

Cheshvan/Kislev 5779
December 2018

The Jewish VOICE

Lighting Our World

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

On the fourth day, God put the sun in the sky to light the world! Thanks to a labor of love from some of the temple's women members, Temple Beth-El has a beautiful new series of needlepoint images of the Days of Creation.

2018 Federation Beneficiaries *Page 4*
General Assembly in Tel Aviv *Page 5*
2018 Babies Light Up Our Lives *Page 7*

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Jewish Federation
OF GREATER EL PASO

FEDERATION

80 Years of Lighting Our World



Janet Kent Wechter

Our Jewish community is better together, stronger, working side by side. This was especially evident in the days following the horrific act of terror in Pittsburgh.

Immediately, our community leaders organized a vigil like Jewish Federations across the nation to condemn this tragic occurrence and lend a supportive hand. Unfortunately, violent acts like these have become commonplace—our Federation network provides support, both in dollars

and resources, to our local and global Jewish communities whenever they're in need.

In times of crisis, whether there are forest fires leaving thousands homeless, hurricanes devastating cities, or Israel facing daily rocket fire, Jewish Federations always show up. We raise millions of dollars across the globe to help Jews who are persecuted, threatened, or in danger.

I know that we all care deeply about the future of our own Jewish community, so we cannot be complacent. We cannot allow apathy to win. We must meet each other half way, through compromise and connection, to truly listen to each other's experiences and better understand our communal needs.

The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso has remained a light in our community for over 80 years and we ask all of our community members to give a meaningful gift to the annual campaign, this year and every year. Let's remember what this yearly campaign represents

right here, where we live and raise our families.

The Granting Committee just completed a new process for fund allocation, and for this impactful work, I want to thank the chairs, Ophra Leysen-Whalen and Arlene Sonnen, as well the committee members, for spending their time to read and evaluate the many program applications; this is a challenging and time-consuming process and I think our community will be pleased with the outcome.

I especially want to thank our staff, Robert French, Sue Bendalin, Said Buhaya and Sonny Franco, along with our board members, for their dedication and commitment to the community and organization. The Federation is busy planning and implementing board leadership, programs for Maimonides Society, Cardozo Society, Women's Campaign and ElPasoConnect. We support Shalom Shuttle, The Jewish Film Series, Sun City Shabbat, The

Jewish Voice and the work of the Jewish Community Relations Council.

Our staff and volunteers are continuously asked to solicit and thank our donors, and there is always pressing financial and campaign work to be done, and we are grateful for all of the minds and hearts that have joined our efforts.

We need to ask ourselves what we want the future of this Jewish community to look like for our children and grandchildren. Especially in light of recent events, it's time to imagine, build, and enjoy a vibrant, thriving Jewish community. I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday, and may the light of Chanukkah light up our world.

Please join us for the Federation's menorah lighting celebration on December 9 in San Jacinto Plaza!

*Better Together,
Janet Kent Wechter*

President

Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

Pacesetters

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

6:30 pm

Event chairs: Wendy Lanski and Robin Furman
Home of Wendy and Dr. Steve Lanski

Learn more about the Federation's work around the world from guests from the Jewish Agency for Israel
Arielle Di-Porto, Director of Immigration and Absorption, JAFI
Mort Naiman, Senior VP, Global Philanthropy, JAFI

\$1800: Minimum 2019 pledge per person
RSVP by January 15: 915-842-9554
Address sent upon RSVP

The Jewish VOICE

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

The Jewish Voice of El Paso, published ten times a year, is dedicated to informing, educating, and uniting the Jewish community by providing news items of local, national, Israeli and international concern.

The Jewish Voice will consider for publication any materials submitted that support the mission of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso and have relevance and appeal to the El Paso Jewish community. Articles are subject to editing at the editor's discretion and are subject to space limitations. Letters cannot be longer than 150 words and articles must be kept to a maximum of 300 words. Please email to thevoice@jfedelpaso.org

Opinions are those of individual writers and not necessarily those of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. The Jewish Voice is not responsible for the kashrut of any product or eating establishment advertised herein.

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Editor: Cindy Graff Cohen
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 Advertising Representative: Said Buhaya
 Printing: PDX Printing

Invites you to the
Community-Wide Chanukah Celebration
 Sunday, December 9 | 5:30 PM

San Jacinto Plaza
 114 W Mills Ave.
 El Paso, TX 79901

Not by might, and not by power—
 But by spirit alone
 Shall we all live in peace!

Menorah Lighting Ceremony at 5:45 PM
 Hot Chocolate & Doughnuts (Kosher)
 Music! Singing!

Deadline for the January issue of the Voice: December 10
Deadline for the February issue of the Voice: January 10

FEDERATION

What is “Campaign?”

Some 22 years ago, I was new to El Paso and new to “how Jewish communities work.”

I know now there is no more a template for that process than there is a formula for the average Jew. I also didn't know about the Federation or its campaign.

Looking for patterns

As a newcomer who was not raised as a Jew, I had to unravel how this small community worked and other mysteries. For instance, what was the sequence of Jewish worship? Unlike programs from the Unitarian churches I had attended in Virginia, Temple Mount Sinai's handout was missing page numbers and the who-does-what-when.

Yet, the service quickly took on a regular – and comforting – pattern of its own in my mind. I learned some prayers, watched what others were doing, and internalized the rhythm.

It also took some learning and watching others to get the Federation's rhythm. In the late 1990s, I was invited to Janet and Randy Wechters' home to hear an inspiring speaker who had converted to Judaism in the backwoods of Arkansas.

I had been warmly welcomed to this

women's event, though I knew maybe three women. One of those was Sue Bendalin and as I left, she was by the door. She gave me an envelope for what I presumed was a donation. I figured I could contribute \$25 to the Federation. It was a lovely lunch and better-than-average presentation. I started writing a check.

Then Sue gently said that I wasn't expected to pay anything right then. The idea was to go home and talk with Burton about an annual gift to the Federation's campaign. I had learned at the luncheon that one gift to this campaign lets you support worthy causes in El Paso and around the world – even in Arkansas!

The envelope had a card with a record of Burton's giving to the Federation over the past few years and I immediately saw that my \$25 for the luncheon did not fit the pattern on the card. Burton had been many times more generous in his annual gift.

Understanding campaign's purpose

Today the Federation's rhythms feel comfortable to me. I see the cycle of Federation events for the Jewish community, like May's Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrating Israel's independence and

December's Hanukkah candle-lighting in San Jacinto Plaza. I see a pattern of events for specialized interest groups that build Jewish identity and community:

- ElPasoConnect for those of us in our 20s, 30s, and 40s
- Café Europa for people over 80
- PJ Library for young children and their parents
- Women's Campaign for women of all ages
- Cardozo Society and Maimonides Society for people in the legal and medical fields donating minimum amounts
- Pacesetters for people giving at least \$1,800 each
- Lion of Judah for women contributing \$5,000 or more to their Jewish Federation

Lighting Our World

To me, the Jewish Federation's campaign begins with considering yourself part of your larger Jewish community here – or in any other city with a Federation. It includes giving back to that community, sustaining it with seed money grants for programs and Jewish organizations. Lastly your donation also goes to support Israel and



Cindy Graff Cohen

Jewish communities around the world. For generations – indeed for millennia – Jews have brought light to the world. With education, intelligence, a vision for a better world, a sense of justice, and rock-hard spines, this tiny minority has made the world so much brighter. It's getting harder to keep those lights burning, but we must.

Thank you to each of you who share your Federation's goal of pooling resources and working together to sustain and, from my lips to God's ears, grow our own Jewish community. May this year's Festival of Lights bring you and your family much joy.

*Cindy Graff Cohen
Editor, The Jewish Voice*

Thank you to everyone who pledged funds to Federation in 2018!
Send in your donation - cash, check or charge - for 2018 tax deduction.

Want to submit an ad? Email frontdesk@jfedelpaso.org or call Said Buhaya at 915-842-9554.

Want to help cover the cost of your Jewish Voice?
 Be a “Friend of The Voice” and send your donation to The Voice, Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, 7110 North Mesa, El Paso, TX 79912. **Thank you!**

Bar or Bat Mitzvahs? Graduations? Weddings? Babies?
 Share your happy news with your Jewish community.
 Submit your announcement with a clear, good quality photograph to thevoice@jfedelpaso.org
For January Jewish Voice: due Monday, December 10
For February Jewish Voice: due Thursday, January 10

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FEDERATION

2018 Beneficiaries of Jewish Federation Funds

These are some of the recipients of Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso grants and support in 2018. Grant recipients apply each year and the Federation's Grants Committee, representing different congregations and organizations, review the applications. Federation seed-money grants are allocated based on the funds received during the Federation's annual campaign.

Local

- Congregation B'nai Zion
- Temple Beth-El, Las Cruces
- Temple Mount Sinai
- The Jewish Voice newspaper
- BZUSY -B'nai Zion United Synagogue Youth
- MSTY -Mount Sinai Temple Youth
- El Paso Holocaust Museum
- El Paso Jewish Academy
- J Center for Early Learning
- One Happy Camper Program
- SKIP – Send a Kid to Israel Program
- UTEP InterAmerican Jewish Studies Program
- PJ Library
- El Paso Symphony Orchestra's Kurt Weill Concerts
- El Paso Jewish Film Festival
- Good Deeds Day
- Borderland's Café Europa
- Yom Ha'Atzmaut
- Community website and community calendar
- Shalom Shuttle
- Jewish Community Relations Council
- Jewish Education Council
- Hanukkah Candle-Lighting at San Jacinto Plaza

National/International

- Birthright Israel
- JAFI -Jewish Agency for Israel
- JDC -American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
- IAN -Israel Action Network
- JCPA -Jewish Council for Public Affairs
- World ORT -Educational and training programs

Why Give to Your Jewish Federation Each Year?

The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso is the one place that belongs to every Jew in El Paso.

We are the heirs to the efforts of generations who built the institutions in our community and made El Paso a good place to live Jewishly.

For more than 80 years your Federation has helped sustain and improve the quality of Jewish life in greater El Paso, in Israel and around the world. With strength in numbers, along with the nation's other Federations, we have the resources to act nationally and globally on challenges such as anti-Semitism, Israel advocacy and the quality of Jewish life for Jews everywhere and we are there to support those affected by natural and man-made disasters.

According to Jewish tradition the highest form of tzedakah is giving to a community fund, or kuppah. Throughout Jewish history it was the custom of Jewish communities to create an address for centralized giving. This guaranteed the privacy and dignity of the poor as well as the successful maintenance of communal "agencies."

Now it is up to each and every Jew committed to sustaining this particular Jewish community to take our turn and do our share. The Annual Community Campaign of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso is your central fund to ensure the vitality of our local Jewish community as well as the support needed for Jewish communities in Israel and around the world – our Kuppah.

We continue the tradition. Your contribution saves lives and helps feed the flame of Jewish identity so it will shine brighter every day. Thank you.

Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso 2018-19 Board

When you have questions about the Jewish Federation's goals and programs, ask board members when you see them or give them a call.

- Janet Wechter, President**
- Scott Stevens, Vice President**
- Hal Ettinger, Treasurer**
- Ophra Leyser-Whalen, Secretary**
- Leslie Beckoff, Campaign Chair**
- Eitan Lavi, Immediate Past President**

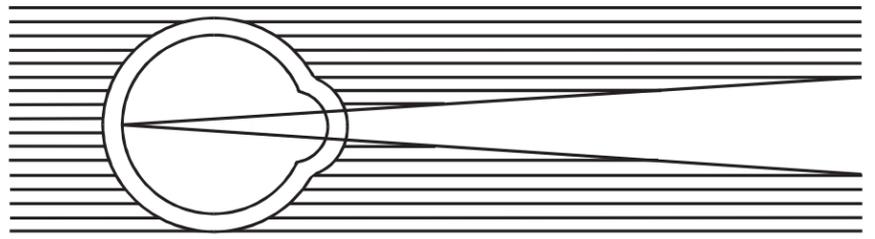
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|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
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| Stephanie Calvo | David Kern | Mitch Puschett |
| Loree Furman | Monika Kimball | Daniel Sonnen |
| Robin Furman | Steve Lanski | Bill Stein |
| Julian Gonzalez Herrell | John Moye | Peter Svarzbein |

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FEDERATION

JFNA General Assembly celebrates Israel's 70th

In October it was my honor to attend the General Assembly (GA) of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) in Tel Aviv. It was the second time I have attended a GA since I arrived in El Paso in 2011. There's something almost magical and definitely electric as you step in the opening plenary session with 3,000 plus other Jews in Israel. As different and diverse as we all are, and all of our communities, you are instantly bonded. You realize we face many of the same successes and challenges as a

individual and collective experiences.

We celebrated Israel's 70th Anniversary together, "Koolulam Under the Stars," where we learned a song in 45 minutes (like a flash mob) with Jewish teens from all over the world. We also attended a Knesset event with the Speaker Yuli Edelstein and Israeli parliamentarians from across the political spectrum.

I was personally able to attend informational sessions on the Israel and North America Jewish relationship, Israeli Education and the next



Robert Trevizo, Robert French, Mitch Puschett, Janet Wechter, Randy Wechter, Monika Kimball, Wendy Lanski, Julian Gonzalez Herrell, Ophra Leyser-Whalen

community, a people and a Federation.

This year I was able to attend with nine other amazing men and women from El Paso and Las Cruces. Honestly, I am a little embarrassed to say I did not know most of them very well or at all before our trip. I now feel I can call each and every one of them, my chaverim (friends). We have shared and bonded and our El Paso/Las Cruces Jewish community will be stronger because of each of our

generation, Haredi Integration into Israeli Society, Fundraising, Projects and Programs supported in Israel by North American Federations, and the Culture of Giving in Israel.

At the end, I can tell you, I felt more inspired that I could do more in our community, for my children and in Israel. I even called home and asked Steve if we could find a way to spend "summers" in Israel when Libi (4) and Liam (3) get a little older. I want my



Robert Trevizo, Julian Gonzalez Herrell, Wendy Lanski, Ophra Leyser-Whalen, Robert French

kids to be proud of their Judaism, being Jewish and as part of that to be able to experience as much of Israel as they can.

Thank you to Janet Wechter and the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso for inviting me and allowing me

this experience and opportunity. It's one I am already sharing and will keep with me forever.

*Wendy Lanski
Co-chair El Paso Connect
Co-chair Pacesetters Event*

ElPasoConnect gives thanks



ElPasoConnect, the Federation's group for those of us in our 20s, 30s, and 40s, enjoyed "Turkey, Tequila, and Todah" the week before Thanksgiving at the home of Shelby and Greg Rubin



Shelby Rubin, Wendy Lanski, Vanessa Sonnen, Caren Szanton, Nathan Stevens



More than 40 people in our Jewish community attended the dinner and brought canned goods to donate to the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger food bank.

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FEDERATION

Federation’s Cardozo Society brings together legal professionals

Dozens of members of our Jewish community’s attorneys, paralegals, and others took part in the Federation’s annual Cardozo Society program to socialize and to hear from one of the country’s top constitutional law experts, Dr. Paul Finkelman. President of Gratz College and author of more than 50 books, Finkelman has been listed as one of the ten most-cited legal historians in the United States.

In a special partnership, the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso and the El Paso Holocaust Museum

and Study Center hosted Finkelman’s presentation and welcomed guests to a bountiful buffet of Middle Eastern food. The program was held at the El Paso Museum of Art.

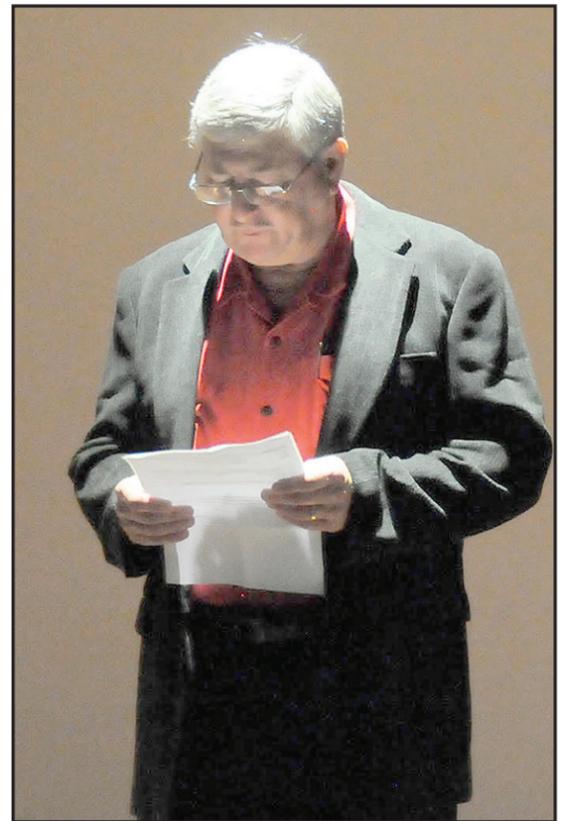
The Cardozo Society is a composed of Jewish attorneys and others working in the legal field. Named after Benjamin Cardozo of New York, a revered Jewish Supreme Court Justice, the organization is a key part of Jewish Federation’s campaign programs.



Amy and Allan Goldfarb



Debra Kanof, Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso board member, and Jamie Flores, Holocaust Museum of El Paso executive director



Cliff Eisenberg, longtime Federation and Holocaust Museum supporter, introduced Dr. Paul Finkelman



Monika Kimball and Susan Michelson



Richard Dayoub, Leslie Beckoff, and Mark Miller



Dr. Paul Finkelman, speaker with Janet Wechter, president and Robert French, executive director, Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

PJ Library kids get ready for Chanukah

The scents of cinnamon, sugar, and frying oil mingled with smiles, laughter and friendly chatter on a chilly Veterans Day when participants gathered at Whole Foods for our “El Paso Top Chefs” event to learn about the holiday of Chanukah and prepare a holiday favorite. It was great to lead nearly 30 children and their grownups through the steps of a recipe for Raspberry Ponchik, a Polish donut typically eaten for Chanukah.

As families finished their donut prep and lined their plates up on the counter for their creations to be fried, we took a break to have some snacks and listen to the book “There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Dreidel” - lots of giggling accompanied each new item eaten by the Old Lady!

Each family took home some special gifts: a copy of the day’s recipe from “The Jewish Holidays Cookbook” (a PJ Parents Choice selection this year), the donuts that they’d made, and PJ Library aprons.



Joel Kaplowitz, Ben Roth, James and Walker Giese, and Kai Papa are ready to cook



Nicole Hertel shares a story with her daughters Tova and Tams

- Join us in January for two PJ Library events!
- Saturday, January 12 - Intergalactic Havdalah! Meet us from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the entrance of the Franklin Mountains State Park for a Havdalah service and stargazing, thanks to our friends in the Sun City Astronomers group. Due to the time and weather, this event will be geared towards PJ Library families with elementary school kids, but as always, all are welcome!
 - Monday, January 21 - Plant for the Future with us! This will be a morning of service, social action and fun for preschoolers and their families on the day off from school. Watch our Facebook page - facebook.com/pjlibraryelpaso - and your email for more information on this event as it develops.

PJ Library is a program of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso.

Alison Westermann
PJ Library Program Professional

2018 BABIES LIGHT OUR WORLD



Jordan Albert Brown

October 29, El Paso
Parents: Iran and Darren Brown



Viva Joy Eisenberg

August 30, Austin
Parents: Cheryl and Ernest Eisenberg
Grandparents: Martha and Cliff Eisenberg



Hadleigh Margot Friedman

July 30, Dallas
Parents: Laura and Dr. Jon Friedman
Grandparents: Cheryl and Alan Karp



Benjamin Herman

September 25, El Paso
Parents: Rose and Raphael Herman

Jon Francisco Heller

May 13, Albuquerque
Parents: Sara and Dareck Heller
Grandparents: Fifi Heller-Kaim and Boris Kaim



Spencer Jordan Kobren

January 31, Houston
Parents: Lauryn and Jason Kobren
Grandparents: Lynn and Scott Kobren



Ashton Gray Mamood

January 14, Gilbert, Arizona
Parents: Alexis and Alan Mamood
Grandparents: Nina and Fred Hirsh



Thomas Bradley Myers

July 20, El Paso
Parents: Jennifer and Chris Giese
Grandparents: Becky and Keith Myers



Simon Bud Schwartz

January 31, Boulder, Colorado
Parents: Amy and Courtney Schwartz
Grandparents: Marcia and Bill Dahlberg



Evelynnn Raequel Small

January 26, El Paso
Parents: Noel and Brian Small
Grandparents: Cherryll and Les Lieberman;
Hermina Hollowell



David Samuel Sonnen

March 13, El Paso
Parents: Vanessa and Daniel Sonnen
Grandparents: Arlene and Jon Sonnen



COMMUNITY

J Center celebrates Hanukkah



Students at the J Center will entertain parents and guests on December 5 "Hanukkah on the Border"

J Center children's smiles are shining as brightly as a newly lit menorah in anticipation of celebrating the Festival of Lights.

Judaic teacher Stacy Berry has been regaling her young charges with the Hanukkah story, including

details of the victory of the mighty Maccabees against their oppressors and the rededication of the Second Temple. Explaining to her eager students that Hanukkah is Hebrew for dedication, Ms. Stacy read books to the children that illustrated the Hanukkah

miracle.

"Even though there was enough olive oil to keep the menorah's candles burning for a single day," she explained, "the candles shone brightly for eight nights."

Armed with Hanukkah knowledge, the J Center students have been crafting their own menorahs out of strips of paper, using their counting skills to make sure their candelabras include eight candles and the mighty "shamash."

Hanukkah education wouldn't be complete without some dreidel action. Teachers explained the significance of the dreidel's letters as the students chanted, "A great miracle happened there! Nes gadol haya sham!"

After learning dreidel rules and regulations, the kids tried their hands at spinning their tops amidst feverish pleas for the dreidel to land on "gimmel." All students went home with their own dreidels and a copy of the game's rules so they could play with

their families.

The J Center's thespians are also preparing for the debut of Hanukkah in the Borderland featuring a cactus-shaped menorah, a Star of David on the Franklin Mountains, and lots of songs and dances, including "When the Macabees Come Marching In," "We Like to Spin the Dreidel," "Ocho Candelitas," "La Bamba," "Dreidel Hokey Pokey," and the children's favorite, "Not by Might."

You can see their show at "Hanukkah in the Borderland" and help celebrate Hanukkah with the students and their families from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 5. Cheese enchiladas, salsa, beans, rice, and latkes will be served in Temple Mount Sinai's social hall; tickets are \$5 for children and \$7 for adults and can be reserved by emailing belinda.saylor@thejelpaso.org. Happy Hannukah!

Wendy Siegel

Board member, J Center for Early Learning

Remembering our War Veterans

The Maurice Kubby Post 749 of the Jewish War Veterans had a busy week of events for Veteran's Day last month. On Thursday, November 8, Lt. (Ret) Stanley Marcus and I went to the Fort Bliss Veterans Remembrance Ceremony. Mr. Marcus is a WWII veteran, liberator of three concentration camps and an Honor Flight participant.

On Friday, November 9, the Post attended services at Temple Mount Sinai (Reform) Rabbi Ben Zeidman (Patron Member) performed a special blessing for all veterans. I spoke about veterans and the JWV during the service. As is our tradition of many years, my wife Bonny and I sponsored and prepared a veterans recognition Oneg supper.

On Saturday, November 9, the Post attended services at Congregation B'Nai Zion (Conservative). Rabbi Scott Rosenberg called JWV members to the

bima for several aliyahs. The veterans were hosted to a luncheon after service sponsored by Mr. Mike Batkin (JWV life member). I was again given time to speak about veterans and the JWV.

On Sunday, November 10, members of the Post and I went to Legacy at Cimarron, a local assisted living facility to meet with senior citizen veterans. We made presentations of U.S. flag pins (provided by Legacy) to all veterans and surviving spouses and the Post presented the veterans with lap blankets made by the spouses of our members. It was a memorable mitzvah to be able to have lunch with many of the veterans and spouses of Veterans and swap a few war stories of their service. We thank all who served!

Scott P. Stevens
Commander, Dept. of TALO
Jewish War Veterans



Jewish War Veterans visited some of their senior fellow veterans at the Legacy at Cimarron retirement community.

Picture of the Month



Scott Stevens and Stanley Marcus visit the Fort Bliss cemetery for a special Veterans Day service



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COMMUNITY

Even when you have no light

Unlike most Jewish holidays, Chanukah is not celebrated with a feast. We kindle flames.

We commemorate the miraculous salvation of the Jewish people in Israel over 2,100 years ago. At the time, the Jewish commonwealth was annexed by the Syrian Greek Empire. During the reign of Antiochus IV (174 B.C.E), the Greeks campaigned to assimilate all the nations under their dominion to the Greek way of life, especially Israel.

They enacted decrees with the intention of destroying any vestige of authentic Jewish life. When they plundered the Holy Temple, they made an ideological statement by rendering all of the ritually pure olive oil unfit for ceremonial use. Their goal was to extinguish the soul of Judaism.

The unlikelyst of heroes emerged to free Israel from the vicelike grip of its captors. A priestly family, called the

Hasmoneans, formed the resistance movement popularly known as the Maccabees. Contrary to common perception, these men were not natural born warriors. Nor were they familiar with military strategy, trained for battle nor possessed arsenals of weaponry. They were scholars from an early age, trained to officiate the ritual services in the Holy Temple. Armed with unfaltering faith and a prayer on their lips they charged into battle to sanctify the name of G-d. Their victory was a miracle of epic proportions.

Upon recapturing the Holy Temple, they set about restoring the defiled premises to its former glory. To initiate the ritual service of kindling the menorah, they desperately searched for ritually pure olive oil. Since the spiritual status of the previous supply had been intentionally compromised by the invaders, only a small jug

containing a night's worth of oil was to be found in all of Jerusalem. Production of a new supply would be a project of eight days.

The courageous Maccabees were not paralyzed by indecision and doubt. Seizing the opportunity to observe this divine service, they filled the lamps and hoped for the best. The awesome miracle occurred and the flames burned for eight nights.

True, the military victory was spectacular and certain catastrophe was averted. But the decision to go ahead with the menorah lighting and the subsequent miracle became the centerpiece of the Chanukah celebration for all time.

The lesson is clear. When the going gets rough and you are surrounded by what can be perceived as a world of darkness and corruption, complaining or philosophizing is not the way to



Rabbi Levi Greenberg

proceed. Take initiative. Kindle a flame in the life of another. Even if you have barely enough emotional and moral fuel for yourself, do your part and G-d will take care of the rest.

This is the surest methodology for lighting up the world.

*Rabbi Levi Greenberg
Chabad Lubavitch – El Paso*

EPJA: Lights, Camera, Action!

Laughter, expression, creativity, and quick thinking---that's what you'll discover with our young Jewish performers as they take center stage at the El Paso Jewish Academy. For the 2018-19 school year, the EPJA is thrilled to have incorporated theatre arts to further enrich their students' Jewish experience. Students have the opportunity to explore many genres of theatre such as improvisational games and exercises, pantomime, tableaux, monologues, duo-scenes, skits, debate, and public speaking.

Currently we are working on a special project to present to the El Paso Holocaust Museum. The theme is

"Unity" and students are researching World War II heroes who risked their lives to save Jews. After individual research, students are writing their own script to bring these heroes to life in first-person narrative. Thereafter, the class will be choral reading an original poem. This is one example of how students can better connect with their Jewish identity and elevate it to a whole new level.

By delving into their creativity, students can become more expressive and learn to work better with their peers. The more you practice coming up with ideas and problem solving, the more you work your brain, which carries over into other areas of academics and life

in general. Practicing tongue twisters provides better diction and taking the stage solo in the spotlight produces confidence and public speaking skills---the list goes on!

When EPJA student Lacey Olson was asked what she likes best about theatre she answered, "I like being challenged with tongue twisters and I feel my confidence has increased to become a better speaker because of theatre."

The other students will tell you that they much prefer to be given the chance to move around and unleash their silliness rather than being tied to a desk. Shalom Sosa often asks to play the "Shopping Game," a warm-up exercise

where students verbalize items they might buy at a grocery store. They have to spontaneously add new items along with recounting all the previous ones. The memory abilities of these students would leave any adult flabbergasted!

With theatre improvisation you'd be amazed at the imaginative and quick-witted play---never a dull moment and always a new scenario! Adding various elements of theatre in a school setting provides a well-rounded education. Witnessing our students' beaming faces as they come alive in their own is proof of this, and a rewarding experience to forever cherish.

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COMMUNITY

December 1-3, Saturday to Monday

Iris Toth, assistant director of Camp Young Judaea Texas, and Michael Esposito, senior assistance director, will be in El Paso to share news of the camp and answer questions about the exciting sessions coming in the summer of 2019. You can meet them at the camp's activity booth at Temple Mount Sinai's Chanukah Family Fun Day on Sunday, December 2, and at the community-wide Chanukah event at B'nai Zion on Monday, December 3.

December 5, Wednesday

The J Center for Early Learning invites the community to its annual Chanukah in the Borderland celebration from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 5, in Temple Mount Sinai's social hall. Enjoy the J Center's student performance, music, and a dinner of cheese enchiladas, salsa, beans, rice, and latkes. Tickets are \$5 for children and \$7 for adults; reserve your spot by emailing belinda.saylor@thejelpaso.org.

December 9, Sunday

The popular community-wide Chanukah Celebration starts at 5:30 in San Jacinto Plaza, with the menorah lighting ceremony at 5:45 p.m. Sing and listen to Chanukah songs and music, and enjoy hot chocolate and Kosher doughnuts.

January 22, Tuesday

The new year starts with a Pacesetters event for those who donate \$1,800 or more toward the Federation's 2019 campaign. At this kickoff event at the beautiful new home of Dr. Steve and Wendy Lanski, attendees will meet two international leaders in the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), an Israel-based organization that receives Jewish Federation funds. Come meet Arielle Di-Porto, who works with relocating families to Israel, and Mort Naiman, senior vice president of global philanthropy. Catch up with friends and make new ones over dinner and drinks while you learn more about JAFI's transformative work in Israel. For information, call 915-842-9554.

January 6, 20, 27, and February 10, Sundays

The Federation's Jewish Film Series committee has worked tirelessly to bring four quality movies to El Paso. They screened a multitude of films selected from various sources, such as movies shown in Jewish film series throughout the country. The movies the committee selected will be thought-provoking, educational and eye-opening. The fourth movie, set in the Middle East,

includes a Mediterranean lunch.

Many thanks to the Jewish Film Series Committee co-chairs, Joan Korn and Wendy Siegel, and their dedicated committee: Joyce Anenberg, Mike Batkin, Brenda Ehrlich, Loree Furman, Romee Herbert, Beth Kurland, Jane Rosen and David Sabal. See you at El Paso's Jewish Film Festival at the Alamo Drafthouse!

Mazel Tov

2019 Hadassah El Paso Executive Board

Co-Presidents: Audrey Lavi and Cherryll Lieberman

- Communications VP: Joyce Gronich
- Membership VP: Mindy Dember
- PRAZE Co-VPs: Debra Cohen and Marcia Schwartz
- (Programs/Advocacy/Zionism/Education)
- Recording Secretary: Lisa Mitchell
- Treasurer: Jane Warach

In November, Hadassah El Paso delivered donated turkeys, baked and canned goods to Hospice El Paso. Hadassah El Paso wishes you and your families a very happy and bright holiday season!

UTEP professors earn tenure

Two members of the Jewish community have been granted tenure and promoted to associate professor at UTEP's recent "Newly Tenured and Promoted Faculty Dinner," hosted by University President Diana Natalicio. Dr. Ophra Leyser-Whalen, a member of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso's board of directors, is on the sociology and anthropology faculty. Dr. Daniel Tillman is on faculty in the department of teacher education.



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COMMUNITY

Recent Temple Beth-El events



Temple Beth-El Las Cruces community members of all ages played Pictionary and a variety of other games at the Beth-El "Temple Youth Game and Dessert" night on Saturday, October 27. The event was preceded by Havdalah and prayers for the victims of the shooting at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh.

Local clergy stood and joined Rabbi Larry Karol in leading a reading of healing and remembrance at the Temple Beth-El Las Cruces vigil and service on Sunday, October 28, following the attack on the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. More than 180 people attended the service, which included discussion among attendees on the goodness and hope we can bring to our communities.



During the Shabbat services on Friday, November 16, Temple Beth-El Las Cruces dedicated seven needlepoints depicting the days of creation. Made by the women of Temple Beth-El over a period of time, the colorful works are now on display in the David Steinborn Social Hall.



"Memories: A Temple in Las Cruces," a dramatic adaptation of vignettes from oral history interviews from members of Temple Beth-El, was presented by a cast of NMSU students and others at the NMSU Theatre in October 7. More than 150 people from Temple and the Las Cruces community attended this performance, which was supported by a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. In the photo, the cast shared short comments from the interviews to conclude the program.



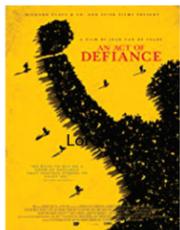
Lynn Zeemont (Temple Beth-El Matzo Ball Open Golf chair), Nina Salmon (executive director of Mesilla Valley Hospice), and Michael Mandel of Temple Beth-El conducted the raffle at the conclusion of an enjoyable afternoon of golf and community at the Picacho Hills Country Club in Las Cruces. A portion of the proceeds from the Temple's annual Matzo Ball Open Golf Tournament will benefit Mesilla Valley Hospice.

ANNOUNCING 2019 JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL



Act of Defiance

Sunday, January 6



(English)

The historical drama, *Act of Defiance*, tells the story of Nelson Mandela, his Jewish attorney, and others as they face a possible death sentence for conspiracy against the apartheid South African government.

Three Identical Strangers

Sunday, January 20



(English)

Three Jewish strangers are reunited by astonishing coincidence after being born identical triplets, separated at birth and adopted by three different families. The fairy-tale reunion takes a dark turn when the unimaginable is revealed.

1945

Sunday, January 27



(Hungarian, English subtitles)

In 1945, an Orthodox man and his son return to a post-Holocaust village in Hungary while the villagers prepare for a wedding. The townspeople, guilt-ridden, fear the men may be heirs of the village's deported Jews, and expect them to demand their property back.

CO-SPONSOR: EL PASO HOLOCAUST MUSEUM AND STUDY CENTER.

The Insult

Sunday, February 10



(Arabic, English subtitles)

The Oscar-nominated *The Insult* starts with a minor incident between a Palestinian refugee and a Lebanese Christian that explodes into a dramatic trial, dividing the two communities. The film depicts the tensions in Lebanon that profoundly impact Israel and the Middle East.

LUNCH SERVED PRIOR TO FILM AT 12:30. PM.

Be a Sponsor!

Executive Producer: \$500
 Producer: \$250
 Director: \$100

All sponsors receive two tickets for each film.

Screenwriter:

\$10/ ticket or \$36 for the series of 4 films

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\$7/ ticket or \$25 for the series of 4 films

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Films begin promptly at 2:00 PM.
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It's almost like getting another 2 nights of Hanukkah.



The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso is pleased to announce the creation of two new funds:

**The Gary and Lisa Nadler Fund
Foundation General Fund**

Through the establishment of funds such as these, we can ensure that a strong Jewish culture and identity exist in El Paso for generations to come. For more information, or to establish a fund, please contact Robert Shiloff at 584-3942.

**The Jewish Future is in your hands...will you be there?
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