



Selections from *BEKI Bulletin: The Newsletter of Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel*

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Rosenkrantz Library Endowed

When our Congregation's building was constructed nearly forty years ago, a library was established by Louis Rosenkrantz and his children in memory of Faye Sachs Rosenkrantz, of blessed memory. During these years the library has proven to be one of the most heavily used resources in our facility.

Now a gift of Louis Rosenkrantz has established the [Louis Rosenkrantz Family Library Endowment for Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel](#). The Rosenkrantz Family Library Endowment is managed by the [Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven](#). Only the interest will be used to maintain the Rosenkrantz Library, so the Endowment will ensure the Library's maintenance in perpetuity. Mr. Rosenkrantz also contributed generously at this time toward immediate capital expenses associated with the Library.

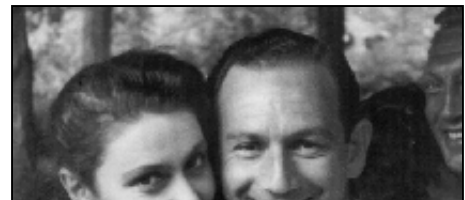
In addition to the Louis Rosenkrantz Family Library Endowment, the Congregation enjoys

the income from the [Morris & Sara Oppenheim Endowment for Sacred Music](#); the [George G. Posener Family Building Fund](#), the [Robert Goodwin Memorial Fund](#), the [Lester & Bernice Margolis Endowment](#); the [George & Leah Posener Youth Education Fund](#); and the [BEKI Endowment Fund](#). These funds are managed by the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven in such a way as to insure the real (after inflation) value of the principle so that they will provide the Congregation with income in perpetuity. A steady income flow from these funds allows the Congregation to budget its income and expenses more effectively.

For information on establishing an endowment for Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel, please call Treasurer Stephen Wizner at (203) 432-4800 or Rabbi Tilsen at (203) 389-2108, or call for a confidential consultation with Jewish Foundation Director Dr. Deborah Kaplan Polivy at 387-2424 ext. 304.

Gift of Sound Honors Garsens

A special gift has been made by Tina Rose in memory of her parents Max & Anita Garsen, of blessed memory, to provide an advanced sound system for our main sanctuary. The Garsens (pictured at right) created a warm and nurturing home in which love and devotion to Torah was instilled in their children and transmitted to their grandchildren. Many BEKI members will recall that during his visits to his family in New Haven, Max recited the haftara and participated in the Shabbat Shaharit morning service. Tina frequently recites the haftara, on Shabbat mornings and on the Festivals including the High Holy Days.



The installation of the new sound system, completed around the time of the High Holy Days, enables the words and melody of tefila (prayer) and Torah (Bible) to be better heard by worshipers, and we pray that our tefilot will be thereby strengthened that they may ascend Heavenward.

Additional opportunities are available to improve the quality of our building and programming. For further information please contact Treasurer Stephen Wizner at (203) 432-4800 or Rabbi Tilsen at (203) 389-2108.

Siyyum '98 "Adult Benei Mitzva" Class Forming

Adults who never celebrated becoming a *bar-* or *bat-mitzva*, or who have not done so in awhile, and who would like to make a commitment to study with a group of like-minded adults, are invited to join "Siyyum '98." This 36-hour course of study will include completing a tractate of the *Mishna*, investigation into the development of Jewish liturgy, Hebrew-language instruction and "synagogue skills" training. Participants have the option of celebrating the conclusion of the course by leading various parts of Shabbat services and with a festive qiddush.

The Hebrew word "siyyum" (see-**YOOM**) means "the celebration held at the conclusion of the study of a sacred text or at the end of a year of study." The word is familiar to many in the context of the *siyyum bekhorot* for firstborns on the morning before Pesah (Passover). In that context, a siyyum is held so that the mitzva (obligation) of holding a celebration -- and in Judaism celebration means food -- will override the minor mitzva of fasting on the day before Pesah. In the present context, the siyyum will represent the traditional way of recognizing participants and celebrating their commitment and achievement.

Classes begin during December, and a nominal fee applies. For information or to register, call Joanne Foodim at 782-9101 or Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108. Register for Siyyum '98. It's just the beginning.

A Message from Rabbi Tilsen

Malik: Martyr or Menace?

The shooting of New Haven resident Malik Jones by an East Haven Police Officer has incited intense emotion as well as thoughtful advocacy. Jones has been described as an innocent unarmed motorist gunned down at point-blank range for the crime of "driving while Black" or at most for a minor traffic violation, by a brutal and racist or panicked patrolman. He has also been described as an alcohol- and Angel-dust intoxicated menace who fled and threatened the life of a dedicated public servant.

But the challenge that this tragic episode presents is not about who Malik Jones was. After all, the East Haven Police officer did not know whom he was shooting; it could have been Bill Cosby for all he knew. However we view Jones -- as martyr or menace -- this tragic episode has brought three important and, unfortunately, interrelated issues to the top of our civic agenda. The first is the public policy issue of the appropriate use of deadly force, that is, under what circumstances a police officer may or must kill a person. More broadly, this is the question of proper police procedure regarding automobile chases and arrest. This question had already captured the public's attention in recent months following several cases of innocent bystanders being killed or injured in the course of high-speed police chases.

Two thousand years ago, the Mishna recorded in law that deadly force may be used only when necessary to prevent murder or physical violation of another person (Sanh 73a). In 1985, the United States Supreme Court reached essentially the same conclusion in ruling that deadly force may be used only when there is probable cause to believe that the fleeing suspect is an immediate danger. "It is not better that all felony suspects die than that they escape," said Justice Byron R. White for the court. But applying these principles in a way that protects the rights of citizens and gives police sufficient power to physically protect innocent bystanders and themselves is no easy matter. When the Mishna was written no one had to worry about concealed weapons or attempt to calculate the risk of a chase at 30, 50 or 100 mph. This is an opportunity for criminal justice professional and the broader public to develop guidelines through a democratic process. It has been observed that the New Haven Police Department, in contrast to that of East Haven, teaches and requires procedure that in this case would not (it seems) have possibly lead to a fatality.

The second issue raised is that of police brutality. What many have known all along has now been recorded on numerous home videos. There are too many cases of police officers beating up on people. In fairness we can point out that there are physicians, attorneys, clergy and elected officials who abuse their positions of authority or their professional expertise.

When brutality (or corruption) occurs among those who are armed and have state power it is particularly threatening to public values and order. The question becomes, who polices the police? As Governor Rowland has pointed out, it is not sufficient for the police and those in the criminal justice system to police themselves; we need others who can bring a "greater objectivity" to that process. This too is no mean feat but is essential for a "free society."

The third issue raised, closely linked with the question of brutality, is that of racism in the police force. While it may be that the East Haven Police are no more racist than general society (at least in East Haven), we must face the fact that racism is pervasive, intense and destructive. It is a sorry state when reasonable and responsible parents are telling their children to run from the police -- and the death of Malik Jones reinforces their perception. While the East Haven Police softball team depicts a caricature of "Boyz on the Hood," the symbol associated with the New York City Police Department has become the toilet plunger.

The East Haven Police Department, if it is to regain credibility and respect, must first admit it has a problem. Then it must undertake ongoing efforts such as hiring officers from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds and avail itself of the Anti-Defamation League's "A World of Difference" program to begin to recognize and overcome the racism of its own officers.

In addition to treating the specific case of Malik Jones in a way that will satisfy the public's demands of justice, accountability and objectivity, these issues of police procedure, brutality, and racism must be addressed on their own merits. The mitzva (commandment) to maintain a system of criminal justice is one that applies to all humanity, and as Jews in the Greater New Haven region we recognize that our own sense of decency and safety depend on it.

Dear Rabbi: Answers, Advice and Helpful Household Hints

Dear Rabbi,

Regular family membership dues at BEKI are \$770. Habad [Lubavitch] Headquarters is at 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn. Is there a connection?

Signed,
Code Seeker

Dear Code Seeker,

Yes, there is a connection. The Habad Lubavitch have adopted the Biblical verse-cum-folksong "ufaratsta -- You shall spread out West, East, North and South" to indicate their missionary faith and expansionist politics. The number 770 times the four directions is 3080 -- and the address of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (the Conservative Movement's educational and administrative center) at 3080 Broadway in New York. Take BEKI's address, 85 Harrison Street, multiply by 36 (the number of "Lamedvavnikim" Righteous Persons who sustain the world, or double "hai" - life), add the last digits of BEKI's phone number ($10 + 2 + 8 = 20$) and again you get 3080. If using the last four digits of the phone number seems contrived, you can use the first three digits ($3 + 8 + 9 = 20$) instead. All roads lead home! If this isn't Divine Codes hidden in daily life, I don't know what is.

Dear Rabbi,

What determines which sefer Torah [Torah scroll] is taken from the ark?

Sincerely,
Better Sefer than Sorry

Dear Safer,

It is common to have more than one sefer Torah in the ark, which is the case at BEKI. All of the Torah scrolls are identical inside, with respect to the letters, words and spaces, although exact layout (number of words in a line and number of lines in a column) may vary, as will the quality of the materials and calligraphy.

We take out the particular scroll or scroll that is set to the portion that we are reading on the given occasion. The weekly reading goes in sequence, so each shabbat we begin reading from the spot we left of the previous week. But on festivals and other occasions we may read from another place, and so to prevent *tirha de'tsibbur* (imposition on the congregation) we do not roll the scrolls while everyone waits but instead set them before the service.

As a matter of our own convention, at BEKI we usually try to make sure the scroll we are using is in a particular position. That way no matter who is taking out the scroll from the ark during the service, they will be able to find the correct one.

Speakers & Benot Mitzva in December

Hadassah Sokal-Holmes will lead services and present a Devar Torah lesson as a *bat mitzva* along with her sister Yaffa on Shabbat Morning 6 December during the 9:15a service as part of her bat mitzva observance. Hadassah is the daughter of Oliver and Hannah Sokal-Holmes, who live in Westville.

Yaffa Sokal-Holmes will lead services and present a Devar Torah lesson as a *bat mitzva* along with her sister Hadassah on Shabbat Morning 6 December during the 9:15a service as part of her bat mitzva observance. Yaffa is the daughter of Oliver and Hannah Sokal-Holmes, who live in Westville.

Anne Johnston, Program Director of BEKI's *Kulanu Ke'Ehad Havura*, a program for adults with special needs, will speak on *Kulanu* at 8:00p during the Late Evening Service on Friday 12 December. Anne is a Jewish Educator and lives with Robert, her husband, and children Sandy and Isaac in New Haven.

Barbara Glassman, Director of Public Relations at the Jewish Home for the Aged of Greater New Haven, will speak on "Caring at the Jewish Home" at the Late Evening Service at 8:00p on Friday 19 Deceember.

Dr. Marc Schwartz will present a Devar Torah discussion relating to the theme of forgiveness on Shabbat morning 27 December during the 9:15a service. Marc, a BEKI member, works as a psychotherapist. Marc and Anne, his wife, live in Woodbridge.

It's 11:30 -- Do You Know Where Your Children Are?

Parents of children who attend services at BEKI on Shabbat and Festival Mornings are asked to make sure your children are accounted for -- either with you in the main sanctuary, one of the [children's programs](#), Learners' Minyan or in a supervised lounge. Only parents can be fully responsible for their children's physical and spiritual well-being.

Torah Reading Workshop with Michele Roberts

Introduction to Torah Reading workshops will be taught by **Michele Roberts** for those who are familiar with the Hebrew alef-bet and would like to begin to learn how to chant from the Torah Scroll according to the ancient system of *ta'amei ha-miqra* ("trope"). The basics of the system will be explained and a written and vocal table of the notes will be presented. Participants may wish to bring a tape recorder. The workshop is in two parts. Part one is Wednesday 3 December from 7:00p to 8:00p; part two is Wednesday 17 December from 7:00p to 8:00p. Classes are held in BEKI's [Louis Rosenkrantz Family Library](#). All are welcomed. This evening is made possible by the [Morris and Sara Oppenheim Endowment for Sacred Music at Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel](#). Michele Roberts is a BEKI member who lives with Jeremy Golding, her husband, and their children in Woodbridge. For information and for registration (requested by not required) call 389-2108.

Evening Services at BEKI

Evening services are held every day at BEKI. The evening service is held from 5:45p to 6:00p Sunday through Thursday nights, and at 6:00p-6:40p and sometimes 8:00p-9:10p on Friday nights. The Saturday evening service is held a variable times, listed in the calendar.

For many, the evening service provides an intimate and convenient time to refocus one's inner thoughts, to unwind before returning home after a day's activities, or to reconnect to God and our heritage through a few moments of prayer and contemplation. In addition, those developing their Hebrew language skills can dedicate this period for practice.

The presence of a minyan (quorum of ten adult Jews) is important to some of our worshipers. During September (the most recent month for which data was available), our evening services had a minyan 73% of the time. However, most of the services that lacked a minyan were short by only one or two worshipers. This means that if only one or two people came regularly to our evening services we would have a minyan almost all of the time. Alternatively, if thirty individuals came once each, the same would be accomplished. Could you be one of those?

BEKI Members: Where We Live

BEKI members live in twenty-one municipalities in the Greater New Haven area. Of our households, about 62% are in New Haven; 13% in Hamden; 6% in Woodbridge; 5% in Orange; and 14% in other towns and cities. There has been a recent increase in the representation of New Haven residents in our membership, possibly due in part to extensive outreach and recruitment focused in New Haven neighborhoods. Through expanded efforts our community can embrace even more households in West Haven, Hamden, Woodbridge, Naugatuck and other towns. Among the most effective "recruitment tools" are word of

mouth and your personal invitation to friends, co-workers and neighbors to BEKI services and events. Yes, there is strength in numbers.

Fire Alarm Upgrades Completed

The installation of a fire alarm system throughout our building has been completed through the generosity of the late Sara Oppenheim (see "[Oppenheim Capital Gift](#)," *BEKI Bulletin*, September 1997). Now our sanctuary, classrooms, offices and other facilities -- and most importantly, our people -- will be protected by advanced fire and smoke alarms 24 hours a day. In the event of fire, alarm bells will sound in the building and the New Haven Fire Department will be immediately notified. Jay Brotman had charge of the project.

Yahrzeit Records Computerized

In an effort to provide better and more cost-efficient service to the membership, the Congregation's yahrzeits records were computerized over the summer. The Congregation maintains thousands of active records which serve an important religious function for our members and supporters. Every effort was made to enter each record with complete care and accuracy. However, we recognize that spelling or other errors may have occurred, and we ask your forbearance and that the office be notified (preferably in writing) of any corrections or additions you would like made to records of your loved ones.

BEKI Sisterhood News

We wish everyone a very happy, healthy, and enjoyable Hanukah. Speaking about Hanukah: Sisterhood president, Adele Tyson, advises that the Gift Shop is loaded with beautiful Judaica and other items for the holiday. There are also gifts for other occasions: weddings, showers, birthdays, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs; gifts for babies, youngsters, teens, etc. There are religious items, household items, books, candy and much more.

The gift shop will be open additional hours on Wednesday afternoons and Sunday mornings when the Hebrew School is in session. Come in and look around!

LifeCycle

Mazal Tov to

- Miriam Benson & [Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen](#), and to Gilah and Tsvi, on the birth of their daughter and sister, Tova Benson-Tilsen, on Rosh Hashana 1 Elul 5758, Wednesday 1 October 1997. Grandparents are Morton & Evelyn Benson, Robert & Sandy Tilsen, and the late Joy Tilsen. Tova was named at BEKI during weekday morning services.
 - Alexander & Lillian Heisler on the birth of their granddaughter Maya during the last week of September.
 - Deborah Libman & Phillip Simon, and to Sam and Isabel, on the birth of their son and brother Noah Henry Simon on Shabbat 24 Tishrei 5758, 25 October 1997. Noah's *brit milah* took place on Shabbat *Parashat Noah*.
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Mourners' Workshop

A Mourners' Workshop with Rabbi Tilsen will focus on ways to help mourners through their period of mourning, and on what happens to a soul after death. The Mourners' workshop will meet in the Rabbi's study on Wednesday 10 December at 7:00p. All are welcomed.

Computers needed

The United Hebrew School and BEKI offices are in need of several computers. 486-based units (or better), color monitors and laser printers can all be put to good use. If you or your company has used equipment to donate, please contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 or email jjtilsen@aol.com.

Oneg & Qiddush Sponsorships Available

If you would like to sponsor a Qiddush for a Shabbat Morning or an Oneg Shabbat (refreshments) for a Late Friday Night service please call the BEKI office at 389-2108. Sponsorships may be in honor of a birthday or anniversary, in marking a yahrzeit (anniversary of death of a loved one) or to mark another important event, or even just as a "thank you" to someone. Sponsorships are available on a first-come-first-served basis, so please call now to reserve your date and avoid disappointment.

Congregants are reminded that no deliveries of food or other items may be made to the shul on Shabbat or Festivals. Only through your cooperation can we insure that our strict standards of kashrut and Shabbat observance can be consistently and fairly maintained.

For more information call or write to:

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel
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(203) 389-2108

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