

# Whitestone Hebrew Centre Bulletin

12-45 Clintonville St. Whitestone, NY 11357



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

שנה טובה!

5780 תש"פ

## שלום

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Volume XXIX No. 1

September 2019

Elul 5779 — Tishrei 5780

## Schedule of High Holiday Services

### S'LICHOT

Saturday Night September 21st

Program 9:00 PM - Service 11:00 PM

### ROSH HASHANAH

First Night - Sunday September 29th - 6:30 PM

First Day - Monday September 30th - 9:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Second Day - Tuesday October 1st - 9:00 AM

### YOM KIPPUR

Kol Nidrei - Tuesday October 8th - 6:00 PM

Yom Kippur Day (Yizkor) - Wednesday October 9th - 9:00 AM

Break-fast following Neilah



### Sisterhood General Meeting — Tuesday September 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 12:30 PM

Please Join Us For Our Program — "The Fall Holiday Season"

A Lite Lunch Will Be Served

### Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday September 24<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 PM





## WHC Bulletin Staff

Rabbi Steven Axelman,  
Editor  
Sharon Samet  
Patricia Smolker

## WHITESTONE

### HEBREW CENTRE

12-45 Clintonville St.

Whitestone, NY 11357

718-767-1500

### Email:

Whitestonehebrewcentre  
@gmail.com

### Website:

whitestonehebrewcenter.org



## WHC ADMINISTRATION

### 2018-19 Officers

Rabbi & Cantor - Steven Axelman

President - Bruce Berenson

Vice-President - Ellis Rosenblatt

Treasurer/Financial Secretary -  
Barbara Parker

Corresponding/Recording Secretary -  
Ron Kohn

Sisterhood President  
Rhoda Weinstein

## President's Message

Shalom - and welcome back. It has always seemed to me that even in the soul of the most secular Jew is a desire (however deeply buried) to use this coming Season as an opportunity for a fresh start (after the deprivations and overindulgences of the High Holiday cycle, of course).

This month will see another year come full circle and most of us will, thank God, have persevered relatively intact. Starting Erev Rosh Hashanah, we'll come together collectively for Prayer with our regular "Minyanaires" and, those Shul Family members seen less frequently, ranging from appearances on the High Holidays themselves, to an additional /occasional Shabbat Friday night or Saturday morning (generally to say Kaddish for a loved one).

I still want to fall back on a line that I read quite some time ago - and never tire of quoting - that "no one's life is so utterly without joy that they are unable to find reason to thank the Master of The Universe every day for all the blessings, revealed and hidden He has given us". You can do this on your own, but may I humbly offer the suggestion your voice will be much more targeted and amplified in the presence of a minyan.

My wife often says (this may be an original quote - if not original in sentiment) - No one **deserves** anything - but you can **earn** what you have and what you desire. I felt this to be a good hook making the argument for contributing to our Synagogue what we really need - your presence.

Why come to Shul? Here are just a few off-the-cuff reasons. In Shul, we can hear God's

*(Continued on page 4)*

## FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

Rabbi Steven Axelman

haxelman@gmail.com

718-208-5059



Welcome back from what I hope was a relaxed and enjoyable summer. Since the Jewish Year 5779 was a leap year in which we added a thirteenth month, the High Holidays are late on the non-Jewish calendar this year, with Rosh Hashana not beginning until the evening of Sunday September 29<sup>th</sup>.

Why does this happen? It all relates to the way we Jews traditionally look at the calendar year and months vs. the way the Christian world does. (The Muslim calendar seems to have more in common with the Jewish one but I claim no expertise in that area.)

Unlike the Gregorian/secular calendar which is based on the solar year, the Jewish month is based on the lunar cycle. Twelve months on the lunar cycle, based on the moon circling the earth every 29.5 days, add up to 354 days, eleven fewer than the regular year. (For the astronomers among us who know that the moon orbits the earth every 27.3 days, I refer you to [starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/questions/question32.html](http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/questions/question32.html) for a brief explanation of Sidereal Period versus Synodic Period.) Without an adjustment to the Jewish calendar, every year each Jewish holiday would fall eleven days earlier on the secular calendar. Eventually Rosh Hashana would fall in the middle of summer and Pesach would fall in the winter. Since the Torah specifically states that Pesach is the holiday of the spring, the Jewish calendar makes that happen by periodically adding a second Adar to the Jewish Calendar. In every cycle of nineteen years, there are seven leap years. Every nineteen years the two calendars coincide either exactly or one day apart and then the cycle starts again.

Practically speaking, since most of my life I celebrated both my Jewish and secular birthdays, eighteen out of every nineteen years I had two birthdays per year, e.g. this

*(Continued on page 4)*

# SISTERHOOD

## SISTERHOOD DATES TO REMEMBER

Tue. Sept. 3	Sisterhood Board Meeting	10:00 AM
Tue. Sept. 3	Sisterhood General Meeting	12:30 PM

## Sisterhood Message

We hope everyone had a happy, healthy and enjoyable summer.

During the summer, Sisterhood was busy planning programs, luncheons and other functions for the coming year.

In August, Sisterhood had a Summer B-B-Q Luncheon and Bingo at Ben's Kosher Restaurant in the Bay Terrace Shopping Center. If you didn't attend, you missed out on a fun day. (See Naomi Gukowsky's article for details.) Thank you, Naomi, for once again chairing this popular fundraiser.

On Tuesday, September 3rd at 12:30 P.M. we will have our first General Meeting. Iris Kirschner, our Program Chairperson, has planned an interesting program for the meeting, "The Fall Holiday Season". Come and enjoy a lite lunch prior to the program. We hope to see you at the meeting.

Sisterhood wishes everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.



The Brooklyn, Queens, Long Island (BQLI) Region of Women's League for Conservative Judaism held its Woman of Achievement Awards Dinner Gala on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup> at Shelter Rock Jewish Center in Roslyn.

The 430 attendees at the Gala included, from our Sisterhood, besides myself, Liliya Berezovsky, Lilian Gradofsky, Iris Kirschner, and Linda Pereira. After an elaborate smorgasbord dinner, we honored the 18 Women of Achievement, who were chosen by their Sisterhoods. Following the honoree celebration, we enjoyed a lavish Viennese table.

With her busy schedule, we were happy that Margie Miller, WLCJ International President, and also a member of our BQLI Region, was able to attend our Dinner Gala. The Gala gives the BQLI members a chance to not only congratulate all the Women of Achievement honorees, but also to catch up with their "Sisters." The Woman of Achievement Awards Dinner Gala culminates our BQLI Region year. Programs, events and activities are in the planning stages for the upcoming year.

Patricia Smolker

## Sisterhood Summer Luncheon

On Tuesday, August 20th, Sisterhood's Summer B-B-Q Luncheon and Bingo was held at Ben's Kosher Restaurant in the Bay Terrace Shopping Center. The 36 people who attended had a great time. Instead of the usual sandwiches, we enjoyed beef



hot dogs, with a choice of toppings, beef burgers, also with a choice of toppings, chicken, corn, all prepared on the B-B-Q by David Czegledi, General Manager of Ben's. In addition, along with the meal we had coleslaw, potato salad, pickles, sliced watermelon, soda and coffee or tea. The food was delicious. Since Rabbi Axelman and Iris Kirschner's birthdays were in August, we celebrated with two birthday cakes,



which everyone enjoyed. Bingo was a lot of fun. We had several lucky winners. The winners were Lilian Gradofsky and Doris Shankman who each won \$5 gift cards, Rayann Fernandes, a friend of Dorothy Schneider, won two bottles of beer and two mugs, Julie Kerrane won a \$10 gift card, Iris Kirschner won a \$15 gift card, Ruby Cohen won a bottle of champagne and two glasses, and Dorothy Schneider won a \$20 gift card. (See pictures on page 5)

A special thank you to David Czegledi for taking care of everything and for running the Bingo games. Also to our own Patricia Smolker for making all the arrangements and to Evelyn Apter, Linda Pereira and all the other drivers for helping to transport people to the Summer B-B-Q Luncheon. Look for further details about our Winter Luncheon in upcoming Bulletins.

Naomi Gukowsky, Chairperson

### Chai Fund—July 2019

Good health to Esther Cohen

- Evelyn Apter

Good health to Naomi and Leon Gukowsky

- Evelyn Apter

### Prayer Book Fund - July 2019

In memory of Jeffrey Goldsmith

- Esther Cohen

In memory of Elaine Lieberman

- Esther Cohen

- Adele Rothman

- Zula Schibuk

- Patricia Smolker

Inscribed Prayer Books in memory of

Elaine Lieberman, daughter of Aaron and Shirley Safran

- Sisterhood WHC

- Evelyn Apter

### Prayer Book Fund - August 2019

In memory of Elaine Lieberman

- Bonnie Buxbaum

Inscribed Prayer Book in memory of Lawrence Gross -

Barbara Friedman's brother

- Sisterhood WHC

## FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

*(Continued from page 2)*

year my English birthday was August 22<sup>nd</sup> but my Jewish birthday is not until September 6<sup>th</sup>.

For the purposes of most people, this extra month affects the dates of yahrzeits and Bar-Mitzvahs. For example, if someone dies in a non-leap year in the month of Adar, there is a dispute over when to observe that yahrzeit in a leap year. (Some do have a custom to light a candle in both Adars.)

Also, since Yom Kippur is quite late this year the days are shorter. Kol Nidrei begins a little earlier than last year but the fast is over earlier as well. Somehow most people seem to prefer starting to fast earlier as long as the fast ends earlier, even though realistically the same amount of hours pass by. Another difference is that by the time Succos comes around and especially by its conclusion, it is quite cold outside!

Though Selichot services are usually held the Saturday night before Rosh Hashanah, since the custom is to say these prayers every morning for at least four days before Rosh Hashana, this year these prayers will be said one week earlier, Saturday night, September 21<sup>st</sup>. (Unbeknownst to many, the Selichot services held in most synagogues on a Saturday night are not a one-time event but rather the beginning of a daily service ending only the day before Yom Kippur. Sefardic Jews begin reciting daily Selichot services at the beginning of the Jewish month of Elul, this year on September 1<sup>st</sup>, and continue until Yom Kippur. This corresponds to the 40 days that Moses spent on Mount Sinai pleading with God to replace the Two Tablets on which the Ten Commandments had been inscribed, which Moses had shattered upon witnessing the Jews worshipping the Golden Calf immediately on his descent from the mountain.

(For those jealous of Sefardic Jews (possibly) being able to eat rice on Pesach, bear this in mind.)

Rosh Hashana begins the evening of September 29th and concludes at dark on October 1st. For many, this holiday season evokes memories of apples dipped in honey, the sound of the shofar, family meals; for me, the memories are mostly of upside-down cake. But, is that really all there is to it? To me

and hopefully millions of other Jews there has to be a bit more about God and Judaism to make these holidays meaningful (and worth all the preparation). Traditional Judaism sees this period as a time of reflection and repentance, culminating in Yom Kippur, the day on which all our sins are forgiven, though the conditions for this to happen are too complicated for a bulletin article. This year Yom Kippur begins the evening of Tuesday October 8th and concludes at dark the next night. Please note that the evening of Yom Kippur on which we recite Kol Nidrei is the only time of the year that a Tallit is worn by the congregation at night. There was a time not too long ago that almost every Jew would attend services on Yom Kippur; sadly this is no longer true. But as I have said in the past, the only guarantee I can make is that if you do not attend services, you will not be inspired by them!

This may be a good time of year for each of us to ask ourselves, "what is a Jew?". Other than the fact that we were born that way (or converted), what makes us Jewish? What do we do or refrain from doing because we are Jewish? For those who see the expression of their Judaism in charity, helping and being kind to others, there is no question that those things are a great part of what a Jew is or should be. But honestly, they are a great part of what any human being should be, are they not? So, what is a Jew?

Since the answer to this question takes up more than one lifetime and since there is only so much space for this column, I would just like to quote from the Torah Portion we read this past Shabbat from the book of Deuteronomy 10:12--21 (Parshat Eikev), translation from JTS:

And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God demand of you? Only this: to revere the Lord your God, to walk only in His paths, to love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. Keeping the Lord's commandments and laws, which I enjoin upon you today, for your good.

For discussion and questions about this issue, please join us for Judaism 101, Monday nights at 7:30.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*(Continued from page 2)*

voice without the intrusion of the internal and external noise around us, say prayers for healing ourselves and others, learn to be humble (we can't know God unless we're willing to suspend our egos), demonstrate to our neighbors of other faiths commitment to our own beliefs, and just simply express gratitude for what we have.

The mechanisms for doing the above are contained within the performance of our faith, but there are practicalities to be considered. We need a quorum of ten to perform certain

aspects of the prayer service. In this New Year, I ask you to be a willing participant in our Community. For those we only see two or three times a year – commit to a modest goal of Shabbat attendance once a month. Come to events announced in this bulletin as well as on our first-rate web site. Become an active member in the Community of the Whitestone Hebrew Centre.

L'Shana Tovah,  
Bruce Berenson





### Sisterhood Bingo Luncheon

August 20th



### Making Contributions

For many years Sisterhood has offered the service of sending cards from all those who wish to acknowledge both Simchas and Condolences. The response from the recipients is most heart warming. The following funds are available:

Simcha Fund .....	\$10
Chai Fund.....	\$18
Prayer Book Fund .....	\$10
Inscribed Prayer Books .....	\$25

The recipient receives an acknowledgement of the contribution and it is printed in the monthly Bulletin so all can share the feelings expressed. To place orders, call Patricia Smolker at (718) 746-7068.

Checks for the above funds should be made payable to "Sisterhood of WHC".



## UN salutes Israeli innovation

Innovative Israeli technologies presented at UN to diplomats and government representatives from around the world  
Nitsan Keidar, 07/19/19 02:12

[israelnationalnews.com](http://israelnationalnews.com)

On Wednesday at the UN headquarters in New York, the Israeli Mission to the UN held an event showcasing unique Israeli innovation. Diplomats and government representatives from around the world, UN officials and representatives of Jewish and pro-Israel organizations were among the guests participating, as innovative Israeli technologies were featured in the areas of water, agriculture, social issues and more.

The purpose of the event was to connect local, Israeli industry with governments and senior officials from the international community at the UN headquarters during a high-level week that was part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the companies and technologies present among those that can help countries achieve their respective SDG goals. The event was moderated by Israeli actress and producer Noa Tishby.

The company NUFiltration, which participated in the event, presented a unique technology for artificial kidney remission used to filter and purify drinking water. Another company, Hilico, introduced a simple and affordable rain-harvesting device that can turn rainwater into clean, drinking water. MASHAV, Israel's agency for international development, presented its extensive field work to help the development of countries of the world.

Other companies and organizations that participated in the event included SupPlant, Rashi Foundation, Social Finance Israel, SmartWater.

The event took place as part of the United Nations Development Week - the second largest week in size and scope after the General Assembly. Shortly before the event, Environmental Protection Minister Ze'ev Elkin presented to the

UN Israel's first report on the work of the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Foreign Affairs in implementing the SDGs.

Last Sunday, a decision was approved to implement the sustainable development goals in the Israeli government's work programs.

Ambassador Danny Danon sent a congratulatory message to the event's participants, saying, "What you have seen today is only the beginning. Israel stands at the forefront of innovation and is ready to continue sharing our knowledge with the nations of the world."

Minister of Environmental Protection Ze'ev Elkin said, "We are celebrating an event that combines Israeli innovation with the sustainable development goals of the United Nations. At the event, I represented the government as the Minister of Environmental Protection - an evolving field, innovative and contemporary field that touches on the lives of all of us - as well as a connection to Jerusalem and our heritage, a role that may be surprising to hear, but there was a minister for Jerusalem as far back as 2,700 years ago, as evidenced by an ancient stamp I presented to the UN. As minister, I bring together the glorious past and the promising and innovative future. At the Israeli event we held at the United Nations, we presented innovative Israeli companies that also solve old problems. These companies change reality from a social, technological, agricultural and environmental perspective. This is Israel's contribution to the advancement and implementation of narrowing gaps - in Israel and around the world."

## Condolences

To Barbara Friedman and family  
on the loss of her brother, Lawrence Gross

**המקום ינחם אתכם  
בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים**

May his memory be a blessing



Esther Cohen

**Best Wishes for a  
speedy and complete recovery**

Doris Shankman





## June Family Shabbat Sponsors



Rabbi Axelman, Sharon and family  
in honor of Ashley's birthday  
and the birthday of the Rabbi's grandson, Gavi

The Berenson Family  
in honor of the birthdays of Kayla and Max

Liliya Berezovsky and Alex Ratner in honor of the birthdays of  
Alex, their daughter, Alina, and their grandson, Alexei

Joshua Friedman in memory of David Friedman

The Goldberg family in memory of  
the first yearzeit of Robert's father

Naomi and Leon Gukowsky in honor of their anniversary,  
Leon's birthday and the birthdays of their daughter-in-law,  
Sarah, and grandsons, Max and Noah Gukowsky

Ellis Rosenblatt in memory of  
the yearzeit of his father, Martin Rosenblatt

Patricia Smolker in memory of  
the anniversary of her parents, Goldie and Joseph Smolker

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to arrange your sponsorship.

## September Happy Birthdays



Lazer Axelman

Liliya Berezovsky

Jenna Berenson

Judi Glass

\*Editor's note: If your birthday should be listed on this page  
and is not, please call the office at (718) 767-1500 and give  
them your date of birth.

Thank you.

## SCHEDULE OF WHC CLASSES

(led by Rabbi Axelman)

### Sundays @12:45 PM -- Talmud Class

The goal of this class is to reintroduce people to the  
wisdom of the Talmud. As Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz writes in  
Essential Talmud:

"The Talmud is a very hard book to define ... from content  
to style, every definition is incomplete or contradictory. ...  
The Talmud is completely unique--a book that has no  
parallel anywhere.... If the bible is the cornerstone of  
Judaism, then the Talmud is the central pillar, soaring up  
from the foundations and supporting the entire spiritual  
and intellectual edifice.... In many ways the Talmud is the  
most important book in Jewish culture, the backbone of  
creativity and of national life. No other work has had a  
comparable influence on the theory and practice of Jewish  
life, shaping spiritual content and serving as a guide to  
conduct.... [t]he Jewish people have always been keenly  
aware that their continued survival and development  
depend on study of the Talmud.

### Mondays @7:30 PM -- Judaism 101

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**Your donations are greatly appreciated.**



## Thank you for Donations -- Summer 2019

### Yahrzeit

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Evelyn Apter	Loren Klee-Weiss	Audrey Seidman
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Naomi Gukowsky	Sidney Rothstein	

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Ellis Rosenblatt

#### In memory of

Ingram, Beatrice and Clinton Carner

Sharon Samet

#### In memory of Trudy Messinger

Stan Simon

### Kiddush Sponsors

#### In memory of Irving Cohen

Esther Cohen

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### WHC BULLETIN BY EMAIL!



If you would like to receive a copy of the bulletin by email, in addition to the printed version, please send your email address to [haxelman@gmail.com](mailto:haxelman@gmail.com) and let us know. The email version appears in color and will reach you several days before the hard copy. Thank you!





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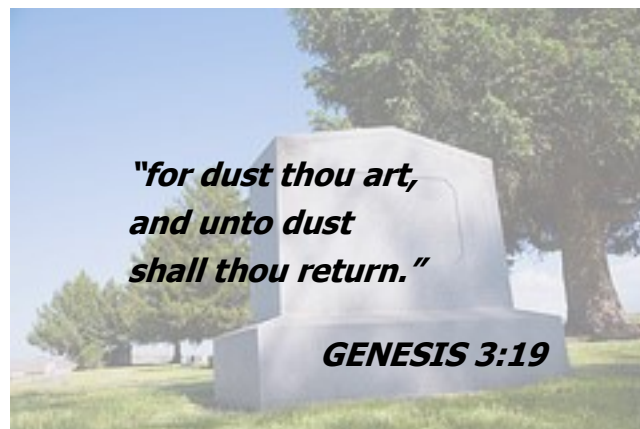
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