

**The Garden State Region is still accepting Convention Scholarship applications. Please email application to Lynette Seader, gsrpresident21@wlcj.org. Sisterhood Affiliate Leadership, come to convention to re-energize and bring back new ideas.**

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Torah Fund supports programs and scholarships at the five Conservative/Masorti global institutes of higher education.

## TORAH FUND NEWS

### Spotlight on Congregation Beth Ohr, Old Bridge, Torah Fund Honoree Linda Benish

by Harriet Rabinowitz, Sisterhood President

The Sisterhood of Congregation Beth Ohr in Old Bridge, NJ honored Linda Benish as our 2023 Torah Fund Benefactor Luncheon on April 23rd.

The Sisterhood of Congregation Beth Ohr has been honoring deserving "Sisters" annually for over 45 years. The Benefactor is chosen by an Ad Hoc Committee comprised of the last five women who received this honor. This Ad Hoc Committee meets in September to discuss the nominees and announces the recipient at our annual paid-up event in early November. Our Torah Fund Committee selects the caterer and coordinates a date that works for the honoree.



Harriet Rabinowitz

This year, the Sisterhood honored Linda Benish, a wonderful woman, educator, and volunteer known throughout our community. A beautiful luncheon was catered by The Orchid, Metuchen, NJ with a "full house" in attendance. It was a very lovely gathering for our close-knit synagogue community.

Rabbi Mishkin opened the program and discussed his unconventional journey to becoming a Conservative Rabbi. Our Rabbi described his childhood in Connecticut and his path leading to the Jewish Theological Seminary and the rabbinate.

Our Rabbi Joel Mishkin was our first guest speaker who honored Linda. "In summary, Linda Benish represents the very best of our devoted and dedicated volunteers, who always seeks ways to reenergize and reinvigorate our programs at our congregation. Yasher Koach to the Sisterhood for all you do for our synagogue, and also for your choice of honoree this year. Linda is a fine choice for our Torah Fund event. Linda's commitment to the Conservative Movement, the importance of Jewish educational excellence, and her willingness to give of herself exemplifies the meaning of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Linda, is a teacher's teacher, that spans from her teaching career at Solomon Schechter, to her dedication to Adult Education benefiting our Congregants at Beth Ohr. Beyond her educational projects Linda remains a longtime supporter and member of the Board at the Jewish Federation in the Heart of NJ and is the chairperson for her communities' shiva services."

Linda's husband Allan Benish and her son Jeffrey then spoke and shared their family history with us. They spoke proudly of Linda's many accomplishments and family history. Linda's father immigrated to America from Germany, just prior to Kristallnacht. When Linda's father was 19 years old, he earned money for his mother and two brothers to leave Germany. They were the lucky ones to escape, as most Jewish residents of their community were sent to concentration camps or killed. Linda was the second of three children born to Rosemarie and Edgar Sender in Chicago.

Linda graduated with a BA in Education from Roosevelt University, U Chicago minoring in Jewish History from Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Teaching. She began teaching in Chicago, taking time off to raise her sons David and Jeffrey. When her husband's job transferred, they moved to Maryland, for nine years and became very active in a new young synagogue. Allan was the President at their synagogue, Linda the head teacher of the Hebrew School and son David the president of Kadima. Their daughter Marci was born in Maryland. Allan was then transferred to the NY Office and began their life in Middlesex County.

Lastly, Linda spoke at our event about her life in Middlesex County. "When we moved to NJ, we found Congregation Beth Ohr in Old Bridge. I got a job at Solomon Schechter Day School, where I spent 30 years, teaching general studies, Grades 3-5, History, English followed by teaching Jewish History in the Middle School. I taught Torah reading and helped the middle school students lead services. I loved teaching there because it gave me the opportunity to bring my love of Jewish and general studies knowledge together to share with so many students over the years. Beth Ohr provided to me the opportunity to teach Hebrew School, tutor B'nai Mitzvah students, get involved in Sisterhood and so many synagogue committees, and conduct a Zoom class that started during Covid. At Beth Ohr I gained a rich ritual life at our services and holidays, as well as an anchor in our Jewish lives for many years."

Mazel Tov to Linda Benish, a true Woman of Valor.

Pictures from the Torah Fund Benefactor Luncheon are shown below:



Rabbi Joel Mishkin, graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, spiritual leader at Congregation Beth Ohr in Old Bridge, New Jersey, and Guest Speaker.



Linda Benish thanking Sisterhood for being honored as its 2023 Torah Fund Benefactor.



from left to right: Harriet Rabinowitz, Sisterhood President, Lisa Mason, Vice President of Programming, Lee Hyman, Torah Fund Chairperson, Linda Benish, honoree and Lynette Seader, President - Garden State Region WLCJ

(from left to right) Harriet Rabinowitz, Sisterhood President, Lisa Mason, Vice President of Programming, Lee Hyman, Torah Fund Chairperson, Linda Benish, honoree, Lynette Seader, President – Garden State Region WLCJ.



The Benish family. (from left to right) Daughter Marci, husband Allan, Linda Benish, son Jeffrey, grandson Cole and daughter-in-law Cheryl.