

Whitestone Hebrew Centre Bulletin

12-45 Clintonville St. Whitestone, NY 11357



שלום

Inside this issue

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY	2
SISTERHOOD	3
VISIT WITH THE RABBI	3
BIRTHDAYS	4
SISTERHOOD BINGO PICTURES	4
ISRAEL	5
FAMILY SHABBAT	8
WHC CLASSES	8
DONATIONS	9
ADS	10

Volume XXIX No. 6

February 2020

Shevat — Adar 5780

SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA

Friday February 28th

Following services at 6:30 PM

Join us for a Shabbat Dinner with Family and Friends

(See Enclosed Flier for Details)



CELEBRATE PURIM AT WHC

Megilla Reading

Monday, March 9th -- 7:00 PM

PURIM PARTY

Following Megilla Reading

(See enclosed flier for details)



Family Shabbat

Saturday, February 8th @ 10:00 AM



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Rabbi Steven Axelman,
Editor
Sharon Samet
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FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

Last month I wrote about the unpredictability and precariousness of our lives, spurred on by Sharon's breaking her ankle on December 24th. This month the news made me think even more along those lines with the sudden death of a former NBA basketball superstar, Kobe Bryant. For those unfamiliar with him, he was only 41 years old, retired for several years from professional basketball and the father of four. The helicopter he was flying in crashed on January 26th and he was among the nine on board who died, including his 13-year-old daughter. Most people looking at his life and similar lives of rich and famous celebrities would be sure "he had it all". Many are jealous of his fortunes. But his life was no more guaranteed than any of ours. We are not only one fall away from major changes in the paths of our lives but, God forbid, from much worse. None of us are special in being immortal. Do we live our lives conscious of this and make the most of them in every way?

Among the many thoughts that come to mind with such a tragedy is trying to figure out why we care so much when a celebrity dies versus a regular person, even one who is a hero, maybe a firefighter, a Navy Seal or the like. After all we hear of deaths every day, yet the death of a celebrity gets so much attention.

Without in any way judging the truth of the matter, I wish to share one other thought that I had regarding the sudden and tragic death of Kobe Bryant. In 2003, he was [accused](#) by a young woman of a heinous and violent crime. The allegations

President's Message

By: Bruce Berenson

On Friday night, February 28 many synagogues across North America will take part in celebration of the most frequent recurring Holy Day in the Jewish Faith: Shabbat. It's the 24th annual Shabbat Across America. Devised in 1987 by Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, who founded the NJOP (National Jewish Outreach Program) as a response to the perceived ongoing loss of Jews from Jewish life due to assimilation and lack of Jewish education. The organization sponsors and publicizes the Shabbat Across America campaign, as well as Hebrew teaching programs, Prayer Services for Beginners, and many free courses in basic Judaism and Jewish history. I have to confess – until very recently I've been opposed to the concept of this One Night a Year – thinking it was designed to lure fellow Jews to Synagogue disguised as dinner theatre (with the Shabbat Service as The Show). Of course – Shabbat occurs every 7th day of the week, and my view was either you felt Synagogue was the right place to be Friday night (and Saturday Morning) or not, and people should follow as their conscience dictates. What had escaped me all those years was the reality that so many Jews have grown up in homes which do not observe the Sabbath, or even had so much as a rudimentary instruction in our Faith. This is an opportunity to give

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued on page 7)

SISTERHOOD

Sisterhood Message

Our annual Winter Luncheon and Bingo at Ben's Kosher Restaurant, located in the Bay Terrace Shopping center, took place on Tuesday, January 14th. Thank you to Naomi Gukowsky for chairing this event. It's always a lot of fun and an enjoyable day. (See Naomi's article for more details.)

Purim is on March 9th. Please fill out your orders for Shalach Manot. Return the orders as soon as possible with your check payable to Sisterhood WHC.

Please join us on Tuesday, March 24th at 12:30 P.M. for our Passover program. We are sure you will enjoy this program, which will be led by Iris Kirschner, Sisterhood's Program Chairperson. Mark your calendars. Refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you at the Passover Program.

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".

SISTERHOOD DATES TO REMEMBER

Tue. Feb. 4th Sisterhood Board Meeting 10:00 AM

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

Sharon Samet



Chai Fund— January 2020

Best Wishes to Sharon Samet for a speedy recovery

- The Smith Family

Sisterhood Winter Luncheon

On Tuesday, January 14th, Sisterhood held its Annual Winter Luncheon at Ben's Kosher Restaurant in the Bay Terrace Shopping Center, and a good time was had by all. (See pictures on page 4). Twenty-six sisterhood members and friends enjoyed a delicious luncheon, which included potato latkes with applesauce, overstuffed sandwiches, coleslaw, potato salad, assorted pickles, soda, coffee or tea and rugalach. We played bingo and had many lucky winners. \$5.00 gift cards were won by Ann Oliva and Patricia Smolker. \$10.00 gift cards were won by Lilian Gradofsky, Meryl Hoffmann and Alex Ratner. A \$15 gift card was won by Gail Miller. Two mugs each were won by Rayann Fernandes, a friend of Dorothy Schneider and Lilian Gradofsky.



Lilian Gradofsky also won a \$30.00 gift card and a chef-dog stuffed animal. A special thank you to Patricia Smolker for making all of the arrangements and to Hal Simon, Area Supervisor and General Manager of Ben's, whose help made for a wonderful day. Thank you to Evelyn Apter and Linda Pereira for driving some of our members. Please join us when we have our next event. Look for fliers in future bulletins. You'll have a great time.



Naomi Gukowsky
Chairperson



Visit with the Rabbi— In the Comfort of your Home!



Rabbi Axeiman is available to visit with those of our congregants who are either homebound or find it difficult to get out, but would appreciate the opportunity to meet with the Rabbi at their convenience and in their own home. If this is something you would be interested in, please phone the office and let us know what the best days and times would be for the Rabbi to visit.



February Happy Birthdays

Benjamin Mandel

Sisterhood Bingo Luncheon on January 14th





Recent positive news generated by Israel, of which we can all be proud.
(Articles below are excerpts of originals only)

Israeli tech company making water from air gets top honor in Las Vegas

By [ZACHARY KEYSER](#)

JANUARY 9, 2020



GENNY, the Israeli-innovated home appliance that generates water out of thin air, was named the Consumer Technology Association's Energy Efficiency Product of the Year in the 2020 Smart Home Mark of Excellence Awards at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas Wednesday

night – an award series that annually recognizes the tech industry's top smart home innovations. Created by the environmentally savvy Rishon LeZion-based tech company Watergen, the water-from-air system taps into atmospheric water using patented heat-exchange technology, producing up to 30 liters of potable water for a home or office every day – significantly reducing plastic usage and disposal by eliminating the waste caused by drinking bottled water.

The company, chaired by Israeli-Georgian businessman and philanthropist Mikhael Mirilashvili, recently set its sights on expanding its renewable and energy-efficient clean water solution to the 2.1 billion people worldwide who lack access to safe water at home – and wherever else it might be needed. Last year, the company's large-scale system was donated to authorities in Brazil, Vietnam and India. According to [the company's website](#), it is "perfect for villages, off-grid settlements and factories." While the technology is now firmly focused on tackling the global water shortage, the company has maintained the energy-efficient edge of its early-day designers and boasts the world's most energy-efficient atmospheric water production system. "My first priority is not how to make money but to help people, the planet and make [a] kiddush hashem [sanctification of God's name]," Mirilashvili told The Jerusalem Post. "Regarding the revenues, only God decides who makes money and how much."

Israeli docs strike big blow to antibiotic-resistant 'superbugs'

Every year in the United States, more than 35,000 people die and 2.8 million get sick from antibiotic-resistant infections. Now, a team led by Hebrew University of Jerusalem's (HU) Professor Nathalie Balaban and Shaare Zedek Medical Center's Dr. Maskit Bar-Meir has shown that resilient bacteria may be treatable with currently-available therapies. In a study published in Science magazine, the researchers show that aggressive bacteria can be controlled - but only if doctors administer treatment within a short window of opportunity.



Israel ranked as world's 20th most talent competitive country

By EYTAN HALON

JANUARY 22, 2020

Israel is the 20th-leading country worldwide in developing, attracting and empowering talented employees, according to a global index published Wednesday at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The index, published annually by leading graduate business school INSEAD, evaluates a wide range of policies and practices impacting human capital and contributing to productivity and prosperity. The latest publication by the Paris-based school emphasizes the importance of readying business and talent for the increasing impact of artificial intelligence technologies. The competitiveness of 132 countries was measured according to 70 talent-related variables falling within six pillars: enable, attract, grow, retain, vocational and technical skills and global knowledge skills. The index details that Israel excels worldwide in global knowledge skills (8th), reflecting creativity and problem-solving expertise, and vocational and technical skills (12th), describing technical or professional skills acquired through vocational or professional training and experience.

Israel, the highest-ranked country in the Northern Africa and Western Asia region, sits one place behind Japan and ahead of France. The Jewish state has improved its ranking in recent years, sitting in 20th place on average during 2018-2020, compared to 25th place in 2015-2017.

[Israelis plan to produce world's first 'super wine'](#)

By Daniel Ben Tal, ISRAEL21c
January 19, 2020



Everyone knows that wine, in moderation, is good for you. The medicinal benefits of drinking a glass of red wine in the evening have been well documented. Back in the 1990s, it became known as the

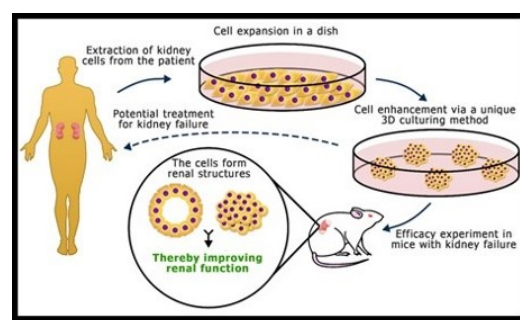
"French paradox" after a groundbreaking study showed that the French – whose diet is typically rich in cholesterol and saturated fats but also insist on a glass or two of wine with their meals – suffer from 40% fewer coronary heart ailments than Americans. Since then, wine has been widely recognized as a central factor in preventing cardiac events and atherosclerosis. Drinking wine can literally extend your life. Now Israeli researchers are trying to produce the world's first "super wine" that condenses all the beneficial factors of fermented grapes – without affecting the wine's taste, tones, or tannins. "Wine contains antioxidants and other substances that help our bodies defend against various ailments, but at a relatively low concentration," explains Meir Shlissel, a senior lecturer in food science at the Academic and Technology College of Tel Hai. "There's a limit to how much of it you can drink because of the amount of alcohol." For three years, researchers at Tel Hai College have been working on an innovative recipe to make a single glass of wine many times healthier – effectively turning it into a superfood that confers exceptional health benefits due to its nutrient density.

Israel has at least 300 wineries producing over 42 million bottles of wine annually. Exports leaped in 2018 to \$47 million, and the industry's turnover has crossed the billion-shekel mark. Israeli wines can be easily found across Spain, Italy, and the United States. At the same time, Israel is becoming a leading innovator in the food-tech field. Much of this development is aimed at the superfood market, estimated to be worth \$18 billion annually. This year, the two wine researchers entered an acceleration program run by the Economics Ministry's Small Business Agency, with the aim of establishing the world's first super-wine startup. "The idea is not to sell wine, but the technology," says Shlissel. "I'm an academic – my primary motivation was curiosity and I didn't think about a startup when I began this research."

[This Israeli doctor's revolutionary discovery could end the need for kidney dialysis](#)

Ken Stephens
January 26, 2020

A groundbreaking study has shown that it is possible to rejuvenate damaged kidneys and improve their function, a procedure that could reverse chronic kidney disease, offsetting the need for dialysis. This is the first breakthrough in decades to combat this disease, often precipitated by hypertension and diabetes, and which affects a whopping 10% of the population worldwide. The study was conducted by Professor Benjamin Dekel, head of Pediatric Nephrology and the Pediatric Stem Cell Research Institute in the Edmond and Lily Safra Children's hospital at Sheba Medical Center, and published this week in the prestigious Cell Reports medical journal. In past studies, researchers discovered that the adult kidney constantly renews itself over time through the activity of colonies of cells that replace lost and degenerated cells in the kidney. Prof. Dekel and his team have now developed an innovative technology that involves the extraction of such healthy kidney cells from diseased kidneys. These cells are then expanded into large numbers within a laboratory environment. By generation of three-dimensional cultures called "kidney spheres," the cells show improved function to generate new kidney tissue and replace lost cells. The new cells are then reintroduced into the kidney where they rebuild it, positively influencing neighboring cells and improving its function (see diagram below). One of the most significant aspects of the discovery is that the newly developed technology uses the patient's own cells, thereby circumventing the need for immunosuppression as well as problems associated with immune rejection.



[Revolutionary brain cancer treatment becomes available in Israel](#)

A new groundbreaking cancer treatment developed by Israeli scientists, which fights malignant brain tumors using electric pulses, has become available to patients in Israel. This FDA-approved treatment comes in the form of a device that delivers Tumor Treating Fields (TTFields) for glioblastoma (GBM), an aggressive form of brain cancer. Tumor Treating Fields use alternating electric fields specifically tuned to target cancer cells. Once electric fields enter the cancerous cell, they attract and repel charged proteins during the division process of the hostile cell, preventing the tumor's growth while causing minimal harm to nearby healthy cells.





I want to thank everyone who sent a gift, donation, card, or good wishes my way. They really meant a lot in this frustrating time. By the time you read this note, I will probably be walking again!

Sharon Samet

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

(Continued from page 2)

never went to trial, though Kobe Bryant. apologized to the victim, in addition to agreeing to an undisclosed monetary settlement. I am in no way attributing [guilt](#) to Kobe Bryant, but merely viewing the situation from the point of view of the alleged victim. Assuming that she was 100% sure that she was horrifically wronged by just another rich, powerful person who never pays the piper and always gets away with bad deeds, how horrible it must have been for her to see “the wicked bloom like grass and all doers of iniquity blossom”, as we recite every Friday night during our prayer service. It reminded me of how many times in our own lives we ask this question when we see that God does not immediately punish the evil nor reward the righteous (or at least those who appear so in our eyes.) For us mortals who live within time, with each minute lasting 60 seconds, each hour 60 minutes, etc., how hopeless does one become believing that good is not rewarded and evil not punished. Yet with a broader look at time, anything can happen to anyone at any time and suddenly the world makes sense. It is only because of our mortality and the limits of our own understanding of time that we even question God’s wisdom and judgment.

Onto another subject that has been on my mind since New Years Eve, which I also spent at the Emergency Room with

Sharon. She had post-surgery concerns which brought us back to the E.R. several days after her surgery. Among the many tests performed to make sure she was ok (she was totally OK) was an ultrasound. I have to admit that most of the ultrasounds I have been present at have been for obstetrics. At least on those I can see something when pointed out by the technician. On an ultrasound of a leg I could see absolutely nothing. At best it could have been a Rorschach test. Yet this technician and even more so the radiologist who analyzed it could see amazing amounts of information on the same screen on which I saw nothing. This really made me think about how much the untrained eye cannot see. Had I shown a picture of what I saw to someone 200 years ago and claimed to be able to diagnose pathology from it, I most probably would have been laughed at, if not burned at the stake. Yet with proper training it must have looked clear as day. What if this were possible in the spiritual realm as well? What if properly trained scholars really could see things that the average layman could not? Just for the sake of an example, what if Rabbis really could see that the study of Torah protected the Jews more than a fighter jet? To the untrained eye, they really would seem delusional but to the trained eye? Food for thought?

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 2)

them the experience without the usual distractions, and in a friendly nonjudgmental space in which they may (HaShem willing) catch some of its spirit.

Throughout Scripture - Judaism honors Shabbat and in many ways gives it the status of being the most important day on the Jewish calendar. Notably, it is the first Holy Day mentioned in the Bible, and God was the first to observe it at the end of the first six days of Creation. If any Fast Day (except for Yom Kippur, which is in fact referred to as the Shabbat of Shabbats)

falls on that day – it is postponed till the following day. Shabbat is a time of joyous observance and for Our People - that of course includes eating and drinking. It is also considered to be a very small taste of the World To Come and in fact, a tradition described in the Talmud (Shabbat 118) states that the Messiah will come if every Jew properly observes two consecutive Shabbatoh. Who wouldn't want to be a part of that? What are we waiting for! See you in Shul.

Bruce Berenson

January Family Shabbat Sponsors



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in honor of Jacob's birthday, in memory of
the yahrzeit of Naomi's father, Morris Dubin, in memory of
the birthday of Naomi's mother, Rose Dubin and in
memory of the anniversary of Naomi's parents, Rose and
Morris Dubin

Ellis Rosenblatt in memory of
the yahrzeits of his grandmother, Rose Rosenblatt,
and his Uncle Boris Barron
and in honor of Esther Cohen's birthday

The Smith Family in honor of Frank's birthday

Patricia Smolker in memory of
the birthday of her mother, Goldie Smolker,
in memory of the yahrzeit of her grandfather,
Samuel Smolker and for a speedy recovery and return to
good health for Sharon Samet

The Young Family in honor of Jared's birthday

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:

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Mondays @7:30 PM -- Judaism 101

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Thank you for Donations -- January 2020

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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 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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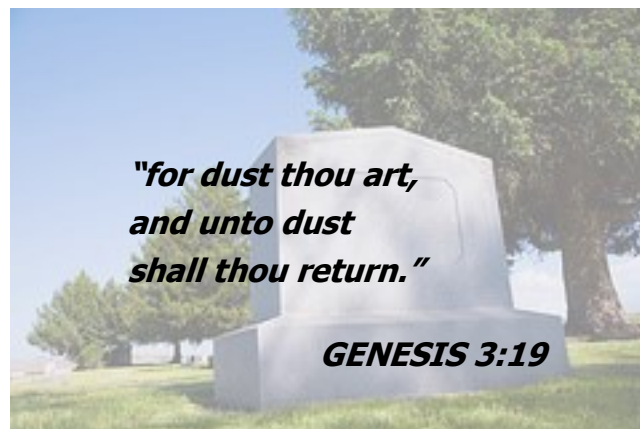
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