



Fall 2016

Volume 15 Issue 2

# Beth Chaverim

Humanistic Jewish Community



## Upcoming Events

### Shabbat Under The Stars

Friday, August 26  
6:30pm  
Maplewood Park

### Sunday School Begins

Sunday, September 11  
The Center for Enriched Living  
Riverwoods

### Day of Healing, Hope & Love An Interfaith Gathering

Sunday, September 11  
2:00pm  
Jewett Park, Deerfield

### Lox Box Fundraiser

Sunday, September 25

### Rosh Hashanah Service

Monday, October 3  
10:30am  
Alan B. Shepard Middle School  
Deerfield

### Yom Kippur Service

Wednesday, October 12  
10:30am  
Alan B. Shepard Middle School  
Deerfield

### 3-4 Year Old Program

Sunday, September 25  
Sunday, October 16  
10:00-11:00am  
The Center for Enriched Living  
Riverwoods

### Interfaith Show:

### Songs of Peace & Justice

Saturday, October 22  
7:00pm  
Holy Cross Church  
Deerfield

### Sukkot Celebration

Sunday, October 23  
The Home of Phyllis & Howard Cheskin

## Giving Meaning to Life

As the Jewish New Year approaches, we pause to assess our conduct over the past year. How have we behaved toward those closest to us? How have we contributed to our community? Have we done what we can to help those less fortunate? These assessments really should be an ongoing inventory of our behavior, not requiring the annual prompt of Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur. Neither at the holidays, nor on a daily basis, do we keep a running accounting sheet with credits for good deeds and debits for those times when we have not lived up to our own expectations. Rather we must be mindful and attentive; we cannot afford opportunities to express our feelings through words and deeds to escape. Truly paying attention to our lives, to both the large and small details, gives our lives meaning. It is in the richness of the details that we live. It is in the engagement with others that we thrive. It is in the creation of what is good that we matter. Our lives have meaning when we live them ethically, morally and with integrity.

Human beings are unique in their ability to discern meaning. We do not merely exist, engaging in biological behaviors to pass a lifetime. Instead we have the range of emotions at our disposal; we have the fundamental ability to be empathetic. Our lives are so deeply interconnected with others, and at times so profoundly dependent on them, that we cannot help but be affected both by those with whom we have actual contact, and those whose condition we learn of. The emotional ability to experience great joy and deep sadness makes us human. It provides the framework for the actions that give us meaningful experiences. As social

creatures, we celebrate together and we grieve together. We tend to the needs of others both for their sake and as importantly, for our own. So renew the pledge to let your community include those in causes near to your heart. Widen your circle of people you count as significant, and celebrate with them as they too give meaning to your lives.

It is likewise important to recognize that we have the ability to bring meaning to the lives of others. A life of kindness, charity and gratitude lets others know that they matter to us. It allows their lives to be enriched by the influence we have on them; it allows them to be seen, heard and treasured. After all, if such things would make our lives better, there is no reason to doubt it will do the same for another.

A few years ago we added the song "Nothing More" by The Alternate Routes to our Rosh Hashanah service. The lyrics express these notions simply yet profoundly. "To be humble, to be kind. It is the giving of the peace in your mind. To a stranger, to a friend, To give in such a way that has no end. We are Love. We are One. We are how we treat each other when the day is done."

Wishing you and your family a Shanah Tovah, a good new year!

B'shalom,

*Rabbi Jodi*

**Fall is Here!**

## President's Column: Food for Thought

I am not a political creature; however, it's impossible to ignore the upcoming election. When we turn on the TV, read a newspaper or chat with friends, colleagues or family, we review each candidate's plans to "make our country a better and a safer place." Our potential leaders speak about improvements they plan to make including basic everyday needs, health care, human rights, education, equality, commerce and security. I listen but cannot fathom how we could possibly accomplish so much at once and wonder what the first priorities will be once we have a new president.

When I reflect on what NEEDS to change, I usually wind up returning to one basic concept. In a developed country such as ours, no one should go to bed hungry or not have enough nutritious food to be healthy and thrive to the best of their abilities. We might not be able to eliminate hunger around the world, but we should be able to solve this problem in our own country. In a nation where 200 billion dollars per year (an average of 1200 dollars/person) are spent on fast food, there is no excuse for not keeping American citizens adequately fed no matter what their age, status or income.

So, until the government figures out how to eliminate hunger in the United States, we as individuals need to do our part. Our Beth Chaverim Community is doing what we can to help in a number of ways. We begin our Jewish New Year by taking up a collection for the Deerfield Food Pantry on Yom Kippur. Before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we get together to buy and prepare a summer barbecue dinner for the St. Paul's Soup Kitchen in Evanston. As a new project this past summer, we volunteered to help distribute the excess produce from the weekly Deerfield Farmer's Market to low-income families.

Our most ambitious anti-hunger endeavor has been providing breakfast once a month from October through April for a rotating homeless shelter that houses up to 100 people/night at area churches. The project, named PADS, provides a warm place to sleep, and breakfast and lunch to go the next morning for those with nowhere else to go in the Lake County Community. Our members volunteer to donate the ingredients and our students create the breakfasts during their regular Sunday school hours. The meals are delivered to the church to be served for breakfast on Monday morning. It is a chance for even our youngest students to understand the meaning of helping to eliminate hunger and the joy of Tikkun Olam.

If you have contributed to our "feed our community" campaign in any way, I would like to personally thank you and ask for your continued support. If you haven't yet become involved, I encourage you to join us. We will continue to announce the dates for volunteer opportunities both by email and on our website (under news and events). Additionally, this year we will have a display at our Rosh Hashanah Oneg to make it easy to contribute to our PADS project during the year.

Please feel free to contact Rabbi Jodi or me if you have any suggestions about new or existing projects. Your input is always welcome.

I look forward to seeing you at the High Holidays.

*Deb Rusnak*, President

### Beth Chaverim Mission Statement

Beth Chaverim is a place for individuals and families to explore their Jewish heritage and traditions, to learn to think critically and independently about religious and theological issues, and to develop meaningful and relevant Jewish identities through education.

**Beth Chaverim Humanistic Jewish Community**

1457 Wilmot Road  
Deerfield, IL 60015  
847-945-6512

**High Holiday Membership 2016**

**High Holiday Membership**  
(per person)

**\$136.00**

**Family Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member One** (Name and Date of Birth): \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation and/or special interest: \_\_\_\_\_

**Member Two** (Name and Date of Birth): \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation and/or special interest: \_\_\_\_\_

**Child 1** (name and Date of Birth): \_\_\_\_\_

**Child 2** (name and Date of Birth): \_\_\_\_\_

**Child 3** (name and Date of Birth): \_\_\_\_\_

**Address, City, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to join Beth Chaverim for the High Holidays.

A check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ accompanies this form.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## What's Happening at Beth Chaverim

### *Mah Nishmah*

#### Todah Rabah

*means thank you  
very much*

**Carolyn Lewis** for designing our new FAQ deck of cards, and the Lewis family for collating them into packets

**The Lewis family** for staffing the "Gleanings" table at the Farmers' Market in June; **the Pinkus family** and **the Enciso family** for staffing it in July; and **the Kantor family** for staffing it in August

The following people who donated food for the BBQ at the soup kitchen: **the Gusis family**, **Rabbi Jodi**, **the Kantor family**, **the Klawans family**, **the Koehler family**, **the Lewis family**, **the Matlin family**, **Meryle Imber Mitchel**, **the Rusnak family**, **the Shore family**, **Dick & Donna Strauss**, **Ken & Cara Strauss**, , and **the Young family**. And thanks to **Ben Kornfeld** and **Bridget Wild** for opening their home for the barbequing and baking; and the volunteers for cooking and at the church: **Jillana Enteen**, **the Gusis family**, **Hecht family**, **the Klawans family**, **the Koehler family**, **the Lewis family**, and **the Rusnak family**

**The Cheesecake Factory** for the gift card donated to the e-auction

**Kiley Hernandez** for staffing our table at the Jewish Festival

All families that donated school supplies for the school supply drive

Everyone who volunteered at Feed My Starving Children & Bernie's Book Bank



#### Donations in Memory of David Kornfeld

Jan Grant  
Annabelle Clinton Imber  
Richard and Dianna Rice  
The Stein Family

#### Mazel Tov

Lora Lewis for her winning entry to the calendar art contest from Shalom Memorial Park

Stacy Samuels on the birth of her grandson, Dean Henry Serota

Sophia Whittemore on the publication of her second book, "Death's Fool."

*Mazel Tov*  
מזל טוב

#### Welcome New Members

Jonathan Renshon and Michelle Schwarze



#### Donations

Jan Grant in honor  
of Lindsey's bat  
mitzvah

### Beth Chaverim Steering Committee Members

President : Deb Rusnak

Treasurer: David Kantor

Secretary: Steve Rusnak

Past President:

Robin Chessick

Members At Large:

Carolyn Lewis Dan Lewis Laurie Matlin  
Sue Pinkus Alan Solid

# The Humanist Café - Food for the Mind & the Appetite

## Creating Meaningful Celebrations

One of the most meaningful ways that human beings mark the passage of time is with the celebration of life cycle events. From the birth of a baby to the entry into emerging adulthood to marriage, we give meaning to these moments by creating rituals designed to move us, to connect us to our family and community. We celebrate in a way that honors the traditions developed in one's religious tradition, one's own family as well as the traditions of human beings at times of joyous transition. Creating such a ceremony inevitably brings a richly diverse amalgam of rituals and readings. We are of course part of a deeply connected web of humankind, and the joy of life cycle gatherings make us acutely aware of how much we all share where matters of love and happiness are concerned. Likewise, as the American Humanist Organization on its website, has written, "Holidays can bring people together and allow us to feel like a part of family and community. Traditions that center on family, friends, or community are a great way to enhance our lives with positive, meaningful social bonds. Doing things together, as a family or as part of a wider community, can help form social bonds so that we become part of each other's lives in a meaningful way and develop a sense of belonging and connection." Humanist celebrations are meaningful precisely because they focus on the matter at hand: the baby just born, the teen going through the rite of passage, the couple being married. For holidays, the theme of the holiday frames the celebration. In each instance, readings, poetry, songs apropos of the event are used to fill out the celebration. We are not limited to doing things "the way they have always been done." Instead we can fashion our own means of celebrating with intentionality and thoughtfulness, with integrity of language and of action.

### Crumb Cake

By Deb Rusnak



#### Dough Ingredients:

- 1 1/3 tbsp. dry yeast (2 pkg.)
- 1 2/3 cups very warm water (105 degrees)
- 2 large eggs
- 1/3-1/2 cup honey
- 1/3 cup oil (canola or light olive oil)
- 2 tsp. salt
- Approximately 6 cups flour
- 1 cup chocolate chips

#### For the egg wash:

- 1 egg

#### For the crumb topping:

- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 1/2 tbsp. oil

#### Directions

- In a very large bowl, dissolve yeast in 2/3 cup warm water with a pinch of sugar and let sit about 15-20 minutes until slightly frothy.
- Add the rest of the ingredients and half the flour. Mix until a loose batter forms. --Add the rest of the flour a couple of cups at a time, until the dough is soft but not sticky.
- Cover the dough with a wet towel or plastic wrap and put it in a warm place to rise for about 1 1/2 hours. Dough should double in size.
- Punch the dough down and let it rest for 10 minutes. Divide into 2 equal pieces.
- Roll into loaves (round or braided). Place loaves on lightly greased cookie sheets and let rise for another 1 hour
- Make the sweet crumb topping by putting the flour and sugar into a bowl. Slowly add the vanilla and oil, mixing with a spoon, or your fingertips until you it reaches crumb consistency.
- Egg wash the loaves and sprinkle with crumb topping.

Bake at 365° F on the lower rack of the oven for approximately 35 minutes. Loaves should be golden brown and firm on the bottom.



## Beth Chaverim Book Club

Please join us as we discuss the following books.



**On August 30 at 7:30 pm**, we will read a first novel by Israeli author Shani Boianjiu, *The People of Forever are Not Afraid*. It is a story of three young Israeli women conscripted into the Israel Defense Force. From the Washington Post, "At the end of "How to Tell a True War Story," Tim O'Brien suggests that a true war story is always a love story. It's a tribute to Boianjiu's artistry and humanity that she portrays those on both sides of the barbed wire as loved and feared. "The People of Forever Are Not Afraid" is a fierce and beautiful portrait of the damage done by war."

*Henna House* by Nomi Eve will be discussed on **September 26**. From jewishbookcouncil.org, "Nomi Eve has woven a magical and fascinating story, set in an obscure corner of history, unfamiliar to almost everyone. Adela Damari lives in a tiny village in the mountains of Yemen.

The Yemenite community that surrounds her follows ancient Jewish traditions and dress. . . .Adela, and most young children in her small town, live in deadly fear of the Confiscator, a Muslim official who has the legal right to seize orphaned Jewish children and give them up for adoption to Muslim families, where they will have to convert and forget their former lives. To prevent this, many Jews engage their seven and eight-year-olds to avoid their being kidnapped. An integral part of the Yemenite women's culture is the practice of henna: drawing elaborate paintings on each other at parties. Adela's mother forbids her to attend these parties until the arrival of another uncle, aunt, and cousin, Hani. Aunt Rahel is an expert henna artist and finally Adela is allowed to join this almost mysterious custom of women. She shows an affinity for the art, and through learning henna designs, learns how to read and write."

In **October** we will consider *The Houseguest* by Kim Brooks. In her first novel, Brooks looks at the experience of an American Jewish community to events in Europe during the war. From the Kirkus Review, "It's 1941, and the Jews of Europe are disappearing to the East or fleeing on ships that can find no safe harbor. This sophisticated first novel considers the response by American Jews to the ever more insistent evidence of racial conflagration across the Atlantic. An inevitable cloud of despair hangs over this timely, psychologically questing debut, since the reader, like many of the book's characters, already knows things will not end well. Brooks uses a handful of figures to express various responses of American Jews to the terrible news filtering out of Europe and the national reluctance to intervene. In Manhattan, firebrand Shmuel Spiro wants to raise a Jewish army to fight the Nazis; in upstate Utica, otherworldly rabbi Max Hoffman understands the hypocrisy behind America's refugee visa quotas and how high the bureaucratic bar is set; and Utica junkyard owner Abe Auer, a first-generation immigrant himself, remains haunted by his role in his Russian family's history. While opposing factions argue and disagree at conferences about how to rescue Hitler's victims, many middle-class Jews like Abe's wife and daughter find their comfortable lifestyles largely undisrupted. Then a refugee arrives, an atypical one—glamorous, unsettling Yiddish actress Ana Beidler. Mature in tone and unhurried in pace, Brooks' novel is at its best in its portraits of unhappy men confronted by cataclysmic events in the world and unexpressed longings at home."

In **November** we will discuss *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Montero* by David Kertzer will be discussed. This book will be the basis of Steven Spielberg's next film. From amazon.com, "Bologna: nightfall, June 1858. A knock sounds at the door of the Jewish merchant Momolo Mortara. Two officers of the Inquisition bust inside and seize Mortara's six-year-old son, Edgardo. As the boy is wrenched from his father's arms, his mother collapses. The reason for his abduction: the boy had been secretly "baptized" by a family servant. According to papal law, the child is therefore a Catholic who can be taken from his family and delivered to a special monastery where his conversion will be completed. With this terrifying scene, prize-winning historian David I. Kertzer begins the true story of how one boy's kidnapping became a pivotal event in the collapse of the Vatican as a secular power. The book evokes the anguish of a modest merchant's family, the rhythms of daily life in a Jewish ghetto, and also explores, through the revolutionary campaigns of Mazzini and Garibaldi and such personages as Napoleon III, the emergence of Italy as a modern national state. Moving and informative, *the Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* reads as both a historical thriller and an authoritative analysis of how a single human tragedy changed the course of history."

**Many if not most of the books we read in our book group are in the Beth Chaverim library.  
If you would like to borrow one of the books, just contact Rabbi Jodi.**







Over the past few years, we have had several families within our community that have had a temporary set back, ie: a surgery, loss of a job, family crises, etc.

"Helping Hands" is available to help with the needs of these families, either through delivering a meal, or driving to a doctor's appointment or any other minor needs a family could use. Over the past several months, assistance has been provided to several members.

If you would like to be added to the list of members who will assist when needed, please email us and Laurie Matlin will contact you when the need arises. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered already; it is greatly appreciated. Any family needing assistance can seek it by contacting Rabbi Jodi.



### ???? Membership Questions ????

Do you have questions about membership?  
Then contact our membership liaison  
Deb Rusnak at [dfishman63@comcast.net](mailto:dfishman63@comcast.net)

### Can You Help?

We are always looking for some assistance large and small for our events. Please let us know if you are interested to help with any of the following events this year or next.

- Helping Hands Committee
- E-Auction

## Humanistic Judaism 101

- Defines Judaism as the collective historic experience of the Jewish people and promotes a community of shared Jewish values.
- Promotes the development of a strong Jewish identity, especially for those Jews who cannot intellectually or emotionally embrace a supernatural being, or who are unsure about the existence of such a being and want to express their Judaism in an honest and meaningful way.
- Emphasizes the capacity in all human beings to improve themselves and the world through learning and the performance of good deeds.
- Teaches that ethical behavior is conduct which enhances the dignity of every individual.
- Understands that ritual without meaning is simply empty ritual and that liberal Judaism is authentic Judaism, without apologies to the present or nostalgic bows to the past.

Beth Chaverim is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism.

From Staying Sane in a Crazy World:

"I believe that the strength to cope with a crazy world comes from within ourselves, from the undiscovered power we have to look reality in the face and to go on living. . . .

I believe that the love of life means the love of reason and the love of beauty. . . .

I believe that human dignity comes from the courage to live with reality and to enjoy its challenge."

**Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine**



## Summer Events at Beth Chaverim

### Soup Kitchen



### Jewish Festival



### Race Against Hate *Team David*



### Farmer's Market



## Adult Education Continues

We will continue with an examination of siblings in the Bible, and from there we will examine royals.

Watch your e-mails and check the website calendar for the dates and times.

All sessions will continue to be held at Barnes & Noble in Deerfield.

### Standing On One Foot

(Judaism in 140 characters or less)

"Who is wise? One who learns from every man. . .Who is rich? One who is satisfied with his lot...Who is honorable? One who honors his fellows." (from Pirke Avot, Ethics of the Fathers)

## THE FAMOUS BETH CHAVERIM LOX BOX IS HERE!

### The Top 5 Reasons to Order:

- 1) You have to eat breakfast anyway, right?
- 2) Only the finest ingredients fresh from Upper Crust Bagels (can be frozen for later...)
- 3) Makes a wonderful gift to a friend to show your appreciation
- 4) A lot of the extra surprise 'stuff' you'll find in the bag and...
- 5) Your support of Beth Chaverim makes a big difference!



**INCLUDES: 6 BAGELS, ½ LB LOX, CREAM CHEESE  
ORANGE JUICE, TOMATO, ONION, COOKIES AND MUCH MORE.**

DATE: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
(orders must be placed by Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>)

COST: \$30.00 for one, \$25.00 for each additional

### TO ORDER:

**SEND YOUR PAYMENT TO: BETH CHAVERIM HUMANISTIC JEWISH  
COMMUNITY, 1457 WILMOT RD., DEERFIELD, 60015 OR SEND AN E-MAIL  
TO INFO@BETHCHAVRIM.NET AND PAY ON DELIVERY.**

Please fill out a separate page for each delivery address:

Circle One: PICK UP DELIVER TO HOME

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address (delivery): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# of lox boxes      Amount Due \$

Gift from: \_\_\_\_\_ (please advise the recipient to expect the Lox Box.)

## BETH CHAVERIM



Humanistic Jewish Community

### BETH CHAVERIM REMEMBERS

Yom Kippur is the more solemn of the Jewish High Holidays. It is a time to seek forgiveness and make amends. Another important part of Yom Kippur is the **Memorial Service**, a time to remember those who have gone before us. A feature of such a service is the reading of names of deceased relatives and friends. We invite you to submit the names of individuals you would like included in our service on October 12<sup>th</sup> as Beth Chaverim remembers.

Please submit those names on this form and return it with any memorial donation by September 28<sup>th</sup> to:

Beth Chaverim  
1457 Wilmot Road  
Deerfield, Illinois 60015

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Yahrzeit or anniversary of death if known: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Yahrzeit or anniversary of death if known: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Yahrzeit or anniversary of death if known: \_\_\_\_\_

1457 Wilmot Road Deerfield, Illinois 60015 (847) 945-6512

[www.bethchaverim.net](http://www.bethchaverim.net)

[info@bethchaverim.net](mailto:info@bethchaverim.net)



## Beth Chaverim

A quarterly publication of

### Beth Chaverim

Humanistic Jewish Community

1457 Wilmot Road

Deerfield, IL 60015

847-945-6512

[www.BethChaverim.net](http://www.BethChaverim.net)

Rabbi

Jodi Kornfeld

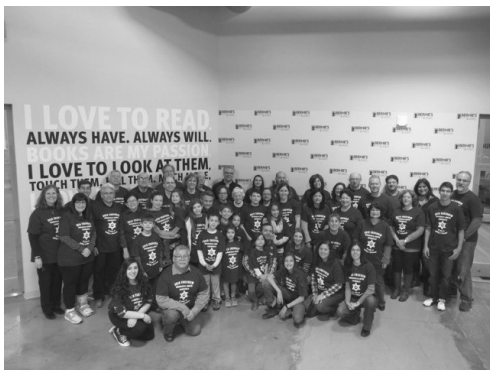
Administrator

Linda Horn

Editor

Brooke Perlman

Affiliated With



**Beth Chaverim is the place where you  
can make a difference.**

**Start the New Year with us!**



**Visit our website to learn more about us - [www.BethChaverim.net](http://www.BethChaverim.net)**