

MARCH 2025

ADAR 5785

SHOFAR

VOLUME 82, ISSUE 5



Temple Beth El

Bakersfield, California

*Bring your whole self,
whoever you are*

Letter from the Rabbi	3
Letter from the President	5
Thanks to Our Contributors	7
World Zionist Congress	8
Moments in our Lives	9
March Calendar	10
Upcoming Events	11
Sisterhood & Book Club	12
Celebration Wear	13
Yahrzeits	14



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE RABBI

Honoring the Divine Image—An Inconvenient Truth: Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger and Ali Abu Awwad

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger is a member in good standing of the Rabbinical Council of America, the leading Orthodox institution in the US. Born in New York, he moved to Israel as a young man and lived in Alon Shvut where he received Smicha at [Yeshivat Har Etzion](#), in Gush Etzion (an area just outside of Jerusalem recaptured in 1967 after a [massacre of 127 Jews](#) a day before Israel declared independence in 1948). His credentials as a rabbi, an educator, and religious thinker are impeccable.



His choice to leave the comforts of the United States and to live in Gush Etzion, which was settled by the same voices that established “Gush Emunim,” the ultranationalist Orthodox settler movement (founded by Zvi Yehudah Kook, the son of the influential Rav Kook) that became an extreme voice for settlements in Israel during the seventies and eighties and even sparked a [Jewish terrorist organization](#), demonstrates his ardent Zionism. His move to the Gush in 1983 was “out a deep sense of the fact that Jewish destiny has come to a deep consummation, and I wanted to be part of the Jewish destiny...In front of my eyes, I saw the fulfillment of 2,000 years of Jewish dreams and hopes, and the resilience of a people, after so much destruction. I saw the triumph of the spirit, the fulfillment and consummation of our people, and I saw tremendous justice in it. I saw the triumph of the human spirit. I saw justice all around me.”

This hard-right, pro-settler worldview makes it all the more fascinating that after a stint teaching in Dallas when he returned to Alon Shvut in 2014, his interactions with local Palestinians, particularly Ali Abu Awwad, a West Bank Palestinian militant-turn-nonviolent peace activist, transformed his thinking. Awwad led Schlesinger to recognize that Palestinians love the land they inhabit every bit as much as he does. He writes:

“I heard stories that were so different from my stories, stories that created strange unfamiliar narratives from the same building blocks as my own narrative, but which I could not reject out of hand. The stories I heard—of deep connection to the land, of exile, of suffering, of humiliation, of loved one lost in the conflict—were authentic and they were real. Never before had I heard such stories. And they affected me deeply.” [Meeting My Palestinian Neighbors For the First Time](#)

It was the humanity of the Palestinians that led him to build a new organization, [Roots שורשים جذور](#), together with Awwad. He states in a [video](#) on his website that

“For all these years, the Palestinians for me were like the grey, drab senior that passes in the background of the movie, my movie, my Jewish movie, but they are not part of the plot. They were transparent, or I was blind. I lived as if my story, my Jewish story, was the only story in the land. There was no other story, no other people. Today, I hope that I know better....I know that there are two peoples in the land, two stories in the land, and to live your life as if there’s only one story is to mistake part of the truth for the whole truth. I DON’T WANT TO BE THERE ANY LONGER.

One might argue, “This is all fine and good, but this video was produced before October 7th when thousands of Palestinians invaded, raped, pillaged, and murdered over 1200 Israelis and kidnapped 250 more, is he still so positive about coexistence?” Here is [what he wrote just a couple of days ago](#), as we enter the month of Adar:

The pain of the Jewish People at this juncture in time is exceedingly great. We are bent under the weight of tragedy, mourning and trauma. But I refuse to let our pain close off my heart from the pain of the Palestinian People who are undergoing tremendously difficult ordeals at this time. There is no competition of suffering, one people’s suffering cannot be compared or ranked in relationship to the other people’s suffering. They are both immeasurable. And they are both terrible. **One people’s pain does not undo or cancel out the other people’s pain. I have room in my heart to feel both, the pain of my people, the Jewish People, and the pain of the Palestinian People.** And that makes the burden even heavier. But I believe that this very heavy burden is the key to a better future for both Jews and Palestinians. If a critical mass of people on both sides could only feel the pain on the other side, then we would be well on our way to solving this conflict for both sides. Today is the first day of the Hebrew month of Adar just as we are now standing at the beginning of the Muslim both of Ramadan. May we all find the resources to somehow make for ourselves a joyous Adar and a blessed Ramadan. It all depends on us and on no one else.

Many of us feel that the earth is crumbling from under us. Perhaps voices like that of Hanan Schlesinger, or of his Ali Abu Awwad, will remind us that, as I am apt to write, the sun is still [שורשים جذور](#), inspiring codirector of Roots shining on rainy days, whether we are able to see it or not. Remember, it took the Israelites 400 years of misery to leave Egypt, and it took Jews 2000 years of exile to reestablish a Jewish homeland in the land of Israel. Or as Unitarian thinker and abolitionist Theodore Parker wrote in 1858 when he assailed the evils of American slavery :(copied a century later by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

“I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice.” (Parker, [Ten Sermons of Religion](#), p. 48).

May the wars end! Both Domestic and Foreign! Sha’alu Sh’lom Y’rushalayim, Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

Blessings,



Rabbi Jonathan Klein



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Shalom Friends who are Family,

I have just returned from a medical volunteer mission to Israel, coordinated by the Jewish National Fund (JNF). It was an amazing experience and opportunity to hear from leaders and physicians, as well as volunteer in rehabilitating communities near Gaza, feeding soldiers, picking crops, and connecting with family and childhood friends.

The CEO of Israel's Children's Hospital described to us the colossal task of securing the lives of patients and providers in a major hospital at a time of unexpected war. What an impressive achievement! Attending to the emotional and physical needs of children and adults who have experienced unimaginable physical and emotional traumas, including captivity, is uncharted territory that physicians and care providers are managing with dedication, ingenuity, and love. I listened in awe to a surgeon who was on call at Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva on the morning of October 7, 2023. He described the hundreds of critically injured patients that just kept coming; the teams of care providers of all persuasions, Jews, Muslims, Christians; who just kept doing what they do best - performing miracles. The photos of the wounds and piles of gurneys are etched in my heart. There was no time to transfer people, and attempting to do so was not even safe. They just kept going and treating and improvising. Medical care in Israel is second to none!

We listened to 2 young people who survived the Nova Festival Massacre. They described the frantic efforts to run away, the mass confusion, the paralyzing fear, and the loss of friends. They talked about the process of attempting to emotionally recover.

Everyone in Israel talks about October 7 all the time. Young people talk about the need to secure their future so their children will never experience this, and older adults fret about geopolitics and the survival of our Jewish Country. Everywhere, there are signs urging the release of the hostages and reminding us not to get used to, not to normalize the fact that there are captives in Gaza.

We got to hear from the physician who oversees the health of the hostage families and of the returning hostages. The implications of physical and mental health for the whole country are enormous. At that point, we were at 500 days of oppressive stress and worry. I participated, with many Israelis, in 500 minutes of fasting. A small act of solidarity and prayer for the urgent and safe return of everyone. We also did some manual labor, reminiscent of my previous trip with Rabbi Klein, before anyone started organizing missions. It is always meaningful to contribute sweat equity. Something about refurbishing



playgrounds, picking tomatoes, and feeding soldiers is simply joyful. This time, when we visited a base located at the corner where Egypt, Gaza, and Israel form a triangle, we were impressed by a singing troop of especially abled soldiers, and we danced for hours with the soldiers on base (those not on patrol at that moment). Such joyful noise the folks on the other side of the borders heard!!
Traveling with JNF was a great experience. I did not know anyone when I joined the trip, but I left with cherished new friends. I encourage you to join a mission or join Rabbi Klein in 2026 for an unforgettable experience.

There is always a reason for celebration,
יש תמיד סיבה למסיבה

Avital Anders
President, Temple Beth EL



Our Contributors:

thank you

Memorials/Yahrzeits

- Bob & Heidi Allison: *in memory of Bert Kantor*
- Greg & Rose Broida: *in memory of Ruth Broida Harter*
- Brent Eastep
- Selwyn & Cecily Kay: *in memory of Valerie Segil*
- Ronald & Laura Lauria: *in memory of Thomas Lauria Jr.*
- Melanie Rudnick: *in memory of Milton Rudnick*
- Ilene Schechter: *in memory of Aaron Harry" Somkin"*
- Glenn & Anita Singer: *in memory of Debbie Brown*

Kol Nidre Donation

- Leonard & Carla Epstein
- Ronald & Laura Lauria
- Irvin Pike & Pamela Elisheva
- Philip Rudnick

Building Fund

- David Anaya & Celeste Caballero

Tree of Life

- Irvin Pike & Pamela Elisheva

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

- Leonard & Carla Epstein: *in memory of Warren Gold*
- Mary Gerena

Caring Committee

- Irwin & Elizabeth Harris: *in honor of David Dudovitz*
- Ilene Schechter: *Chardonnay Shabbat Oneg*



Contribute Online: <https://templebethelbakersfield.org/donation>

We are grateful for all contributions!

WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS 2025

US WZC elections will take place March 10 – May 4, 2025.

Once every five years, we have a Jewish civic duty – to Israel and to our people – to cast our vote and make our voices heard in the World Zionist Congress (WZC) election. In a few short weeks, on March 10, voting will open for the 2025 WZC and you can vote for our Vote Reform slate.

This is your chance to stand up for democracy, security, and peace in Israel. Our Vote Reform slate will make the safe return of all the hostages their number one priority. They will fight to make sure that your children and your children's children are recognized as Jewish in Israel – a right that our ultra-orthodox opponents in this election are trying to take away.

Please commit here today to casting your ballot for Vote Reform from March 10 through May 4 and sign up for a reminder to vote when the voting period opens.



**Moments in
our Lives**

**HAPPY
Anniversary!**

Joshua & Edith Rudnick	March 10
William & Laura Wolfe	March 10
Stacy & Mark Davis	March 19
Michael & La Zelle Broida	March 23
Jeffrey Russinsky & Linda Morales	March 24
Jana & Joshua Reichert	March 28

**Happy
Birthday**

יום הולדת שמח

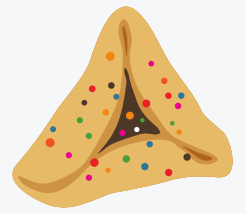
Esther Brandon	March 1	Jill Eglan	March 17
Elaine White	March 3	Lucas Baron	March 18
Julia Brennan	March 4	Isabella Rudnick	March 20
Robert Smith	March 13	Michael Feldman	March 22
Jeffrey Russinsky	March 14	Stacey Rodriguez	March 27
Dawn Baron	March 15	Jeanette Delijani	March 29
Linda Hakimi	March 15	Fermel-Sharmaine McCay	March 30
Peggie Soltis	March 16	Courtney McConnell	March 30
Tom Armistead	March 17		





MARCH

Adar



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	<p>Services</p> <p>Religious School</p> <p>Adult Education</p> <p>Leadership Meetings</p> <p>Community Events</p> <p>Sister Hood Event</p> <p>Parsha of the Week</p> <p>Jewish Holidays</p> <p>Jewish Date</p>					<p>1 <i>1 Adar</i></p> <p><i>Rosh Chodesh</i></p> <p><i>Terumah</i></p> <p>5-6 pm</p> <p>Class on Ecclesiastes (by Zoom)</p>
2	<p>3 11:30 am</p> <p>Simcha Set @ Village Grill</p> <p>7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Hebrew reading class with Rabbi Klein</p>	<p>4 6:30 - 7:30 pm</p> <p>(Zoom) Religious Practices Committee</p> <p>7:00 pm</p> <p>Board Meeting via Zoom</p>	<p>5 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Hebrew reading class with Rabbi Klein</p>	6	<p>7 6 pm</p> <p>First Friday Shabbat Family Services</p>	<p>8 <i>Tetzaveh</i></p> <p>9:30 am</p> <p>Shabbat Morning Service w Cong Bnai Jacob</p>
<p>9 9:30-12:30</p> <p>Religious School</p> <p>1:00 PM</p> <p>Hamantashen Bake</p>	<p>10 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Hebrew reading class with Rabbi Klein</p>	<p>11 9-9:30 am</p> <p>Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom)</p>	<p>12 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Hebrew reading class with Rabbi Klein</p>	<p>13 <i>Fast of Esther</i></p>	<p>14 <i>Purim</i></p> <p>6 pm</p> <p>Purim Shabbat</p>	<p>15 <i>Ki Tisa</i></p> <p>5 - 6 pm</p> <p>Class on Ecclesiastes (by Zoom)</p>
<p>16 9:30-12:30</p> <p>Religious School</p> <p>2:30 PM</p> <p>S.H. Leader Meet</p> <p>3:00 PM</p> <p>S.H. Gen Meet</p>	<p>17 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Hebrew reading class with Rabbi Klein</p> <p>1:00 PM</p> <p>Sisterhood Bookclub</p>	<p>18 9-9:30 am</p> <p>Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom)</p>	<p>19 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Jewish Life Cycle Class</p>	20	<p>21 7 pm</p> <p>Shabbat Services</p>	<p>22 <i>Vayak'hel</i></p> <p>5 - 6 pm</p> <p>Class on Ecclesiastes (by Zoom)</p>
<p>23 9:30-12:30</p> <p>Religious School</p>	<p>24 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Jewish Life Cycle Class</p>	<p>25 9-9:30 am</p> <p>Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom)</p>	<p>26 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Jewish Life Cycle Class</p>	<p>27 <i>1 Shevat</i></p> <p><i>Rosh Chodesh</i></p>	<p>28 7 pm</p> <p>Learning Shabbat</p>	<p>29 <i>Hachodesh</i></p> <p>5 - 6 pm</p> <p>Class on Ecclesiastes (by Zoom)</p>
<p>30 <i>1 Nissan</i></p> <p><i>Rosh Chodesh</i></p> <p>9:30-12:30</p> <p>Religious School</p>	<p>31 7-8:30 pm</p> <p>Jewish Life Cycle Class</p>					

Upcoming Events:



A poster for a Shabbat Megillah Reading event. It features a yellow background with a pattern of small, colorful stars. In the center, there are four stylized, colorful masks (blue, orange, purple, and light blue) with various expressions. Below the masks, the text reads: "SHABBAT MEGILLAH READING", "Friday, March 14 6 pm", and "Costumes and revelry highly encouraged".

**SHABBAT
MEGILLAH READING**

Friday, March 14
6 pm

Costumes and revelry highly encouraged



A calendar titled "UPCOMING DATES" for Temple Beth El, Glenside, California. The calendar is set against a background of orange and yellow geometric patterns. It lists three upcoming events:

- 12** APRIL: PASSOVER, FIRST NIGHT
- 20** APRIL: PASSOVER ENDS
- 02** MAY: JNF SHABBAT DINNER WITH DOV GORDON

Temple Beth El
Glenside, California

**UPCOMING
DATES**

12 APRIL	PASSOVER, FIRST NIGHT
20 APRIL	PASSOVER ENDS
02 MAY	JNF SHABBAT DINNER WITH DOV GORDON

Sisterhood Chailights

Sisterhood members continue to participate in many exciting and interesting activities! All activities can be started at any time and no prior attendance is needed.

GENERAL MEETING- Sunday, March 16th @ 3:00 pm via TBE Zoom

LEADERSHIP MEETING- Sunday, March 16th @ 2:30 pm via TBE Zoom

BOOK CLUB- Sunday, April 6th at 1pm via TBE Zoom with the author!!

The current book is *The Goldie Standard* by Simi Monheit.

Rosh Chodesh- March 30th @ 6:30 pm via TBE Zoom.

COOKING CLASS- Sunday, March 9th @ TBE to make Hamantashans for Purim!

SISTERHOOD DUES ARE NOW DUE!! \$18 FOR THE WHOLE YEAR!! You can pay online at the TBE website or send a check made out to WOTBE with sisterhood on the envelope!!

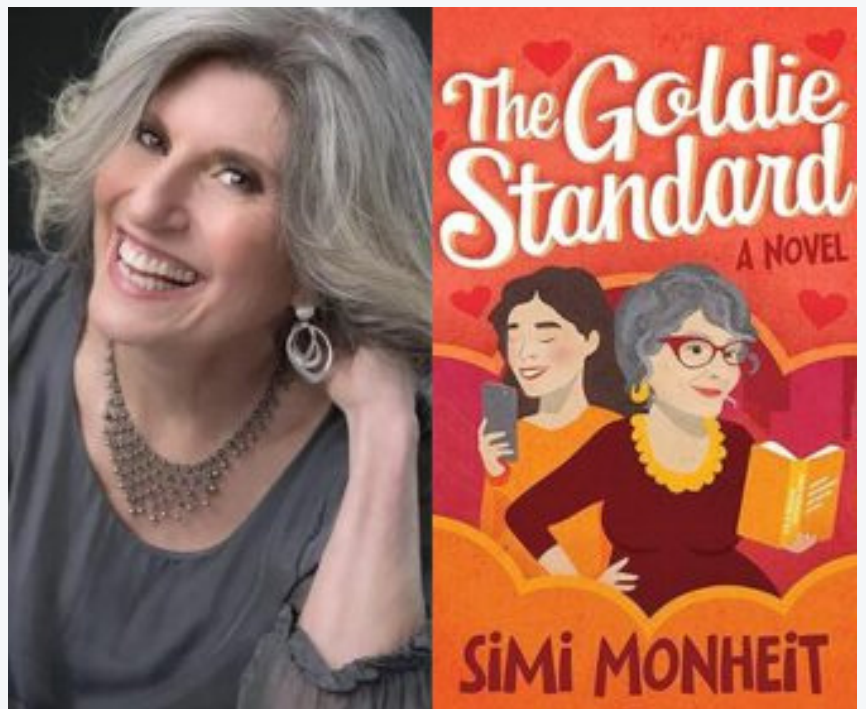
Please consider joining some great women! We are now on Facebook. If you would like an invite to join our group please let one of the leadership team know!

All Sisterhood activities are via TBE Zoom and in person, as noted.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me, Helen Armistead- Co-Vice President/Secretary; armisteadlmft@gmail.com

Sisterhood Book Club

We are enjoying our current read, *The Goldie Standard*. We will meet on Sunday, April 6th at 6:30 pm via TBE Zoom) with the author. Yes, the author, Simi Monheit will join our book discussion via Zoom to discuss her funny novel.



CELEBRATION WEAR



Temple Beth El is always ready to celebrate! You can now show everyone that you are ready to celebrate with us and help support TBE at the same time! We have t-shirts for the hot summer weather and sweatshirts for the cooler winter weather!

Please go to the TBE website to order yours today! We have both youth and adult sizing!!

If you would like to order by check please call or email Helen Armistead so she can help you!

She can be reached at 661.472-1758 or armisteadlmft@gmail.com

**ALWAYS A
REASON TO
CELEBRATE**

**יש תמיד
סיבה
למסיבה!!**

YAHREZEITS

January 2025

+Memorialized on the Yahrzeit plaques on the wall in the foyer

FEBRUARY 28 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHREZEITS

+Helen Shewach Goldberg: remembered by TBE	February 28
Adolph Bernstein: father of Stacy Davis	March 1
Ruth Broida Harter: mother of Greg Broida; grandmother of Michael Broida	March 1
Yehudit Sheriki: mother of Haya Klein	March 1; Adar 1
Michael Calvin Brust: father of David Brust	March 2
Harold Greenstein: father of Jay Greenstein	March 2
Risha Grosberg: remembered by TBE	March 2; Adar 2
Estelle Salnitsky: aunt of Esther Brandon	March 3
+Edwin K. Baum: remembered by TBE	March 3
Fay Berger: great-grandmother of Leah Bank	March 4
David Kohn: great-uncle of Irvin Pike	March 4
Hyman Krute: uncle of Jackie Rudnick ז"ר	March 5
Sheila Overture: cousin of Irvin Pike	March 5
Art Rockoff: husband of Jan Rockoff	March 5
Dan Neal: remembered by TBE	March 6
Marie Redding: mother of Jeanne Moore ז'ל	March 6

MARCH 7 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHREZEITS

Melvin Adelstein: uncle of Larry Saslaw	March 7
Yvonne Bitton: mother of Dorise Bitton	March 7; Adar 7
+Morris Katz: remembered by TBE	March 7
Esther Schwartz: grandmother of Diane Andrews	March 8
Sherman Klein: father of Jonathan Klein	March 9; Adar 9
+Abraham Gilfenbain: remembered by TBE	March 9
+Miriam Lipcowitz: remembered by TBE	March 9
Rabbi Israel Neuman: uncle of Heidi Allison	March 10; Adar 10
+Sarah Pearlmutter: remembered by TBE	March 10
Tom Bettis: husband of Susan Bettis	March 11
Herbert Blatt: father of Barbara Kessler; grandfather of David Kessler	March 11; Adar 11
William Fish: grandfather of Larry Fish	March 11
+Julius Grosberg: remembered by TBE	March 11
Barry Schwartz: father of Stacey Rodriguez	March 12
Mike Scott: foster son of Stan & Norma Schwartz ז"ר	March 12
+Stephen Kramer Strauss: remembered by TBE	March 12

MARCH 14 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Esther Flaxman: aunt of Larry Saslaw	JMarch 14
Mazal Hadida: grandmother of Dorise Bitton	March 14; Adar 14
+Bessie Kaplan: mother of Marsha Parr	March 14
+Jean R. Segel: remembered by TBE	March 16
+Herbert Baron: remembered by TBE	March 15; Adar 15
William Greenberg: father of Ella Abrams	March 15; Adar 15
+Marilyn Greenlee: mother of Marilyn Press; mother of Arnold Reed	March 15
Sarah Kasse: great-aunt of Steven Magnus; great-great aunt of Elliott Magnus	March 15
Sam Saslaw: uncle of Larry Saslaw	March 15
Elijah Escobedo: son of Carol and Raul Escobedo; grandson of Wynne Waugaman	March 17
Samuel J. Young: father of Robert Young	March 18
+Isaac N. Marks: remembered by TBE	March 18
Peter Perez: step-brother of Joshua Rudnick	March 19
Allen Wolfe: father of Willam Wolfe	March 19
Zelda Baron: friend of Mary Speare	March 20
Jess Leighton: father of Jan Rockoff	March 20; Adar 20

MARCH 21 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Bradley Dillon: grandson of Peggie Soltis	March 21
Dr. Ralph Franklin: friend of Mary Speare	March 21
Ida Kruger: great aunt of Sarah Mawhirter	March 21
Jay Leopold: brother-in-law of Judy Strauss	March 21; Adar 21
Moshe Eliezar Neuman: grandfather of Heidi Allison	March 21; Adar 21
Shifra Neuman: grandmother of Heidi Allison	March 21; Adar 21
Rifka Rubenstein Sprung: great-grandmother of Heidi Allison	March 21; Adar 21
+Arline Pike: mother of Irvin Pike	March 22
+William Pike: grandfather of Irvin Pike	March 22
Rae Cherry: aunt of Helen Armistead & Jeff Schwartz	March 24; Adar 24
+Isaac Shewach: remembered by TBE	March 24; 18 Adar II
Peter Golombek: remembered by Carla and Len Epstein	March 25
Geitel Stern: great-grandmother of Steven Magnus; great-great grandmother of Elliott Magnus	March 25
+Erich Rosenbaum: remembered by TBE	March 25
Max Gruber: father of John Fried 7"r	March 26
Jim Humphrey: father of Karlyn Farber and Laura Reyes; grandfather of Kari Aguilar	March 26
Tony Rodriquez: father of Adam Rodriquez	March 26
Stanley Schwartz: father of Helen Armistead & Jeff Schwartz	March 26; Adar 26
Hannah Somkin: grandmother of Ilene Schechter	March 27; Adar 27

MARCH 28 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Anne Caplan: mother of Diane Rogers	March 28; Adar 28
+Minnie Meyers: remembered by TBE	March 28
+Emile Stein: remembered by TBE	March 29
Hyman Hoffman: grandfather of Steven Magnus; great-grandfather of Elliott Magnus	March 30
Bruce Pagni: friend of Peggie Soltis	March 30
Milton Shilkrou: uncle of Judy Strauss	March 30; Nissan 1
+Harry Gilfenbain: remembered by TBE	March 30
+Hyman Hoffman: remembered by TBE	March 30
Rudolph Cohn: father of Ethel Cohn Katz	March 31
Florence Burstein Goldy: mother of Lynne Joseph	March 31
+H. Oscar Drasin: remembered by TBE	March 31
+Heidi Rozanne Mailman: remembered by TBE	March 31
+Anna Solin Shewach: remembered by TBE	March 31; 9 Nisan
David Kosakowski: husband of Dorise Bitton	April 1, Nissan 3
Ione Lollar: mother of Laura Wolfe	April 1
+Marvin David Teplitz: brother-in-law of Mary Speare	April 1
+Albert Klakoff: remembered by TBE	April 1
Craig Backer: friend of Shyanne Southern	April 2
Esther Bernstein: mother of Stacy Davis	April 2
Pierre Laborde: father of Fanny Jacobs	April 2
Abraham Levey: great-grandfather of Irvin Pike	April 2
+Sam Rudnick: brother of Phil Rudnick and Miriam Stull; uncle of Daniel Rudnick, Libbie Mahan, & Joshua Rudnick	April 2
Tommy Uhacz: son-in-law of Muriel Vekas 7"7	April 2
Susan Ferguson: wife of Stan Ferguson	April 3
Virginia Ferguson: mother of Stan Ferguson	April 3



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JEFF SCHWARTZ

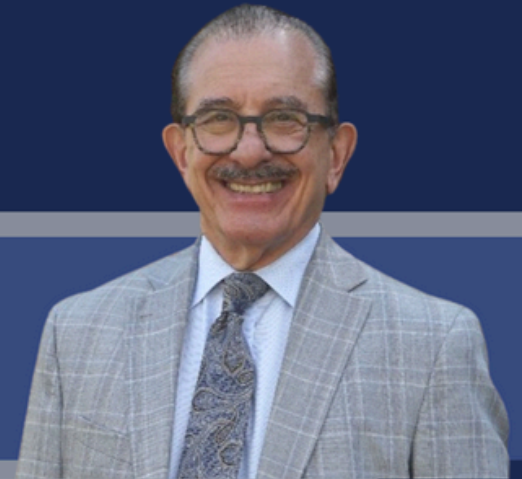
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Bakersfield, California

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