


**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT*
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

MACOMB FAMILY YMCA



**WHERE YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
MEANS MORE**

**Join the Y in November and
take 75% off your Joining Fee***

Fall Programs like Family Zumba, Cycling, and more are included with membership!

*Savings depends on membership type. Student monthly rates apply. Other restrictions may also apply. Please contact the Y for details.

candgnews.com

The Online Home of C & G Newspapers
13650 11 Mile Road | Warren, MI 48087 | Main: (586) 498-8000

Tuesday, December 11th, 2012

Warren, MI: 27°F



Macomb County
Oakland County
Wayne County
Features
Sports
Shop
Classifieds
Advertising
Contact



online local marketplace
discounts, deals, specials, and classifieds

WEBSITE LOGIN

Username: *

Password: *

[Create new account](#)
[Request new password](#)

FEATURES

- Homes
- C & G Extra
- Neighbors in the News
- Community Calendar
- Class Reunions
- Letters to the Editor

ADVERTISING

- Advertising Information
- C & G Info Movie
- Demographics
- Place Classified Ad
- FTP Login
- Legal Notices

SHOP

- Auto
- Apartments
- Dining
- Jobs
- Real Estate
- Retail

CONTACT INFO.

- [About C & G](#)
- [Link to C & G](#)
- [Business Links](#)
- [Employment](#)

[Home](#)

WEST BLOOMFIELD
July 5, 2011
Synagogue grows Bible garden

*By Eric Czarnik
C & G Staff Writer*

WEST BLOOMFIELD — It's not the Garden of Eden, but new landscaping at a West Bloomfield synagogue will take visitors on a botanical journey through the history of the Hebrew Bible.

Congregation Beth Ahm is opening its Louis and Fay Woll Memorial Bible Garden to the public after dedicating it a few weeks ago. The garden, which contains 19 different species of plants based on the scriptures, is confined to a small area near the side of the synagogue.

Rabbi Steven Rubenstein said the idea came from congregation member Doug Woll, who donated money to create a garden to honor the memory of his parents. Rubenstein said Woll told him about the concept of Bible gardens, and the rabbi thought it was a great idea.

"In the narrative section of the Bible ... the flowers and the plants and the trees are really part and parcel with what the land of Israel is all about," he said.

Rubenstein said plant life is frequently mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. Such plants as the lily are used metaphorically in the romance poetry of the Song of Songs.

Jewish lore also instills certain lessons with different plants. One tradition compares pomegranates to the Torah because the fruit's many seeds are comparable to the many commandments of Jewish law.

The Bible garden took several months to design and nine months to complete, according to designer Gary Roberts, who owns Great Oaks Landscape & Maintenance of Novi. Roberts said he attended the synagogue as a child and was delighted to lead the project, adding that it takes walkers on a tour of the Bible's stories while explaining the significance of shrubs, flowers and trees.

"In this case, we went more through the scenes and themes to represent a passage of time through the Bible," he said. "In that way, the rabbi or anybody could walk through with knowledge of the Bible."

The garden contains murals and five scenes reflecting different points of biblical stories or Judaism, such as the Garden of Eden and Abraham's tent. A stone pathway between two pools of water symbolizes the crossing of the sea described in Exodus. Guests climb a few steps to reach the exhibit of Mount Sinai, where Moses is described as receiving God's commandments.

The garden ends with a replica of the Western Wall, a Jerusalem landmark that dates back to the era of the Second Temple — before that building was destroyed by the Romans almost 2,000 years ago.

People from around the world visit the Western Wall and stick prayer requests between the stones, and some people have done the same to the model wall at Congregation Beth Ahm's Bible garden.

Not every plant species in Beth Ahm's Bible garden has a scriptural origin, as some are there to fill out and complement the visuals. Relevant plant species have a sign in front of them with

» click to enlarge «



Photos by Erin Sanchez

Rabbi Steven Rubenstein looks at a replica of Jerusalem's Western Wall in northern end of the garden.



POPULAR STORIES

[Viewed](#) [Commented](#) [Liked](#)

[Last 24 Hours](#) [Last 7 Days](#)
[Last 30 Days](#)

Most viewed stories in the last 24 hours

1. Motorists, police discover body in woods - Shelby Township
2. Police notified after report of suspicious person, van - Warren
3. Bashara sentenced to up to 20 years in prison - Detroit
4. Christmas With A Fire-fighter brings 'season's greetings' - Warren
5. Local businesses sought for gloves, mittens campaign - Warren
6. Police arrest man following alleged armed robbery - Utica
7. Suspects arrested after string of related thefts Dec. 4 - Warren

a biblical passage, as well as the plant's Latin and common names.

Because the climate of Israel differs from Michigan's, Roberts said he sometimes had to make some slight substitutions in representing certain plants.

"Symbolically, there's a cedar from Lebanon," he said. "Instead of that, we're using Alaskan cedar, which is hardier. We used an autumn olive to represent the olive tree and the olive branches."

Rubenstein said the garden's purpose will vary upon the audience, but he described it as a place where people who value the Bible can learn more about it. A Jewish senior home and a Waterford church have already requested tours, he added.

He compared the garden to one of its exhibits. Just like Abraham's tent, the garden is intended to be open on all sides and welcoming to visitors.

"We were hoping it's a reminder and representation of what our synagogue is about, that we let people in," he said.

Congregation Beth Ahm is located at 5075 W. Maple Road. To learn more, call (248) 851-6880.

You can reach C & G Staff Writer Eric Czarnik at eczarnik@candgnews.com or at (586)498-1058.

[f Share](#) 0
[Tweet](#) 4
[in Share](#) 0
[Pinterest](#) 0
[f Like](#) 0

[Printer-friendly version](#)
[Send by email](#)
[Login or register to post comments](#)

For more local news coverage, see the following newspaper:



West Bloomfield Beacon



f 41 people like this. Be the first of your friends.



WUJEK-CALCATERRA & SONS, INC.

STERLING HEIGHTS
SHELBY TOWNSHIP
www.WujekCalcaterra.com



Outstanding funeral service. Fair. Trusted. Kind.

[Home Page](#)
[Macomb County](#)
[Wayne County](#)
[Oakland County](#)
[Sports](#)
[Employee Resources](#)
[Site map](#)



Copyright © C & G Publishing.
All Rights Reserved.