

Adar/Nissan I
March 2018

THE JEWISH VOICE

Informing and Connecting the Jews of the El Paso-Las Cruces Area



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FEDERATION



Eitan Lavi

It has been particularly busy at the Federation offices recently. Even though we are shorthanded, operating without an executive director, all the functions of the Federation continue uninterrupted. Our extremely active committees make sure the Federation lives up to its responsibilities in serving our community, while also helping Jews around the world. The Shalom

Shuttle, Cafe Europa, and PJ Library are fully functional. Our community's response to the Film Series, which was chaired by Brenda Ehrlich, turned out so great that we needed to rent a second theater for the first three films. Our campaign co-chairs and director already have the year planned and had an outstanding Pacesetters event in February. With great attendance and a double-digit average increase from our donors, it is reassuring that we are on the right track. Thank you, Janet Wechter, Leslie Beckoff and Sue Bendalin for your superb performance.

On April 22, the Federation will sponsor the 70th Yom Ha'Atzmaut community celebration. Scott Stevens is chairing this program with the cooperation of local Jewish Organizations. On April 29, the JCRC, chaired by David Kern, will lead the community Good Deeds

Day, and we are looking for increased participation. In the meantime, a search committee, chaired by Janet Wechter, is working to fill the executive director position.

In fact, the Federation is not just continuing the operation, we are also continuously seeking ways to improve our system and processes. We updated the Bea Weisz scholarship application for Jewish students, we are working to enhance the granting process, and we make incremental advancements in our electronic communications.

I am grateful to the staff, Sue Bendalin and Shirley Leonhardt, who rose to the occasion, assumed added responsibilities and put in additional hours to ensure smooth and professional operation while the search for a new executive director is in place. I welcome and congratulate the new office assistant, Said Buhaya, to our staff. In addition to the staff, I

am thankful to the board members and volunteers who stepped up to make our transition positive and efficient. It is especially noted the president-elect and campaign chair, Janet Wechter put countless hours in organizing, leadership, and guaranteeing that the Federation is prepared and ready to serve the community and the Jewish people in the years to come.

As we celebrate the happy festivals of Purim and Pesach this month, we are also reminded that in every generation someone rose to do evil to the Jewish people. The Federation is here to help bring our community together in propelling it forward while helping Jews and non-Jews in need.

*Chag Sameach,
Eitan Lavi
President*

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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

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Campaign Director: Sue Bendalin
President: Eitan Lavi
Office: 915-842-9554
7110 North Mesa, El Paso, TX 79912

Editor: Cindy Graff Cohen
Layout and Design: Beatriz Garcia
Advertising Representative: Ethel Braun
Controller: Shirley Leonhardt
Printing: PDX Printing

PASSOVER MESSAGES



Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg

Freedom is relative

Throughout Jewish literature we find three names for Passover. Chag HaPesach (The Festival of Passover), Chag HaMatzot (The Festival of Matzos) and Chag HaCheirut (The Festival of Redemption).

What type of freedom were the Jews granted when they left Egypt? Did we not remove the yoke of Pharaoh only to replace it with an even greater yoke? “When you take the people out from Egypt they shall serve G-d,” Moses is told. G-d took the entire Jewish People out of slavery in Egypt, only on condition that they become subservient to Him! Observing the Torah and its 613 commandments is certainly a heavy yoke. Is it not a contradiction to claim that the Jews were freed from bondage, if they afterward found themselves in a new sort of servitude?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that the concept of freedom is relative, dependent on many factors. The same freedom that suffices for an animal does not constitute freedom for a human being. If we were to fulfill all a person’s physical needs, yet not allow his intellect to be satisfied, this would be a terrible deprivation. Freedom for man includes the recognition that he possesses a need to fulfill his intellectual yearnings, to develop his full potential as a human being.

And yet, even intellectual fulfillment is not true freedom for a Jew. His Jewish soul must also be taken into consideration, that “veritable piece of G-d” which is the birthright of every member of the Jewish nation. Even when this soul is clothed in a physical body it maintains its intimate connection with its G-dly source. A Jew can only find true freedom and fulfillment when his soul is afforded the opportunity to strengthen that bond with G-d, through the Torah and its commandments.

That is why our Sages said, “A truly liberated person is one who engages in the study of Torah.” Torah for the Jew is as essential to his existence as water is to a fish. Contrary to being a yoke, Torah is our very life. For a Jew, whose soul is his true essence, genuine freedom is that which will allow him to draw closer and closer to G-d - learning Torah and performing mitzvot (commandments). May this year’s Pesach bring us all true spiritual and physical freedom.

Best wishes for a kosher and joyous Pesach,

*Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg
Chabad Lubavitch*



Rabbi Ben Zeidman

Clearing the clutter

The ancient Jewish philosopher, Philo (died 50 ce), explained that the chametz, the leavening, is like “pride” because leaven is “puffed up” (The Special Laws, 53). Leaven is the “stuff” in our lives that keeps us from being able to fully recognize the holiness that is around us and within us. It blocks us from being able to access the depths of Truth and leaves us wading in the shallow waters of pettiness, envy, anger, hatred, destructive behavior. Chametz also tastes good, and while the long-term effects are potentially devastating, in the short term it is fulfilling and pleasant.

This month many of us will be doing a lot of cleaning and re-organizing. Straightening up the clutter and making space by moving the chametz out of the way not only allows us to celebrate the Festival of Passover. With our homes ordered and organized, papers filed, and pantries dusted, it is not so different from the cleaning of old leaven from ancient storehouses. Similarly, we come into the spring prepared to grow and expand our lives in all kinds of ways. Our homes are prepared to allow for love in ways that the clutter may have hindered.

But if we take Philo’s words to heart, we will work on clearing out the chametz within ourselves to prepare for the coming Festival as well. We will work to free ourselves from the negative clutter within that keeps us from being the best versions of ourselves. Giving ourselves a chance for renewal and rebirth with the change of the season, we will find that through our relationships with other people that we can access deeper Truths and profound meaning for our own lives. Perhaps with this season we can each let go of some of the things that keep us from recognizing the Divine in our midst: anger, divisiveness, closed-mindedness and more.

This year, may the Festival of Passover inspire us to reconnect with our community. Passover should be a time for us to focus on ultimate truths like the goodness of Freedom, like the righteousness of kindness and generosity and respect and love, like the holiness of seeing the humanity and Godliness in those we might be tempted to call the Other. May our celebrations of Passover help us to look for the ways we are similar and inspire more peace in the community and the world.

*Rabbi Ben Zeidman
Temple Mount Sinai*



Rabbi Larry Karol

Freedom from bigotry

For the last year, I have participated in an interfaith discussion group that, for several months, focused on issues and concerns related to Jewish identity and history. I joined the group in early 2017 to lead a study of Dr. Jonathan Sarna’s book, “American Judaism: A History.” The most chilling paragraph in the book commented on the conditions a century ago that led to the passage of the 1924 Immigration Act. After so many Jewish immigrants had successfully integrated themselves into life in America, there was not acceptance in all corners of society.

Here is that passage: “Immigration restrictions that sought to restore the nation’s ethnic mix to its nineteenth-century white Protestant character also aimed directly (though by no means exclusively) at Jews. The House Committee on Immigration received a report prepared by Wilbur J. Carr, the director of the Consular Service, and approved by the secretary of state, that described Jews who desired to migrate to the United States as being, among other things, ‘undesirable,’ ‘of low physical and mental standards,’ ‘filthy,’ ‘un-American,’ and ‘often dangerous in their habits.’ Resulting legislation - the 1924 Immigration Act - never mentioned Jews, and it restricted other “undesirable” immigrants like Italians and Slavs no less stringently, while Asians were barred entirely. ‘Chauvinistic nationalism is rampant,’ Louis Marshall, the foremost American Jewish leader of his day, recognized. ‘The hatred of everything foreign has become an obsession.’”

The Pesach Haggadah states that “in every generation, we are obligated to see ourselves as if WE were freed from [slavery in] Egypt.” Jewish arrivals in the United States were grateful to live in a land where a wide range of freedoms are realized and practiced. There are also echoes of prejudicial expressions from that previous time that do, in our own day, emerge and re-emerge to remind us that certain negative perspectives, unfortunately, do not totally disappear.

Pesach’s arrival in the spring can inspire us to renew our hopes for triumphs in the struggle for freedom against hatred and bigotry. The symbols of the Seder bring to life the promise of redemption, which can result from our faith in God and from our partnership with one another.

Emma Lazarus once said, “Until we are all free, we are none of us free.” May her words, and the prayers and songs of our Passover celebration, lead us to continue the quest for liberty for all humanity.

*Rabbi Larry Karol
Temple Beth-El*



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PASSOVER MESSAGES



Rabbi Levi Greenberg

The “Me” and “We” blend

The Prophet Ezekiel refers to the Exodus we celebrate on Passover as the birth of the Jewish nation. It follows that in addition to the inception of the Jewish community it was also the beginning of the individual Jewishness of every Jew.

Every human is composed of his or her individuality as well as their place within humanity – citizen of a country, resident of a city and member of a community. Seemingly these two elements are essentially at odds with each other. Is the individual expected to do everything for the common good of the broader community or is the community obligated to throw everything in for the individual?

Passover reveals a fundamental truth that allows us to integrate these two extremes.

Prior to redemption the Israelites were commanded to slaughter a sheep or lamb, sprinkle the blood on their

doorposts and eat the roasted meat on the eve of the 15th of Nissan. This tradition became known as the Korban Pesach (Passover Sacrifice), offered in the Holy Temple on the day before Seder night and served as the centerpiece of the Seder as long as there was a Holy Temple in Jerusalem. (Many Seder traditions today commemorate the Passover sacrifice from Temple times.)

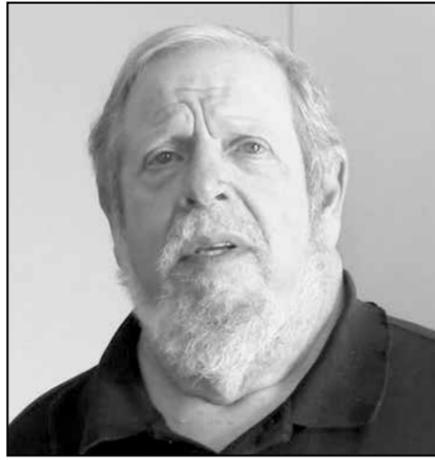
In the list of sacrifices offered in the Holy Temple there are communal sacrifices and private sacrifices. The Passover sacrifice incorporated elements of both. Participation in a sacrifice was exclusive (private) but all Jews were obligated to offer the same sacrifice on the same day and eat it in the same manner as everyone else (public).

The Passover sacrifice challenges us to simultaneously focus on the individual and the community. However, as long as our approach to Jewish life is calculated, the individual is responsible for self preservation and the community must operate based on public polling and data.

The name “Pesach - Passover” teaches us to transcend our logical approach to self preservation and community building. The individual must make an unconditional commitment for the greater good and the community must be ready to invest everything for the benefit of even a single individual.

Be sure that every Jew has a place at the Seder and may we all have a kosher and joyous Pesach!

*Rabbi Levi Greenberg
Chabad Lubavitch*



Rabbi Steven Leon

A fifth question

Millions of Jews will gather this month in their homes and also in the synagogue to observe a Passover Seder. And do you know why we will go to all the trouble of having a Seder plate and preparing special foods and hiding the Afikomen and listening to the four questions and refraining from eating leavened bread? It is because on the evening of the Exodus from Egypt God commanded us to prepare for our freedom by observing the Pesach and He especially wanted the children to take part.

Yes, all of us celebrate with our children to keep alive the story of Pesach in our homes and in our communities by remembering through observing the signs and symbols of the Seder service. I can't emphasize enough how vitally important it is for us, the descendants of our ancestors who were Hebrew slaves for four hundred years, to become passionate about the freedom that we have to practice our Judaism freely, to be grateful that we have a homeland in Israel today, and to appreciate all that we can benefit from the teachings

and values of Judaism and specifically by fully participating in the services and activities of our wonderful congregations and community.

A few years ago I represented the Jewish community in an interfaith dialogue on peace at the YWCA. Clergy and representatives of Islam, the Anglican Church, Buddhism, Roman Catholic, and Bahai also participated. How satisfying it felt to show the entire community the marvelous values and traditions of Judaism.

And so, as we prepare for Passover this year, let me suggest that we also fully appreciate the great teachings and practices of our people. We have so much to be proud of and to be passionate about and yet we tend to take our Judaism for granted. We should be motivated by the great Festival of Freedom, to appreciate that blessing by exercising our right to attend religious services more frequently than we presently do, by making a commitment to visit Israel and especially Jerusalem, now recognized by America to be the capitol of the Jewish homeland, and by really demonstrating our love for Judaism through our participation and support for the Jewish community and Federation.

May I suggest that this year at our Passover Seder we ask the fifth question and give reference to our Jewish students in El Paso and to the children of our Hebrew slaves at the time of Moses, “What does Judaism really mean to me, my children, and my family? What more can I do to make my life more fulfilling as a member of the Jewish People?”

Have a wonderful, healthy, meaningful and happy Pesach,

*Rabbi Stephen A. Leon
Congregation B'Nai Zion*

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FEDERATION

Sylvia Cohen: Lifelong leader for our Jewish Community

The year 1949 turned out to be a great year for El Paso and the El Paso Jewish community because that's the year that my cousin, Sylvia Deener Cohen, moved to El Paso from New York. My mother, Gitel Batt, and I had moved to El Paso the year before for my health and Sylvia followed. With her encouragement, both her brothers, Carl and Sam Deener, and their families and her parents, Louis and Yetta Deener, eventually moved to El Paso as well.



Emily Stuessy and Sylvia Cohen at a Cafe Europa lunch at the Federation office

Early on Sylvia met a Jewish entrepreneur, Emil Reisel (Mimi Gladstein's and Holli Berry's father) who conducted business in Israel from El Paso and owned Rio Grande Wholesale Dry Goods downtown. He encouraged Sylvia to get involved in community work. While raising her two sons, Michael and Louis, she began her career in serving our region's Jewish community.

In 1968, after leaving Rio Grande Wholesale, Cohen went to work at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) as the senior adult director, in addition to teaching Hebrew at Temple Mt. Sinai, a practice she continued for 30 years. She also volunteered part-time as an assistant to Henry Kellen, who early on had the dream of opening a Holocaust museum in El Paso. With Kellen, it was her responsibility to give talks about Jewish holidays to the U.S. troops at Ft. Bliss.

After the Holocaust Museum was built, Cohen began working quarter-time for the museum and three-quarters time for the JCC, gradually increasing her hours there. From 1988 to 1994 she volunteered to interview El Paso Holocaust survivors for the [Steven] Spielberg Foundation.

In 1994 Sylvia became the museum's first executive director and worked to expand the museum's attendance and outreach. Both school children and

members of the U.S. Army and German military came to the museum for guided tours with docents and other activities. She also assisted the Holocaust Museum board in inviting famous speakers to address the El Paso community, including President Bill Clinton, General Colin Powell, Mayor Rudy Giuliani, General Norman Swazkopf, and actor Christopher Reeve.

When Sylvia made the decision to retire, Emily Stuessy, head of the Jewish Family Services, approached her with another opportunity: working with a Holocaust survivors' group. She immediately signed on and worked there for another 8 years.

She also headed the JCC's Golden Social Club for 15 years. During the same period, she formed both a Teens Group for those aged 13 to 15 and a group for adult singles. Both ended eventually as the teens grew up and went away to school, and the single adults married.

To better serve senior citizens, Sylvia and Josh Kahn, a successful CPA, obtained a grant from City Council to build Chai Manor, a retirement center for low-income seniors. It was built across the street from the museum and was part of its complex. Sylvia became the senior adult director there.



Sylvia Deener Cohen, Ira Batt, and Gitel Batt in El Paso around 1950

In 2007 Sylvia and Mimi Reisel Gladstein co-authored a chapter in the book, "The Lone Stars of David—the Jews of Texas." The chapter was entitled "The Wild West Welcomes Holocaust Survivors." Four years later, in 2011, Cohen and Gladstein collaborated to expand that chapter into a book about



Cousins Sylvia Cohen and Ira Batt

our Holocaust Museum and Study Center.

In 2014 a group of El Pasoans took a trip to Israel. On their tour of Jerusalem, they encountered a group of Jewish senior citizens who met for socialization in a place called Café Europa. Several persons on the trip expressed interest in forming such a group in El Paso. With a grant from the Jewish Federation Foundation, Cohen and Stuessy formed El Paso's Borderland Café Europa. They worked hard to get it started, and in 2015, the Café found a home in the Anusim Center near the JCC. In November 2017 the program moved to the new Jewish Federation offices in Colony Cove II on Mesa Street in West El Paso. Members—all ages 70 and above—now meet there for lunch every other week and listen to invited speakers.

"It was difficult to find the names of

Jewish El Pasoans 70 and older," Cohen recalled. "We already knew many in that age group, so we began making calls to see who might be interested." The pair asked each person if they knew of others and were soon able to identify a number of interested parties. At present Café Europa boasts 25 to 35 active participants attending each luncheon. "We don't card anyone," Cohen grinned.

Ira Batt

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COMMUNITY

EPJA presents TMG Award to Roei Arusi



The El Paso Jewish Academy is extremely proud to announce that the recipient of the 2017-18 TMG Award is Roei Arusi, an eighth-grade student nominated by the faculty for demonstrating a commitment to Torah, Mitzvoth, and Gimilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness). These values are inculcated in our students and are the core of what we stand for as a Jewish Day School as we prepare the future leaders of Am Israel.

Roei was unanimously recognized by all his teachers for his respectfulness, kindness, helpfulness, and commitment to Judaism and living the values he has been taught. As part of our Jewish tradition and in celebration of Tu B'Shevat (the new year of the trees), a fruit tree was planted in his honor

in our ever-growing Ya'ar Ateed, the Forest of the Future at the EPJA. Elliot Berg, past president, EPJA alumnus, and award sponsor initiated this award in 2015 to recognize student leaders who exemplify what the EPJA stands for and to serve as a tribute to all students who we have had the privilege to educate throughout our 42 years of existence. We wish a very hearty Mazel Tov and a Yasher Koach to Roei and his parents, Yinon and Nili Arusi. Roei was honored to receive this award and advised the current students to "stick with your faith and have the confidence to know you are doing the correct thing without being influenced by others." Roei will leave a lasting impression as he graduates from the EPJA in May.



Robyn Helzner presented "A Key to the Casa: Celebrating Jewish Life in Sephardic Spain" on Monday, February 19, 2018 before an audience of 120 at Temple Beth-El Las Cruces. She traced the history and impact of the Jewish presence in Spain through travelogue, story and song. She also shared her program in El Paso at Congregation B'Nai Zion on February 21.

Camp Young Judaea welcomes El Paso campers

Last year, Camp Young Judaea Texas, located in Wimberley, Texas, was fortunate to receive a special 2-year grant to help recruit new campers from small Jewish communities. CYJ Texas has always had big groups of campers from Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio, but this grant allowed the camp to reach out to the El Paso community and recruit 11 new campers for Summer 2017. Not only did CYJ recruit campers by working with B'nai Zion and marketing in the El Paso Voice, but its Assistant Directors also made a special trip to meet with El Paso parents in person.

Jeanne Lipson, who sent her then 8-year old twins for a 10-day session, was excited by the opportunity for

summer camp. "The opportunity that CYJ Texas gave us for Marshall and Ross to attend camp was amazing. We have enjoyed getting to know the staff and the boys had a great time. Such a great time, in fact, that they will be going back for 3-weeks this summer."

The recruiting grant was a success: most of the summer 2017 campers from El Paso are returning in 2018. There is still space in several age groups for more campers, especially in the second half of the summer. CYJ Texas offers 10-day programs for rising 2nd and 3rd graders and 3-week programs for rising 3rd through 11th graders. Visit the CYJ Texas website – www.cyjtxas.org - to learn more about all the various camp programs and session dates.

FEDERATION

Pacesetters show up at kick-off event

The Pacesetters campaign event on February 20 at the home of Lory and Jonny Rogers was a remarkable success on many levels. Nearly 60 people attended, including 40 of those individuals who gave more than \$1,800 to the Federation this year, Federation board members, and other guests. While participants enjoyed delicious appetizers and the sit-down dinner, they also enjoyed unparalleled views of El Paso and Juarez and remarkable works of art. To cap off the event, the event brought a major increase in giving on the spot with many Federation supporters' generous pledges. It seems that Janet Wechter's warning that alarms would go off and Jonny and Lori's four sweet dogs would chase anybody leaving without turning in a pledge card worked!

The highlight of the evening was an inspiring as well as practical talk by the guest speaker Daniel Prescott, a long-time leader in the Dallas Jewish community and a former board chair, campaign chair, and Pacesetters chair for the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas. Pacesetters co-chair Tony Furman introduced Prescott, who he has known since college. Prescott shared some perspectives on his successful approach to fundraising for Jewish causes, emphasizing that "Jewish gelt is not driven by Jewish guilt," but rather the special bonds shared among Jewish

people everywhere and the hopes for the continuation of the Jewish community for the next generation.

*Cindy Graff Cohen
Editor, The Jewish Voice*

Pacesetters at Kick-off Event

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Tony Furman introduces his friend Daniel Prescott, the guest speaker, while Bill and Marcia Dahlberg look on



Dr. Steve and Wendy Lanski and Cindy Metrikin



John Moye and Jonny Rogers



Jane Rosen and Stephanie Calvo



Rabbi Levi and Shainy Greenberg



Bruce Gulbas and Robert Beckoff



Janet Wechter and Peter Svarzbein



Susan Michelson and Bill Stein



Jay Podolsky and David Kern



Chana and Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg



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Kurt Weill Festival in April

The El Paso Symphony Orchestra presents its first-ever "Kurt Weill Festival" with two evenings of music by the great Jewish composer Kurt Weill (1900-1950) at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, April 13 and 14. The orchestra, under the direction of EPSO conductor Bohuslav Rattay, will perform a selection of the German composer's popular songs, such as Weill's "Mack the Knife" from his "Three-Penny Opera" written with Berthold Brecht, as well as four pieces set to poetry by Walt Whitman.

After his music studies and a successful career in musical theater in Germany in the 1920s and early '30s, Weill became a target of the Nazis. He was able to flee his native country in March 1933 and moved first to Paris and then London and the New York City area. His works were produced on Broadway and the London theater circuit and he also wrote the scores for two movies, working with George Gershwin on one of them. One of his Broadway shows won the first Tony Award ever given for a musical score.

This concert, which is funded in part by the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, will be one of the symphony's signature events of the season and will feature a script by Joseph Horowitz and Kim Kowalke, distinguished Kurt Weill scholars, and visuals by the director Peter Bogdanoff. El Paso Symphony Orchestra executive director Ruth Ellen Jacobson welcomes members of the Jewish community to attend the concert at the Plaza Theater, which will be preceded by a talk about Weill and his works at 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs Philanthropy Theater and followed by a discussion with Horowitz and others. For tickets, contact the El Paso Symphony Orchestra at 532-3776.

Join us for a Purim Carnival!

Sunday, March 4th - 9:30am-1pm
Temple Mount Sinai
4408 N. Stanton St.
El Paso, TX 79902

The Reading of the Megillah at 9:30am
 Come in costume, compete and enjoy!

Hamantaschen cookies, Pony Ride, Cake Walk, Games, Arts & Crafts, Prizes, Food, and More...

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COMMUNITY EVENTS



On Saturday, January 27, over 90 Temple Beth-El members of all ages gathered for “Erev Simcha,” an annual congregational appreciation dinner that began with Havdalah and a welcoming ceremony for new members. The Temple Board of Trustees coordinated and sponsored the program.



The Temple Beth-El Religious School coordinated the congregational Tu Bish’vat Seder on Wednesday, January 31, here singing the song created by Ellen and Peter Allard for the holiday, “For Trees.”



Dr. Ezra Cappell, director of UTEP’s Inter-American Jewish Studies, welcomed Dr. Deborah Lipstadt, internationally known Holocaust historian, to the UTEP campus for a special program on February 15. The UTEP Inter-American Jewish Studies Program and the El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center held a fascinating program entitled “Confronting Holocaust Denial” with a presentation by Dr. Lipstadt and a screening of the 2016 motion picture “Denial,” starring Rachel Weisz and based on Dr. Lipstadt’s successful legal battle against notorious Holocaust denier David Irving. The event was well attended and was made possible by grants from the Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso and the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, as well as support from the Aaron Wechter Memorial Scholarship, the Shiloff Family Foundation, Felicia Rubin, and Gerald and Stanlee Rubin.



Members of the Temple Beth-El Board of Trustees hosted congregants from the Leadership Team of the church next door, Sonoma Springs Covenant Church, for dinner on Sunday, January 28, as a “get-to-know-each-other” event. Everyone walked across the adjoining parking lot for dessert at the church, which included Pastor Rob Reed and Rabbi Larry Karol each sharing an original song with biblical and liturgical roots.

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Join Us for Breakfast Sunday

COMMUNITY

Aaron Wechter Memorial Scholarship Fund

Accepting applications for Fall 2018 semester

Aaron Wechter was a long-time philanthropist and leader in the Jewish and business community in El Paso, Texas. The UTEP Memorial Scholarship was established in his name by his widow, Sylvia Wechter, and her family in 2014 to financially assist a worthy UTEP student interested in bettering the Jewish community of El Paso. Building upon Aaron Wechter's legacy of communal involvement and dedication, Sylvia and her family continue to be major supporters of the El Paso community. Anyone interested in applying can contact the UTEP Office of Scholarships (call 747-5748 or email scholar@utep.edu) Completed application forms, with personal statements attached, must be received or postmarked no later than Wednesday, April 18, 2018.



Temple Beth-El Social Action Committee chairperson Ned Rubin addressed the large audience that gathered at Temple on Sunday, February 11, to hear the presentation of an audio recording of a speech delivered by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Temple Emanuel in Worcester, Massachusetts, on March 12, 1961. Congregant Frances Williams had received the tape of the speech over 30 years ago from Rabbi Joseph Klein, who served as rabbi of Temple Beth-El in 1977-1984 after his many years in Worcester. The February 11 program was co-sponsored with the Dona Ana County Branch of the NAACP.

Bea Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund

Accepting applications for Fall 2018 semester

The Beatrice L. Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in July of 2001. It was the wish of Ms. Weisz that proceeds from the fund would be given to one or more needy and worthy Jewish college students to enable them to pursue their studies. The amount available for distribution is \$6,584 for the upcoming school year. Applications are available online at www.jewishelpaso.org and must be received on or before Tuesday, May 15th, 2018, for distribution by August 1, 2018.

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COMMUNITY

First Community Campout at Temple Mount Sinai

On Saturday, February 10th, Temple Mount Sinai hosted their first “Religious School Community Camp-Out.” We were thankful to have over 35 children from ages 4 to 14 stay the night along with several of their parents. The kids (and parents) were from Temple Mount Sinai and Congregation B’nai Zion. Lots of tents were set up in Schwartz Hall.

To start the night, our special guest, Shira Muroff, from the Institute of Southern Jewish Life, led families in celebrating Havdalah. The kids enjoyed many different activities including board games, art projects, karaoke, campfire s’mores, movie time and potato sack races (even Rabbi Zeidman couldn’t resist).

In the morning the children enjoyed a pancake breakfast and attended Sunday School in pajamas and their best “bed head” hairdo. Some of the younger siblings and families joined in for Havdalah and games but left as late as 10:00 p.m. We would like to offer special thanks to Captain Benjamin Kaufman RN and Dr. Lisa Hartman for staying and volunteering as first aid providers (only one band aid was needed). Temple Mount Sinai would also like to recognize the Stevens, Hartman, and Kaplowitz families for organizing and donating to the event. We look forward to this event again next year.

Nathan Stevens



Rabbi Ben Zeidman, Nathan Stevens, Ben Kaufman, and Brian Small got competitive during the potato sack race!



The overnight campers lined up for their turns at karaoke



The kids enjoyed making s'mores outside

Director search process on pace

The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso’s executive director search continues with resume review, phone interviews and visits. Not only do candidates have the opportunity to get to know the community through meetings and other activities, but members of the Jewish community get to know candidates through organized communal organizational visits. In this photo, Dr. Ezra Cappell, director of the Inter-American Jewish Studies Program, meets with candidate Jay Podolsky from Pennsylvania. The next candidate, Robert French, will be in town Thursday, March 8, to Sunday, March 11, and people are encouraged to participate in the scheduled activities with him.

ב"ה

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