
Hannah Horowitz, Cristi and Diana Proistosescu

Karen and Bob Klein and Family

Levine-Rosenblatt Family

Rhoda and Fred London;  
Inna, David, Sam, Jack and Jonah

Kathi and Eliot Mag;  
Saul, Bela and Gracen;  
Leslie, Chris, Jack and Ben Poland

Ellen Sue Moses and Mark A. Gould

Rita and Harold Nevins

Helene Rosenblatt

Sallyanne and Barry Scott;  
Todd, Lindsay and Tenley  
Aaron and Ilana

Helene Shapiro



**Newest Members Charlotte and Philip Block  
(grandparents of Lilly!)**

# A Message from the Co-presidents...

And the survey says... Feedback on the High Holiday Machzor (prayerbook) used for the first time this year was quite positive. Thanks to those who took the time to respond! Based on your responses re our timing for Winter services, the Board made the decision to stay with the 7:00 p.m. start time (other than special events). We like that folks stick around to socialize over our dessert-style Onegs! The concern with starting earlier is that people will rush out after the service with hunger pangs for dinner, and we'll lose our schmooze! Also, the earlier time may present difficulties for those who work or travel from a distance.

- We continue to refine options for a new entry ramp or lift at the Social Hall entrance to TBT.
- We are also looking at refinishing the Social Hall floors and freshening the look of that space with new paint.
- We urge you to PLEASE be mindful of making the best use of our Yale digital lock, and be sure to flip the deadbolt after entering the building, and press the "YALE" button on the keypad after you depart to engage the lock. THANK YOU!

*Happy Hanukkah and New Year! ~ David and Debra*



# **A fun evening in the Sukkah for Kiddush and Shakes of the Lulav and Etrog!**

**More on next page...**

**[Thanks again to the Evans  
Family for Sukkah  
construction, and  
Anderson Farms for our  
corn stalks!]**







**Just as dusk  
was falling... a  
quick lesson in  
“the shake” by  
Rabbi Alan!  
Following  
kiddush, we  
gathered inside  
for a community  
BYODinner.**





Through the High Holiday weeks, many of you generously donated non-perishable foods and other household supplies to be donated to the Wethersfield Food Bank. With changes in SNAP distributions this fall, these donations were more important than ever! The two Debs were pleased to deliver 3 overflowing shopping carts of goods to the Food Bank!



Rabbi Alan was once again invited to offer the Benediction at the Inaugural Ceremony for the newly installed Town Council on November 11th. He was one of 3 religious leaders participating - pastor, imam and rabbi.

Fun fact, 4 of the 9-member Wethersfield Town Council happen to be Jewish!

## New Council Is Sworn In Lesser Re-Elected Mayor

By Joan Hunt  
Staff Writer

WETHERSFIELD - Last Monday, the new Town Council was sworn in and chose its mayor and deputy mayor for the next two years.

There were no surprises, as the top two vote-getters typically become mayor and deputy mayor respectively, but it was also an opportunity to thank the voters, welcome the winners and commend one another for the good work that always transcends from one council to another.

Aiding in the ceremony were religious leaders Rev. Elizabeth Cummings of St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dr. Reza Mansoor, cardiologist and president of the Muslim Coalition of CT, and Rabbi Alan Lefkowitz of Temple Beth Torah.

Rev. Cummings thanked God for His guidance and asked Him to bless the fruits of the Town Council's work. Dr. Mansoor greeted the group with the Islamic greeting God's peace be with you all, noting that we are called upon to serve our neighbor as ourselves and to love our creator and sustainer with all our hearts.

After the new council was sworn in, Councilor Miki Duric nominated Ken Lesser as mayor, seconded by newly-elected Councilor Ken Wein-

et. "Over the years, we have all seen Ken donate countless hours to improving our town, from supporting local businesses and community programs to listening with compassion to the concerns of every resident. Ken understands that our town's strength lies in its people," said Duric.

Weiner added that nobody lives the title of mayor like Lesser does. He was elected unanimously for another term.

Councilor Matthew Forrest nominated Councilor Jane Roets to become deputy mayor, the position that he had filled in the previous council, noting her kindness, her openness and her steady presence on the council. "But what truly defines her is the way she brings people together" he said. Her nomination was seconded by new Councilor Scott Wands.

"To have the confidence of both the voters as

well as my colleagues is truly humbling," Roets said of her unanimous acceptance.

"I love this job, and I love this town," Mayor Lesser said. He shared a story about two boys ages six and nine that he met when he was campaigning door-to-door this fall. They were inspired by the Scarecrows on Main and suggested to Lesser that Old Wethersfield might want to try a Snowmen on Main-themed event in the future.

"We put them on a committee with me and the town manager," Lesser recalled, "and they brought us a power point on this idea. Great ideas can come from any age," he said.

Rabbi Lefkowitz gave the benediction, which included a story about a man who spent all of his time studying the Torah and was failing to do the only thing his wife expected of him, which was to take out the garbage. An argument ensued, and they went to their rabbi to settle it, but he told them to go home and wait for his answer.

"It was a stormy night, but suddenly there was a knock on the door. The husband opened the door, and there stood the rabbi," he said. "The husband asked him why he was there. I'm here to take out your garbage, the rabbi said."

Rabbi Lefkowitz charged the Council that, "The true sign of greatness is someone who is not too great for anything."

### Coffee Social For Solo Aged

NEWINGTON - Solo Ageds Connect will hold a coffee social for those over 50 aging alone on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. at The Community Room Cafe, 39 East Cedar St.

The group provides an opportunity for solo ageds to get together for coffee and conversation with other solos in the area.

Registration is appreciated. Register online at <https://soloagersconnect.com/events> or call 860-930-3253.





Our November  
12th Adult  
Education speaker,  
**Lauren Malicki.**  
See more on the  
next page!

Approximately 35 people attended this fascinating and informative presentation. Attendees included folks from the congregation, our friends and invited guests and the greater Wethersfield community, including our newly elected Mayor, Ken Lesser!



and 24 months.

Though some studies suggest that lead poisoning affects a disproportionate number of lower income households that may be unable to

their homes can contact the Connecticut Department of Public Health for further details.

For more information, go to: <https://www.epa.gov/lead>

## Local Teacher To Share Research on Holocaust

WETHERSFIELD - On Wednesday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m., Temple Beth Torah will welcome Wethersfield resident Lauren Malicki as a special guest presenter. As a Middle School teacher in Newington responsible for lessons including Europe and the Holocaust, Malicki wished to dig deeper and expand her knowledge. A successful grant application landed her in Denmark for a

two-week bicycle tour that turned into an amazing exploration of lived history, and heroic stories of how the people of Denmark stood up to help the Jews of their community hide and escape Nazi persecution.

Temple Beth Torah is located at 130 Main St. Registration by email for this event is required. This is a free program. [TBT.W.CT@gmail.com](mailto:TBT.W.CT@gmail.com)

## AOH November Thanksgiving Food Drive

The Ancient Order of Hibernians Hartford Division 2 is sponsoring a Thanksgiving Food Drive

meal.

Please bring Thanksgiving non-perishable



# Erev Shabbat with Members of Rekindle

Photo by Helene Shapiro



Rekindle's mission is to drive meaningful social change by fostering collaboration between Black and Jewish leaders. Bob Rader and Jody Lefkowitz are actively involved with this organization, and invited their cohort to TBT for a Shabbat evening followed by discussion and Q&A. Thank you both for organizing this special evening!



# Several members of Rekindle and our Oneg Hostess with the “Mostess” ~ Megan Rader!

Photo by Helene Shapiro



# Donations to TBT, gratefully received

In MEMORY of NORMA FINE, mother of Lisa Fine, dear friend of Helene Shapiro

Helene Shapiro

Stuart and Jenny Rabinowitz

Robert Kennedy

Debra and Joe Hammer

In MEMORY of STANLEY ROSENBLATT

Helene Rosenblatt

In HONOR of the birth of MILA ROSE, granddaughter of Sallyanne and Barry Scott

Debra and Joe Hammer



# SHOPPING CARDS FUNDRAISER!

Thanks to Judy Gold for organizing our grocery cards fundraiser!  
Each card purchased pays a percentage donation back to Temple  
Beth Torah. We appreciate the following shoppers:

Donna and David Forrest  
Jody and Rabbi Alan Lefkowitz  
Judy and Marty Gold  
Janet and Joe Rosenblatt  
Elyse and Steven Feltman  
Sallyanne and Barry Scott

**TBT received \$180 from the participating  
grocery stores because of all of you!**





Seems like  
just yesterday  
that it was  
autumn in Old  
Wethersfield...

Stay warm,  
stay safe!  
Happy  
Holidays!

