

Temple Beth El Bulletin

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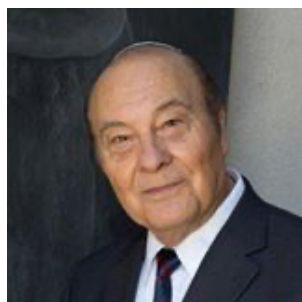
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Rabbi's Message ~ Dov Gottesfeld

Shalom to all:

Writing comes naturally to me, even though I am still having issues with the English grammar. Yet, what to write about is a genuine hardship for me. Why is that? Because there are so many topics, and serious issues on the planet earth, (and with religions) which require public responses and involvement, and it is always challenging for me to sort them out, scrutinize them, and prioritize them, since their majority have also to do with politics. Yes, mixing Politics and Religion is not kosher (acceptable) in the synagogue. Yet, I feel that my obligation is to get involved as a human being among the family of humans on the planet earth, who have chosen to become clergy.

So how can I, and for that matter any Rabbi or clergyman can get involved, while maintaining the separation of Church and State?



Dov Gottesfeld

The answer is given in the Torah portion "Pikudei", which consists of the root in English to "command". The etymology (or the pictorial representation) of each individual letter represents the following: The letter 'P'(Peh) represents an open human mouth – which means 'speaking'. The letter 'K' (koof) represents a person standing. The 'D' (Dalet) represents a 'door', which means an entrance and an exit from privacy to community engagement.

In this particular case, the word was used in the Torah when Moses called the Israelite people to come out of their tents to assemble before him where he spoke about the essential details of the building of the Tabernacle, so that they would be knowledgeable about the dispersion of their donations in the building of God's Tabernacle. In other words, the Tabernacle project wouldn't have happened without their involvement (their donations and participation).

My take away from this Torah portion 'Pikudei' is that it is not my part to tell you what to do to 'survive' in the contemporary 'desert' of the 21st century, but to give you the 'tools' (i.e. knowledge

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March Schedule of Services:

March 1st Josué Medrano (7:30 PM)
March 8th Anita Friedman (7:30 PM)
March 15th Josué Medrano (7:30 PM)
March 22nd Josué Medrano (7:30 PM)
March 29th Diane Borad-Mirken (7:30 PM)

Educational Activities

Etz Chaim Children's Religious School 10 AM

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of survival), by examining and learning from our heritage (Torah) in the past and augmenting it to our present time.

Positive outcomes for co-existence in the world can only be achieved if we can gather to learn from the past – the good and the bad – so that we can build a better future.

On the Saturday before Purim, we will examine the Story of the Megillah during Torah Study, and make comparisons with the elements I presented in Pikudei.

Purim Same'ach.

Rabbi Dov Gottesfeld

TBE Board of Directors for 2023-2024

President: Frank Young

Vice President: Raúl Medina

Treasurer: Ron Levy

Executive Secretary: Open

Past President: Suzanne Levy

Brotherhood: Michael LeCover

Buildings & Grounds: Ken Wolf & Sid Goldstien

Education: Amber Medina

Membership: Josué Medrano

Acting Religious Practices Director: Anita Friedman

Sisterhood: Marsha Epstein

Ways & Means: Diane Borad-Mirken

Trees for Israel: Alyshia Brunk

Social Action Chair: David Goldstien

Sunshine Chair: Open

Rabbi: Dov Gottesfeld

Bulletin Editor: Leslie Epstein

Webmaster: Nakiah Burnes

President's Column – Frank Young



-Frank Young, president of TBE

JEWISH WAR HEROES

Jews have fought in every skirmish, battle, and war from the American Revolutionary War to the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Congressional Medal of Honor is awarded to American warriors for valor above and beyond the call of duty. The Medal is typically presented by the President of the United States of America in the name of Congress. It is awarded for outstanding heroism in battle.



Leonard Kravitz

The following is from the March 15, 2021 DOD News article by Katie Lange

In 1951, 20-year-old Army Pfc. Leonard Kravitz gave his life so his fellow soldiers wouldn't be overwhelmed on a Korean hillside. He initially earned the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions, but thanks to decades of work from a childhood friend, the award was recently upgraded to the Medal of Honor.

Kravitz was born Aug. 8, 1930, and grew up in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. His older brother, Seymour, served as a Marine during World War II, which may have been what inspired the younger Kravitz to enlist as war was breaking out once again during the summer of 1950.

After a few months of service, Kravitz was sent to Korea as part of Company M of the 5th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division.

On March 6, 1951, Kravitz's company was pinned down by Chinese troops on a hillside near Yangpyong, south of Seoul. Friendly forces were initially able to push back two probing attacks, but eventually, the enemy launched into what Kravitz's citation called a "fanatical banzai charge." Enemy fighters charged forward with heavy gunfire supporting them from behind.

Kravitz, who was an assistant machine gunner, watched as his lead machine gunner went down, so he quickly took charge of their weapon and raked the fighters rushing toward them.

Unfortunately, the Chinese fighters were able to breach a left flank, which left the friendly fighters no longer able to help Kravitz's men fight them off. The unit soon received orders to withdraw.

Kravitz volunteered to stay behind to cover the backs of the retreating men, even though he knew his chances of surviving weren't good. As more enemy soldiers pushed toward friendly positions, he blasted them all with heavy fire, killing the entire group. That led to the enemies directing all their fire at him, but it gave his comrades a chance to escape.

The next day, after friendly troops had retaken the area, Kravitz's body was found behind his gun, surrounded by enemy dead.

Kravitz's body was returned to the U.S. and he was buried in Knollwood Park Cemetery in Glendale, New York. Soon after, he was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second-highest award for valor, which his brother accepted on his behalf.

Righting a Wrong

While the Distinguished Service Cross is a big honor, it didn't sit well with Kravitz's childhood friend, Mitchel Libman, who was drafted into the Army in 1953 and arrived in Korea just as the ceasefire was signed. Libman thought Kravitz, who was Jewish, should have earned the Medal of Honor. Through research, he discovered that several minorities earned the Distinguished Service Cross when similar actions earned other men the nation's highest honor.

Concerned that Kravitz was a victim of institutional bias, Libman spent the next half-century campaigning to get his friend's medal upgraded. Eventually, he got help from a Florida congressman, who convinced Congress to consider a bill called the Leonard Kravitz Jewish War Veterans Act in 2001. It urged the Pentagon to review the Distinguished Service Cross awards previously given to Jewish Americans, as well as those who were Black and Hispanic.

The review was eventually set in motion. After a decade of investigating more than 6,000 cases from World War II, Korea and Vietnam, DOD officials concluded that 24 Jewish, Hispanic and Black men — including Kravitz — had been overlooked for the Medal of Honor.



On March 18, 2014 — more than 63 years after Kravitz's death — President Barack Obama held a White House ceremony honoring him and 23 other service members whose awards were upgraded to the Medal of Honor.

Unfortunately, Kravitz's older brother, Seymour, didn't live to see it. He died in 2005. Instead, Seymour's daughter, Laurie Wenger, received the award on her uncle's behalf. Kravitz's famous nephew and namesake, rock musician Lenny Kravitz, also attended the ceremony. Beforehand they talked about the honor of being named for a Medal of Honor recipient.

Post Script: Leonard's parents were Jean (Kaufman) and Joseph Kravitz. His older brother, Seymour, was a filmmaker and TV producer. Lenard's uncle was a popular musician, Lenny Kravitz.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

California Central Coast **YIDDISH BOOK DRIVE** is underway

A book drive on California's Central Coast to collect old Yiddish books is currently underway, David Goldstien, area spokesperson for the Yiddish Book Center announced. Local residents with unwanted Yiddish books should contact:

David Goldstien
Temple Beth El, Santa Maria
805-598-8994 dga@silcom.com

Cheri DeKofsky
Jewish Federation Of Ventura County
805-647-7800 cheri@jewishventuracounty.org

Susan Stern-Pearl
Temple Ner Shalom, San Luis Obispo
805-234-6612 sstern2125@aol.com

Collected volumes will be sent to the Yiddish Book Center's repository in Amherst, Massachusetts, where they will be catalogued and made available to teachers, students, and university libraries throughout the world.

Yiddish literature once enjoyed enormous popularity among the area's immigrant Jewish population. Sacred books in Yiddish translation, as well as sets of Sholem Aleichem, Y.L. Peretz, and other Yiddish classics were to be found in almost every Jewish home. In later years, however, assimilation took its toll. Books that had been treasured by parents and grandparents were often packed away and forgotten by a new generation of Jews who read no Yiddish.

Today, interest in Yiddish language and literature is experiencing a startling resurgence. Academic courses in Yiddish language and literature have been introduced at many colleges and universities around the world. Long-forgotten Yiddish books are urgently needed by a new generation of students and scholars.

All donations are tax-deductible. For additional information, please contact the two collection centers on the Central Coast, noted above.

Efforts to collect Yiddish books began nationally in June of 1980 with the founding of the Yiddish Book Center--a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of Yiddish culture. To date the Center has recovered more than 1 million Yiddish books and has emerged as a major Jewish cultural organization, with initiatives in education, translation, and oral history as well as book collection.

The organizers hope that many volumes will be found in local homes on the Central Coast. All donations of Yiddish books and periodicals are welcome. The Center also accepts Yiddish sheet music and Ladino materials.

Weekly Torah Portion Discussions and Shabbat services at Temple Beth El for TBE members whose main language is Spanish.

The Spanish-speaking portion of our membership meets just about every Saturday morning at the temple starting at 9:30 am. We use a Spanish/Hebrew prayer book and hold a Shabbat service and a discussion of the weekly portion in Spanish. We are not a separate group from the temple (TBE) membership but are members of it whose main language is Spanish and feel that this space creates for us a comfortable way to immerse ourselves in the study of the Torah. Everyone is welcome to join with us, even the English speaking who are striving to learn Spanish as well as our Jewish heritage. We are pleased that we have a space to accommodate our needs and we thank the Board of Directors who encouraged this. The leader of our group is Raul Medina (805) 922-4171 or (805) 868-8153).

Discusiones semanales de la porcion de la Tora y servicios de Shabat en el Templo Beth El para los miembros de TBE cuyo idioma principal es el español. Los miembros de habla hispana de nuestra sinagoga se reune casi todos los sabados por la mañana en el templo a partir de las 9:30 am. Usamos un libro de Rezos en espanol / hebreo y celebramos un servicio de Shabat y una discusión de la porcion semana en español. No somos un grupo separado de la sinagoga (TBE), sino que somos miembros de el cuyo idioma principal es el español y sentimos que este espacio crea para nosotros una manera comoda de sumergirnos en el estudio de la Tora. Todos son bienvenidos a unirse a nosotros, incluso los de habla inglesa que se esfuerzan por aprender espanol, asi como nuestra herencia judia. Nos complace tener un espacio para acomodar nuestras necesidades y agradecemos a la Junta Directiva que permita esto. Para mas información comunicarse con Raúl Medina al 805-868-8153.

Bulletin Briefs

March Anniversaries

20 Renee & Steven Frucht
26 Lori & Bill Sutton

March Birthdays

9 Gloria Aguilar
15 Ilana David
22 Renee Frucht
27 Izbeth Basurto
28 Manning Semiatin
29 Alyshia Brunk

Donations

In memory of Corinne Bernstein from Andi and Jeff Portney

Sisterhood

The Sisterhood will not be meeting in March. We will try to get together in April.

The Sisterhood gift shop has seen a substantial increase in business with holiday gift-giving. It's time to restock. If you have ideas for items that you would like to see or order, let me know.

Marsha Epstein

Brotherhood

The next Brotherhood meeting will be held on Sunday, April 7th, 8:30 am, at the Temple. Join us for our famous breakfast of lox and bagels, eggs, muffins and extras. Our 173rd Seminar starts at 9:30 am.

As usual, I will send out articles of interest to members of the group. Our seminar conversations have been lively, interesting and informative and all interested people, men and women, are welcome to join us.

Gary Epstein

Jewish/Israel discussion group

Prior to Covid there was an active group who met monthly to discuss Israeli and Jewish topics.

After the pandemic we had hoped to resume this program and invite you to our first meeting after Covid. But the October 7th pogrom in Israel suddenly happened. That event made these meetings extremely important to hold. But it was met with concerns about our safety and our hosts' safety. We resolved to include these meetings on Zoom as well as in a local synagogue. That would at least allow those located in remote places to participate in the discussion.

It is now March and the Israel-Hamas War is still raging and Anti-Semitism is increasing everywhere in our country and in the world. We are still seeking a meeting place.

Your comments and suggestions for help are welcomed.

Gordon Mullin

Cell (805)235-5098

Email- gordmullin@gmail.com

March Yartzheits

3/2/24	Paul Appel*	7 Adar	Father of Susan Appel Dempsey
3/2/24	Mary Ann Canter		Cousin of Gary Epstein
3/2/24	Arturo Cervantes		Father of Ana Medrano
3/2/24	Lou Meyer*		Husband of Tibbie Meyer
3/2/24	Sion Nasser Nourani*	22 Adar	Brother of Dan Nourani*
3/4/24	Fannie Simon*		Mother of Nancy Evans
3/6/24	Bertha Berkowitz	22 Adar	Aunt of Gary Epstein
3/6/24	Gertrude Jackaway*	26 Adar	Mother of Lorraine Pregozen
3/7/24	Meyer Meltzer		Grandfather of Lori Meltzer-Sutton
3/7/24	George Hersh	9 Adar	Brother of Seymour Hersh
3/7/24	Al J. Levinson*		Husband of Betty Levinson
3/9/24	Harry Kaplan	28 Adar	Founding member of TBE
3/10/24	Judy Eschen*		Mother of Donna
3/12/24	Ben Bycher*		Husband of Evie
3/14/24	Stanley Ratner	28 Adar I	Cousin of Marsha Epstein
3/16/24	Chaya Rifkin	4 Nisan	Great Aunt of Eric Berge
3/18/24	Rae Krivonos		Aunt of Corinne Bernstein
3/23/24	Bud Schenck*		Husband of Niki Eschen
3/28/24	Dominga Trujillo		Mother of Stella Perez
3/29/24	Joe Davis*		
3/31/24	Sheila Sales		Wife of Michael Sales
3/31/24	Art Tunick*	27 Adar	Husband of Marcia Tunick

Months of Mourning

Margarita Ferrer	Sister of Eliana Medrano	5/6/23
Judith Klinger	Long-time Temple member	6/27/23
Harvey Blatter	Friend of Gary & Marsha Epstein	8/27/23
Joseph Friedman	Long-time Temple member	9/15/23
Colleen Farber	Niece of Phyllis Green	11/30/23
Harold Poliskin	Brother of Sharon Gottesfeld	11/30/23
Howard Stern	Husband of Beth Ladin	12/20/23
Shirley Wagner	Mother of Randy Wagner	1/27/24

MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Josué Medrano leads Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	2 Raúl Medina will lead services (9:30 AM) Also: Amber Medina will lead Etz Chayim school (10 AM)
3 Brotherhood Breakfast & 172 nd Seminar (8:30 AM)	4	5 TBE Board meeting (6 PM)	6	7	8 Anita Friedman leads Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	9 Raúl Medina leads Shabbat service & Torah study (9:30 AM) Also: Amber Medina leads Etz Chaim school (10 AM)
10	11	12	13	14	15 Josué Medrano leads Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	16 Raúl Medina leads Shabbat service & Torah study (9:30 AM) Also: Amber Medina leads Etz Chaim school (10 AM)
17	18	19	20	21	22 Josué Medrano leads Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	23 Rabbi Gottesfeld leads Torah discussion (10:30 am) Raul Medina leads Purim Party
24/31 Purim Potluck & Purim Spiel & Magillah Reading	25	26	27	28	29 Diane Borad-Mirken leads Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	30 Bat Mitzvah of Elisheva Basurto (9:30 AM) Vegetarian potluck