



Community Chaplain

Chaplain Larry Batchlear is available for Jewish Life-cycle events and can be reached at 352-7191

Business Office

Larry Batchlear (806-355-0023)

Looking for articles.

Have you read a good book lately?

Or perhaps an inspirational reading or poem? Do you have a recipe you would like to share?

Temple B'nai Israel newsletter is published monthly. Submissions for the newsletter are due the 21st of the prior month. Send to:

bnaisraelamarillo@gmail.com

Attn. Mary Blinderman

We welcome your contributions to the newsletter.

Know someone interested in becoming a part of our community? New to town? Or looking to find a way to connect with Temple B'nai Israel? Contact any of our board members and we will be glad to assist you.

February 2022

President's Message

"..there is no way to get from here to there except by joining hands, marching together."

Shalom chaverim!

Those are powerful words from our Mishkan T'filah prayer book!

Last week I met with numerous committees, to get things back on track and begin planning 2022. After our Adult Ed committee meeting, Preston said those words. That phrase reflects strength in numbers and optimism for our Temple future, and honestly, it was the exact words I needed to hear at the moment I needed to hear them. We are at a crossroads for building our Temple to serve future generations, and we need every one of you to help.

I came into the committee meetings with a head full of a jumbled laundry list of To Dos and concerns. I left the meetings with a sense of peace and optimism. So many people have stepped up to help! THANK YOU!!

We will continue having Zoom services for a while, until our local COVID numbers improve. This will be in multiple formats: a live leader at the Temple, broadcasting on our Facebook livestream, or on our Go To Meeting platform. We hope this variety will also allow people from out of town to lead or co-lead a Shabbat service. WE NEED LAY LEADERS!! Don't be shy! We have a number of members who are happy to co-lead or mentor. Having a variety of lay leaders lends to a variety of service styles...something for everyone! If you would like to lead or co-lead a service, simply tell any of our Temple board members or email the Temple and we will contact you. This is a great opportunity for our out-of-town members to participate more fully! We are also looking at options for rabbinical, or perhaps even cantorial, leaders to come periodically. And we will continue to join Rabbi Goldmann and Lubbock/CSI on the Shabbats that we do not have a leader.

Adult ed will resume in February! It will become a Book club format, with a different facilitator each week who will get the discussion going.

Mary B. has offered to be a part time administrative assistant for the Temple. Thank you Mary! We appreciate you being at the Temple and making sure everything is in order!

Our House & Security committee will monitor for any repairs, etc. If anyone sees anything that needs attention, you may call or email the Temple and the request will be forwarded to that committee.

The final meeting this week was with a newly formed Grant committee. I found out that we have at least 3 members who have grant writing experience! Additionally, this appears to be an avenue worth exploring, as it turns out that there could be numerous grant opportunities that the Temple may qualify for. Stay tuned!

We are indeed "joining hands, marching together," and I have deep gratitude for every one of you who have offered your help! If you are not currently in our "band of brothers," it is time for you to be. Your Temple needs you NOW!

Stay well! I hope to see you at the Temple soon!

With love and gratitude,

Candy

Adult Education Classes

We have been discussing the book, *People Love Dead Jews*, by Dara Horn. We've been on break, but will resume on February 6th, through GoToMeeting at <https://www.gotomeet.me/TempleAdministrationBnaiIsrael>.

Please join us on Sunday mornings, at 10:30 CT.

REFUAH SHELEMAH

The following people are in our thoughts and prayers:

Joan Altman	Bruce Kriegel
Andrew Alpar	Mabel Knox
Alan Alpar	David Altman
Mike Hibbs	Neal Scott
Joel Kaplan	Rosa Roberts
Larry Katz	Alexis Roberts
Carrie Delaney (Yael bat Avraham Avinu)	Jennifer Hathcoat
	The Harrison Family

Please offer prayers that they all have a full and speedy recovery.

February Birthdays

2/2 Charles Hathcoat
 2/4 Jo Eve Rebecca Shay
 2/7 Hannah (Teddy) Schachter
 2/9 Kathryn Kothari
 2/9 Carly Kaplan
 2/11 Larry Batchlear
 2/13 Cheri Harrison
 2/18 Gayle Reily
 2/19 Carolyn Dowlen
 2/20 Alan Shapiro
 2/22 Michelle Shebowich
 2/23 Cari Howell
 2/28 Dr. Leslie Reese

Shabbat Services

Please join us for “virtual” services this month. February 4th services will be lead “Virtually” at the Temple by Preston Doerfler and February 18th services will be lead “Virtually” at the Temple by Larry Batchlear. We will join Congregation Shaareth Israel in Lubbock “Virtually” on February 11th and February 25th. Check your email weekly for Candy’s announcement on the “virtual” time and place for Shabbat services.

February Anniversaries:

2/7 Candy & Andrew Alpar
 2/14 Patricia and Alan Shapiro

Please consider donating to the Temple

It is a wonderful way to:

- Mark a simchah
- Honor someone’s memory
- Wish someone a speedy recovery
- Express Gratitude

Note:

*If you would like to be included in the birthdays and anniversaries, please send an email to bnaiisraelamarillo@gmail.com
 Attn: Newsletter Editor*

Temple Contacts

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Karen Schroeder, Secretary 681-5196
Mary Blinderman, Treasurer 372-9401



In Memory of Bob Blinderman

June 23, 1948 ~ December 16, 2021

Bob was the son of Morris and Raye Blinderman and graduated from Amarillo High School in 1966. He attended Amarillo College, University of Houston and graduated from West Texas State University with a degree in Business Administration in 1971. He then enrolled in law school at Texas Tech University, graduating with a Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1974.

After passing the bar, he moved to Austin, Texas, working in the office of former Texas Attorney General, Waggoner Carr. He then opened his own private practice and lived in Austin for the next 8 years. While in Austin he met and married the love of his life, Mary Hitchcock. Bob and Mary returned to Amarillo in 1981, where Bob established a private practice. In addition, he worked with Attorney Jim Brown in Canyon, Texas.

Besides his legal career, Bob was very active and devoted to the congregation of Temple B'nai Israel, which his grandfather Jake Blinderman helped found in 1929. He served as President for many years and most recently as Treasurer. One of his most important projects at the Temple was establishing the annual Thanksgiving Gathering in 1995, embracing the many diverse cultures and religions of Amarillo. Just this past November, the Thanksgiving Gathering celebrated its 25th anniversary. Bob was also an active member of the Lubbock chapter of the Scottish Rite Temple and was a Master Mason of the Palo Duro Lodge.

Bob was always a passionate teacher. He loved his law classes at Amarillo College and West Texas State University as well as the weekly adult education classes at the Temple.

However, the real essence of Bob was his generous spirit and strong empathy for all those in need. He was always guided by his strong beliefs in ethics and integrity. He was a true mensch in every sense of the word.

May his soul be bound up in the bonds of life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all our donors for your continued support! (January 25, 2022)

General Fund

In Support of Temple B'nai Israel

Anonymous

Anonymous

Anonymous

For equipment expenses for Remote Services and Meetings

Alex Rimmel Toombs

For Memorial Service Oneg

Neal Scott

In Memory of Scott Hyde

Barry and Dyana Duman

In Loving Memory of my parents Jan and Heinz Reach

Faye Weinstein

Tree of Life

In Memory of Bob Blinderman

Susan Blinderman

Phillip and Jennifer Shipley

Memorial Board Plaque

In Memory of Bob Blinderman

Mary Blinderman

Susan Blinderman

In Memory of and to Honor Bob Blinderman

Anonymous

Elizabeth Avakian

Sandy and Lou Bennett

David and Jacqueline Blinderman

Susan Blinderman

Gordon and Deidra Cizon

Marty and Sue Cohen

Patricia Dobbs

Stuart and Carolyn Dowlen

Barry and Dyana Duman

John and Claire Duncan

Rabbi Alexis Erdheim

Friends of the Amarillo Public Library

Nick and Linda Goldstein

King and Dianne Hill

Cari Howell

Paul Katz and Linda Cook Katz

Ellen Nizzi

Sammie Jo and Jerry Pack

Glenna Raffkind

Cleon and Lily Roberts

Daniel and Mary Schneider

Michelle Shebowich

Virginia Sicola

The Tallert Family

Phil and Nancy Woodall

Heidi Van Zanten

Chapter AI PEO



Rosa and Alexis Roberts

New Feature “Getting To Know You”

1. What are your first memories of Temple B’nai Israel?

After receiving a broader education in 2016, I set out to find my spiritual outlet. This time, I was seeking a spiritual practice that fit me, rather than a practice which demanded me to fit into it. I was relentless. Over a series of months, I tried several different fellowships and congregations. I attended an Episcopalian church, Metropolitan Community Church, Methodist, and even a mosque. Eventually I found myself walking in through the doors of a small synagogue, Temple B’nai Israel of Amarillo, Texas. After three years of attending services and participating in holidays, I finally concluded that this was the path I wanted to take and requested Rabbi Erdheim to oversee and guide my conversion and thus the journey began.

Certainly some of my most favorite memories from Temple are the interfaith thanksgivings that seem to be getting larger every year. Seeing the various religious communities come together to celebrate community, generosity and our shared love of human kind. Often times, I have brought extra tag along friends with me to these group events, whether it be Hanukkah, Thanksgiving or even a simple service... each time I feel such a sense of pride and gratitude knowing I can offer space to these individuals to experience the uniqueness and tenderness that I find within the Temple walls and Jewish community.

2. What is the main thing you like about Temple B’nai Israel?

Perhaps my most favorite thing about Temple B’nai Israel is how open and loving the community has been in accepting not only myself into the congregation but also my wife and our children. I could not be more grateful for the welcoming arms we have fallen into as we navigate our way into living a more Jewish life.

In my conversion journey I have certainly been introduced to an array of prayers that are encouraged to help acknowledge every moment, every blessing and every breath that has been given to us, which has only taught me to live a life more mindfully and with more peace. Never have I met a more socially conscious, aware and gracious group of people.

3. What prayers are most meaningful to you?

While everyone has their obstacles that inhabit their daily lives, I find that reciting morning prayers are a great way for me to ground myself. It is hard to be cranky when the first words out of my mouth are “thank you”. And my evening ritual is to recite the “Mi Sheberach”, whether or not I have anyone specific in mind. No matter the day, no matter where I am, I know that my prayers are heard and that maybe by speaking these positive vibes into the universe, someone will be given the relief, health and assistance they need.

4. Tell us about your conversion.

So lastly, I would like to announce my thankfulness as I have finally completed my conversion into Judaism. On November 16, 2021, Rabbi Erdheim and her council led me through my Beit Din, with the assistance of Candy Alpar as it was completed via Zoom. What would we do without this virtual world in such a time as this? Then Rabbi Holly was kind enough to help me enjoy a more formal celebration with my wife and new Temple family during Hanukkah. For everyone who has participated in this process and supported me through it, please let me take this chance to thank you so deeply, from the bottom of my heart as you have helped carry me through one of the most important decision making processes in my life, for which I will be eternally grateful. Rabbi Erdheim made it clear that conversion was not a profession of perfection as a Jew, but a commitment to follow this path and to use Judaism as a vessel for my life as I continue to explore, experience and take in this new Jewish life. It is by this commitment that my wife and I join Temple B’nai Israel and take a place within the community with much gratitude and humility.

Meet the Jews of the Grand Canyon and rural Arizona, where Jewish life takes dedication

BY NICOLE RAZ NOVEMBER 25, 2021

(Jewish News of Greater Phoenix via JTA) —



Rabbi Nina Perlmutter officiates a wedding overlooking the Grand Canyon in 2017.

Stan Coffield and his wife were pretty open-minded when deciding where they would retire. “I wanted someplace that was lower cost of living [than New York] — warm, dry, near a body of water that I could water-ski on, and had some manner of Jewish presence,” Coffield said.

In 2010, they moved into their house in Lake Havasu City, about 200 miles northwest of Phoenix. Even though the synagogue is small, he hasn’t looked back since. “When my wife and I first moved out here, you would turn a street corner and really be tempted to just pull over to the side of the road and stare; it looks like a picture postcard,” he said. “And you go three blocks, and it’s another picture postcard.”

He and his wife are two of Lake Havasu’s nearly 60,000 residents, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and part of the roughly 30 members of the area’s only synagogue, Temple Beth Sholom. “Given that we’re the only congregation and synagogue within all of Mohave County, we have the full gamut [of members],” he said. “We’ve got people in Havasu, God bless them, who manage to be Orthodox and keep kosher, all the way out to the fringes of Reform.”

Jewish life takes a different shape in rural areas than it does in the city — and often requires great dedication. In some places, that means the congregants have to learn how to lead services since they can only afford to bring a rabbi in periodically. For some, that means driving hours from a remote area to attend a tiny synagogue in another small town. And in nearly every community, a rural Jewish life is one in which your synagogue is like a family for better or for worse, and like any family, you only get one.

Coffield has been president of the congregation for about six years and does his best to provide regular services and Torah study and to grow the congregation. A rabbi travels to Lake Havasu from Los Angeles about once a month to run a Shabbat service on Friday and a Torah study on Saturday. The congregation tries to coordinate his travel with Jewish holidays. The synagogue strives to have a schedule posted three months in advance to ensure members, some of whom

Jewish News (cont.)

drive nearly two hours to get there, have ample time to plan. “We get congregants from Laughlin, Bullhead City, Blythe, California, Needles — I mean, we’re it,” Coffield said.

Being the only Jewish institution for miles can mean Coffield becomes the person people call on to attend end of life matters. Lake Havasu is “almost exclusively retirees and service personnel,” Coffield said. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median age in the city is 54.2. As president of the congregation, he gets “sorrowful phone calls” from people he’s never seen at the synagogue but who are suddenly in need spiritual support. Coffield does his best to accommodate those requests, “but it’s just hard from so many different perspectives.”

Yuma, about 200 miles Southwest of Phoenix, also has a small but dedicated Jewish community. With a population of nearly 100,000 people, the city’s only synagogue has about 20 family units. “Those range from people that are single, to couples, to people who have kids,” said Leone Neegan, president of Congregation Beth Hamidbar. The synagogue, whose name means “house of the desert,” meets in a space rented from a church.

“I am not sure that anyone for whom their Jewish religion is the most important part of their life would move to a place with so few Jewish institutions,” she said. “We don’t know how many, but there are Jews here who don’t belong to the congregation, who just aren’t religious at all.” For the past seven years, a rabbi has driven from Orange County in California to Yuma to lead High Holiday services. “The rest of the time, he gave us a class in doing lay-led services, so we take turns leading Shabbat services, and we pool our knowledge,” Neegan said.

Members meet for services twice a month most of the year — in the summer, that’s halved. Some of the congregants also meet in a weekly Torah study group.

Neegan was born and raised in Phoenix but moved to Yuma in 1975 after graduating from the University of Arizona when a friend told her about a job at the local library that had opened up. At the time, she didn’t think she’d stay in Yuma long. “I couldn’t imagine anyone living here. It was just, to me, a very small, dusty town,” she said. For a few months, she thought she was the only Jew in town. But one day, she saw an article in the local newspaper about High Holiday services. “I went to services, and found that there was a small Jewish community here, and the people were very welcoming,” she said. At the time, the congregation wasn’t affiliated with any branch of Judaism, since the people who attended had a variety of Jewish backgrounds and observance. Eventually it affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism.

Neegan never expected to become as involved in her congregation as she did. “If I had remained in either Phoenix or Tucson, or some other large city with a larger population, I might not have become as involved with either the religion or the congregation as I ended up being,” she said. Neegan’s fellow congregants have become “a giant, extended family,” she said. “It’s like being on an island with people. If you get angry, there isn’t another synagogue to go to. You have to work it out somehow.”

Rabbi Nina Perlmutter, rabbi emerita of Congregation Lev Shalom in Flagstaff, said she’s often found that the further a Jewish person lives from an established Jewish community, the more dedicated they are to building Jewish community. Many Jews who live in the Grand Canyon, where Perlmutter often officiates at lifecycle events, or other rural areas of Arizona moved for the beauty of the landscape, she said. For most of them, Jewish life wasn’t necessarily a priority and isn’t easily supported by the Jewish infrastructure of the area. “But then they often find that they miss having Jewish connections,” she said. “I know people who have commuted a long time, like the Grand Canyon folks, to Flagstaff. That’s not easy. You gotta really want to do it.”

A version of this article originally appeared in the Jewish News of Greater Phoenix.

Yahrzeits for February

*Minnie Spector 2/1	Florence Schneider 2/10	Rose Bruton 2/22
*Lena Klein Haimes 2/1	*Alex Wormser 2/10	Tess H. Adelman 2/23
*Bert Levy 2/2	Louis Heyman 2/10	*Malcolm Lachman 2/25
*Sarah Zukav 2/2	*Joseph Kapelus 2/11	*Adolph Eberstadt 2/26
Rudolph Jacobi 2/2	*Edythe Lerner 2/12	*Sara Reshin 2/26
Alda Lois Feferman 2/3	Morris Feinblatt 2/13	Sid Levenstein 2/26
Mike Reisin 2/3	*Abe Feferman 2/15	Gettel bat Reuven Duman 2/27
Max Stahl 2/4	Hilde Jacob 2/15	*Mildred Loewenstern 2/27
Henry Berg 2/5	Morris Wilkenfeld 2/15	Tara Marie Kroger 2/27
Joseph Maples 2/5	*Morris Herring 2/16	Pauline Mandell
Sarah Drotman 2/6	Susana Rothstein Katz 2/16	David Wolpert
Paul Aleskin 2/6	Daniel Ross Noble 2/18	Kate Baruch
*Ben Rudelson 2/7	Danny Roberts 2/19	Harry Landsburg
Louis Raizes 2/7	*Jesse Melinger 2/20	Nettie Gimp
Edward Rothkrug 2/7	Harry Kamen 2/20	Jessie Cowan
Sam Rabinowitz 2/8	Dr. George Cohen 2/20	Evelyn Wyant
Linda Adkins 2/8	*Morris Bergman 2/21	Carl Reach
*William Jean Saxe 2/9	Fannie Welcher 2/21	Carol Lind
*Miriam Gluck 2/9	*Eunice Weinberger 2/22	
Elizabeth S. Meller 2/10	Dr. Morris Cohen 2/22	

The “” indicates individuals whose names are on the Yahrzeit boards in the sanctuary.*

If any member would like to add a name to the monthly yahrzeit list, please send the name, date of yahrzeit and your relationship to bnailsraelAmarillo.org, Attn: Mary Blinderman. Thank you.