



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ה' עז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן; ה' יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם

The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace. Psalm 29

NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Website address: www.voicesisrael.com

Amuta No. 58-019-703-6

President

Judy Koren
Mobile: 054-741-7860
president.voices@gmail.com

Secretary

Pesach Rotem
Mobile: 052-510-4720
secretary.voices@gmail.com

Treasurer

Chanita Millman
Tel: 02-653-6770
millmanm@inter.net.il

Membership Coordinator

Yochanan Zaquantov
Mobile: 053-708-9140
zaquantov@gmail.com

Workshop Coordinator

Elana Dorfman
Mobile: 054-668-6513
elanado@gmail.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

- President's Letter
- November Meeting Dates
- Kudos to Our Members!
- Israel at War
- Deronda Seeks War Poems
- A "Broken Things" Workshop
- The Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize
- Calls for Submissions



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Poets,

How peaceful, how innocent were these President's Letters up until this month. How totally inconsequential they seem now! Who could have imagined the horror that would be unleashed on us three weeks ago? Before October 7, we were a group of people with widely divergent political opinions, united only in a passion for poetry; after it, we are a people standing together, despite the shock and the grief.

We grieve for our friends and relatives who were killed, or lost people, in the ferocious attack; we are filled with anxiety for the hostages (including most probably our member Judih Weinstein and her husband, officially stilled defined as "missing") and for all those now in battle in Gaza or prepared to enter it (including the son, Matthew, of our award-winning member, David Silverman of Illinois). I'm sure we are all doing what we can to help the tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands of Israelis evacuated from the south, and from the border regions of the north. And we are determined to carry on life "as normal," as far as possible.

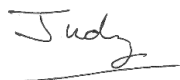
In that spirit: when the "Fern Hill" workshop planned for October 18th had to be cancelled (its presenter Eli Ben-Joseph having had to move from Nahariyya), our indomitable workshop coordinator Elana, and our anthology chief editor Dina Yehuda, gave another on the same date, tailored for the times: "Write at this Moment," encouraging everyone to explore the range of emotions we're all feeling and to concentrate on the positive. Nineteen people attended; several noted how much this coming together, even though just by Zoom, had helped them. As usual we'll produce an e-chapbook of poems started at that workshop: **please send them to me by November 10th**.

And in the same spirit, we decided to hold the Anthology launch event on October 23rd as planned, but as a Zoom-only rather than hybrid event. I was sorry to cancel the room at the Stage Karaoke Bar, whose staff were incredibly helpful, especially when I went down to Netanya to check that they had all the equipment needed for a hybrid event, and it would work with my computer – but I'm sure we'll have other occasions to celebrate there. 55 people registered, including a dozen non-member contributors to the Anthology; almost all attended and after observing a minute of silence for the victims of the tragedy, the event proceeded "as normal." Dina gave an overview and 37 poets read (or had proxy-read) one poem each.

We're planning another Zoom mini-workshop for December 4th at 7 pm, to be given by Iris Dan: there should be a fuller announcement in this newsletter. **Save the date!**

Reminder: the submission period for the Bar Sagi Prize opens on November 15th; its administrator Michele Bustin is busy getting the word out to her network of teachers. **Please everyone who has any connection to English teacher or to teenagers who might want to enter, get the word out too!** It's open till the end of February 2024. And the 2024 Anthology submission period usually opens on December 15th, but since that's both the last day of Chanukah and erev Shabbat, we'll probably choose December 17th this year.

We still have no Publicity Officer. I'm therefore appealing **to all our members: please publicize our events – e.g. now, the Bar Sagi Prize – in your Facebook pages, blogs, and other social media accounts.** Spread the word!



Judy Koren,
President, Voices Israel.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

NOVEMBER 2023 MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

<p>SOUTHERN</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, November 19 at 5:00 PM</p> <p>The meeting is dedicated to Judih Weinstein</p> <p>Coordinator: Miriam Green Tel: 05-738-8640</p> <p>miriamsgreen@gmail.com</p>	<p>TEL AVIV</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, November 23 at 7:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Mark Levinson Mobile: 054-444-8438</p> <p>nosnivel@netvision.net.il</p>	<p>JERUSALEM</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Wednesday, November 22 at 7:30 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Avril Meallem Tel: 02-567-0998</p> <p>aemeallem@gmail.com</p>	<p>WESTERN GALILEE</p> <p>No meetings scheduled. Contact Phyllsie for details.</p> <p>Coordinator: Phyllsie Gross Mobile: 052-874-6880</p> <p>phyllsie@hotmail.com</p>
<p>HAIFA</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Wednesday, November 15 at 19:00</p> <p>Coordinator: Debbie Golden Mobile: 054-580-6209</p> <p>deborahg@edu.haifa.ac.il</p>	<p>NETANYA/SHARON</p> <p>Monday, 27 November at 19:00</p> <p>On zoom or at Susan's home to be determined nearer the time.</p> <p>Coordinator: Susan Olsburgh Mobile: 054-919-3575</p> <p>olsburgh.susan@gmail.com</p>	<p>UPPER GALILEE</p> <p>Wednesday, November 8 at 10:30 AM at the home of Reuven and Yehudit.</p> <p>128 Keren HaYesod Artists Quarter, Tzfat</p> <p>Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 Mobile: 058-414-0262</p> <p>poetsprogress@gmail.com</p>	<p>GLOBAL GROUP</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, November 16 at 19:15 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Mobile: 052-808-9365</p> <p>Y2nosh@netvision.net.il</p>

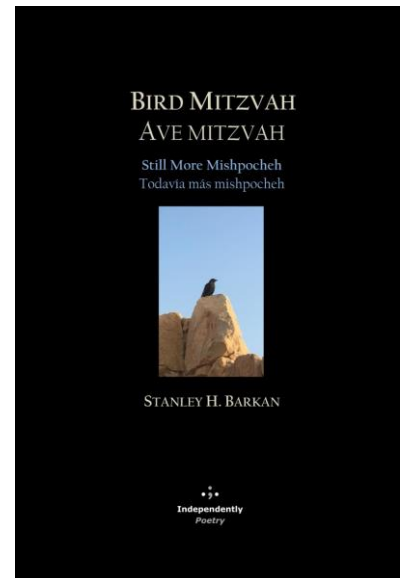
VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

- To – Voices Israel members whose poems and stories were published in *Arc-30*, the annual journal of the Israel Association of Writers in English: **Amos Neufeld, Ann Bar-Dov, Celia Merlin, Channah Moshe, David Silverman, Donna Bechar, Helen Sarid, Immanuel Suttner, Johnmichael Simon, Judy Belsky, Kenneth Nagin, Larry Lefkowitz, Lilian Cohen, Mark L. Levinson, Mindy Aber Barad Golembo, Reuven Goldfarb, Robert Dashevsky, Wendy Dickstein, and Willa Schneberg.** www.iawe.org.il/iawe-publications/arc/
- To – Voices Israel members whose poems were published in the special “Poems for Israel, October 2023” section of *The Deronda Review* online: **Esther Cameron, Ethelea Katzenell, Simon Constam, Yehudit Goldfarb, Elana Wolff, Hayim Abramson, Rumi Morkin, Reuven Goldfarb, Mindy Aber Barad, Ruth Fogelman, Yocheved Zemel, and Donna Bechar,** at www.derondareview.org/backingIsrael.htm.
- To – **Julian Alper**, whose essay “Photography, poetry, and nature in Israel” was published in *The Jerusalem Report* in print and online at www.jpost.com/israel-news/culture/article-761494. Readers are also encouraged to visit Julian’s “Nature of Israel” blog of exquisite photography, prose, and the occasional poem at <https://natureofisrael.blogspot.com/>.
- To – **Helen Bar-Lev**, whose book *Spirit Captive: Jerusalem in Poetry, Prose, and Paintings*, to be published on December 31, is now available for pre-order at www.amazon.com/Spirit-Captive-Jerusalem-Poetry-Paintings/dp/BOCKKPXJY8/.
- To – **Stanley H. Barkan** on the publication of his new book *Bird Mitzvah / Ave mitzvah: Still More Mishpocheh / Todavía más mishpocheh (Spanish Edition)*, available at www.amazon.com/Bird-Mitzvah-Ave-mitzvah-Mishpocheh/dp/BOCKW2CQTC/.



Julian Alper



- To – **Isaac Cohen**, whose poem was published as part of the “Awakening” project in *Prodigy* magazine, available at www.prodigylife.net/products/prodigy-magazine-october-2023-awakening
- To – **Judy Koren**, whose poem “How to Write a Middle Eastern Symphony” tied for 10th place out of 1,279 entries in the Poetry Super Highway 2023 Poetry Contest. (www.poetrysuperhighway.com/psh/psh-live/)
- To – **Ruth Schreiber**, whose poem “Childbirth” was published in the first issue of *Verklempt*, available at www.havurah.art/shop/p/verklempt-creation, and whose poem “After Micha 4:4” was published in *Tikkun* at www.tikkun.org/after-micha-44/.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ISRAEL AT WAR

Israel is a tiny country. It seems that everybody knows everybody. There is nobody in Israel who is unaffected by the terrible Simchat Torah Massacre of October 7 and the ongoing war against Hamas.

JUDIH WEINSTEIN

Judih Weinstein, an active member of the Voices Israel Southern Group, and her husband Gad Haggai are residents of Kibbutz Nir Oz. Judih and Gad went on an early morning walk near the kibbutz on October 7. Judih called kibbutz paramedics and reported that they had been shot by terrorists on a motorcycle and that Gad was badly wounded. They have not been heard from since and are presumed kidnapped in Gaza.

Since Judih is a lover of haiku, Judy Koren has curated a collection of haikus in Judih's honor on the Voices Israel War Blog at <https://voicesisrael.com/voices-israel-war-blog/>. The collection features haikus by Gary Corbi, Yochanan Zaqantov, Judy Koren, Phyllsie Gross, Avril Meallem, Mark L. Levinson, Diane Ray, Helen Bar-Lev, Elana Wolff, and Pesach Rotem. Additional haikus may be submitted to Judy Koren at president.voices@gmail.com.



Judih Weinstein and Gad Hagai

News articles about Judih and Gad are at www.cp24.com/news/a-script-in-a-movie-woman-from-toronto-shot-near-gaza-border-in-israel-missing-for-a-week-1.6601495 and www.timesofisrael.com/taken-captive-judith-weinstein-and-gad-haggai-on-a-morning-walk/.

EDIT GAVRIELY

The brother-in-law of the daughter of our member Edit Gavriely was murdered by the terrorists at the Nova Music Festival near Re'im. Edit writes, "At 2:30 AM on Friday our daughter gave birth to our ninth grandchild, a beautiful baby girl named Emma. At 2:30 PM her husband buried his brother. Life and death – hand in hand." May his memory be a blessing.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

SUSAN ROSENBERG

Susan Rosenberg's granddaughter Deborah, and Deborah's husband Shlomi, were murdered by the Hamas terrorists on October 7. We all share the sorrow of Susan, Voices Israel's oldest member, and her family.

Wendy Blumfield writes, "Susan has a multitude of grandchildren, great-grandchildren and even some great-greats but she cherishes each one as we can see in this beautiful poem written for Deborah's graduation."

COMMISSIONED PORTRAIT

"Do a portrait of me through your eyes,"
you said, dear granddaughter,
wanting to know how you seem to me.
I need not describe the lovely young girl
that a mirror or photographs can show;
your outside beauty or elegance of bearing.
I'll write of the quiet weaver, spinning dreams into reality,
and sometimes, what is real, into fantasy;
I'll tell of the psychic scars, born from hurtful blows,
and the pain from others' wounds,
so keenly felt, they find their mark in you;
and of the brimming love, outpouring and shining;
and also, the anger, kept hidden and dark;
I'll note how clearly you begin to understand
the depths, grown deeper from difficult digging,
and the fatigue you suffer from so much effort;
and then, I'll paint a woman soon to break free
and step into light, almost ready to fly
to a wondrous wherever...
and Deborah, I'll love you all the way there.

Susan Rosenberg
June, 1991 (for Deborah's graduation)

DEFENDERS OF ISRAEL

Matthew, the son of our member David Silverman, is now serving in the Israeli army. I am certain that many others of our members also have children or grandchildren defending our nation. Matthew and all of these other brave young men and women should be thanked, honored, and blessed. Please share with me about them, as much as you feel comfortable sharing, at secretary.voices@gmail.com.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

DERONDA REVIEW SEEKS YOUR WAR POEMS

THE DERONDA REVIEW has now posted on its website (www.derondareview.org), a page of "Poems for Israel, October 2023," containing the work of some 30 poets. The page is being updated as new poems come in, so scroll down to find the latest. Poems for posting on this page may be sent to derondareview@gmail.com.

A "BROKEN THINGS" WORKSHOP WITH IRIS DAN



You're invited to a Voices Workshop
Facilitated by Iris Dan
Monday
December 4th, 2023
19:00- 20:40

Our workshop will be based on the poetry of Grace Schulman, a witness of 9/11, who experienced the disappearance of the known

landscape and of seemingly eternal certitudes, as well as the failure of language in face of the catastrophe. Hope endures (or life goes on), sometimes in the form of sublimation of the loss through art.

Broken Things

The is a zoom workshop.
To register please follow the link below the flyer.

To register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1QpEDBQYkfJkSnUI-R9tV6_BB4MnAQST9ow4mynKY5NM/prefill

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

THE BAR SAGI YOUNG POETS PRIZE

The Bar Sagi Young Poet's Prize will open for submissions on November 15 and will remain open until February 29, 2024. The competition is open to Israelis aged 12 to 18 when the poem was written, it is free to enter, and it awards three cash prizes plus a variable number of Honorable Mentions. The winning poems, and Honorable Mention poems if any, will be published in the annual Voices Israel anthology.

Full submission rules and guidelines are at <https://voicesisrael.com/bar-sagi-prize/bar-sagi-prize-rules-and-guidelines/>.

Please spread the word. If you know any English teachers, please tell them about the Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize. If you know any parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles, tell them about it too. And of course, if you know any young poets, you absolutely must tell them about it.

A SPECIAL OFFER FROM JOHNMICHAEL SIMON

Johnmichael Simon is offering his chapbook design services to Voices Israel members and friends.

If you would like to possess a beautifully presented and published collection of your own favorite poems, please contact Johnmichael for details of this special offer at johnmichaelsimon@gmail.com.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Many excellent calls for submissions, suitable for Voices Israel members, can be found at these sites:

Erika Dreifus Blog – www.erikadreifus.com/blogs/practicing-writing/

Erica Verrillo Blog – <https://publishedtodeath.blogspot.com/p/calls-for-submissions.html>

Jeanne Lyet Gassman Blog – <https://jeannelyetgassman.blogspot.com/>

Winning Writers – <https://winningwriters.com/>

Calls for Submissions Facebook Group – www.facebook.com/groups/35517751475/

Contributions published in this Voices Israel newsletter and files linked to it, including in our workshop chapbooks, are the sole copyright of the contributors themselves.

Any of the opinions in the content published in this newsletter are the sole opinions of the individual contributors and do not represent the views or opinions of Voices Israel Group of Poets in English.