



Jewish Federation OF GREATER SANTA BARBARA

We inspire. We connect. We answer.
WE ARE YOUR JEWISH FEDERATION.

focus on
Fall 2015

TISHREI-KISLEV 5776

Days of Reflection, Renewal, and Impact



BIRTHRIGHT: CONNECTING TO THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

Climbing Masada to watch the sunrise from ancient ruins. Eating and sleeping in a Bedouin tent. Meeting and traveling with IDF soldiers. Participating in Bar Mitzvahs at the Kotel in Jerusalem. Learning firsthand about Israel's people and issues. Just a few of the extraordinary highlights from the recent Birthright trip that took 16 post-college Santa Barbara young Jewish adults to Israel for the experience of a lifetime. Participants also visited our Federation's sister city Mitzpe Ramon, the mystical city Tzfat, the Dead Sea and Israel's northernmost city, Metullah, among other sites.

Adam Klein, 25, is a New Jersey native, working on a post-graduate degree in neuroscience at UCSB. He first heard about Birthright Israel as a child. By the time he seriously considered participating, he was approaching his last years of eligibility and, as he says, "A free trip to Israel was really the only vacation I could afford this summer." He mentioned the trip to his mentor, **Dr. Aaron Ettenberg**, who, Adam says, "was shocked that I had never been to Israel and told me I absolutely must go, and put me in contact with the trip organizers at Federation. How

could I say no when my boss was telling me to take time off to visit Israel?"

Adam says it's difficult to choose favorite moments from the trip because there were so many: "...hiking up to the top of Masada during the early morning hours to watch the sunrise over the Dead Sea. We spent those first few moments of the day blowing bubbles, singing and dancing like crazy. Another moment...came about completely spontaneously, rafting down the Jordan River. As we approached a family enjoying a small BBQ on the river bank, everyone pulled their rafts to the side and we joined their party, singing and dancing with an Arab family in the middle of the river! Our group stopping to dance with the family inspired all the rafts behind us to join! It was such a powerful moment, seeing all these total strangers who didn't speak the same language all taking some time to just dance and be happy!"

By his own admission, in the years between his Bar Mitzvah and going on Birthright, Adam had not been involved in the Jewish community. Since returning, he says he not only feels a closer connection to Israel and her people, but also has been getting more involved in Santa Barbara. "I've attended events with the Young Adult Division, and this year I will be participating in JLEAD, a Jewish Leadership program. It was great that I was able to go on

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IMPACTING LIVES AT HOME AND AROUND THE GLOBE

When it comes to changing lives, what moves you? Is it caring for those less fortunate? Is it investing your time in building our Jewish future? Is it inspiring others to make a difference?



Jewish Federation is rallying our community like never before to make a global impact for Jews everywhere through "60 Days of Impact." If you are ready to put your values into action by giving, volunteering or getting engaged in the Jewish community, the time is now. We will be launching an unprecedented two months of activities and efforts to build and strengthen our community—beginning **with our kick-off event November 1st** at Jewish Federation: *Impacting Lives at Home and Around the Globe*.

Your support truly does impact lives here in Santa Barbara. You help provide a weekly, nutritious meal to seniors while engaging them socially, intellectually and emotionally with programs and entertainment. You offset the cost of counseling

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Birthright Israel Above: Santa Barbara participants with residents of our partner city Mitzpe Ramon. See more on page 3.



L'Shana Tova

Message from the Executive Director



The High Holy Days are a time for reflection and renewal—and gratitude. The Jewish Federation is extremely grateful for the incredible support we receive throughout the year from our community. Thanks to our tireless and selfless volunteers, our generous and committed donors, and our dedicated board and professional staff, we are able to serve and strengthen our community. *Kol ha kavod.*

This past year has seen continued growth at **Jewish Family Service**. We expanded counseling and senior services, revamped and reinvigorated the Friendly Visitors Program, introduced new Art Therapy classes for seniors and those dealing with cognitive challenges.

The Federation's Bronfman Family JCC kitchen renovation was completed, and we have been repurposing our classrooms and meeting rooms to make them more effective for our program participants, visitors and staff. New class offerings include Gentle Hatha Yoga, Poetry, Financial Planning for Teens, and Table Tennis.

Jewish Federation has continued to focus its energies on our mission and our many roles in the community. In partnership with **Congregation B'nai B'rith**, and with generous donor support, we brought the educational series *Step Up for Israel*, created by Jerusalem U., to our community. Its purpose is to help young people, as well as the community at large, to learn more about Israel so that we will all be better informed and prepared to respond to the anti-Israel activities and movements that are becoming more prevalent and forceful on

college campuses and elsewhere.

This year, the Jewish Federation was asked to organize the **Annual Jewish Community Picnic**, building on the tradition and success of Hadassah and the B'nai B'rith Lodge, who spearheaded the event in prior years. Also new for the Federation this year is the upcoming launch of our **60 Days of Impact** educational campaign—which will feature two months of events and activities to highlight the impact of our community members' support, locally and beyond.

Following the announcement of the Iran deal, the Federation has been hard at work fulfilling our mission as community builder, facilitator and convener, hosting several meetings, discussions, conference calls and webcasts for the community at large, as well as for key agency and synagogue leadership, and our elected officials. Our Board was unanimous in affirming our responsibility to promote discourse, not discord. Accordingly, we have committed our energy and resources to providing information and opportunities for community members to come together to learn, discuss, debate, and make their own informed decisions.

As we pause in our busy lives to reflect over the High Holy Days, the Federation wants to thank you for your generous support, your thoughtful involvement, and your commitment to our community, Israel, and the Jewish people.

From our family to yours,

Shana Tovah,

Michael S. Rassler



60 Days of Impact Top: YAD partnered with Habitat for Humanity to upgrade area homes. Above: The Jewish Women's Network delivered 25 Baskets of Love to local seniors.

IMPACT CONT. FROM FRONT

for those who simply cannot afford it. You support outreach efforts to schools to bring them to our *Portraits of Survival* and *Upstanders* exhibits and hear directly from Survivors so that they will understand and remember the Holocaust. Because of you, young families, often living far from hubs of Jewish life, receive PJ Library children's books every month that keep them close to their Jewish identity.

You connect young people with Israel through Birthright and help connect them to the global Jewish community.

In Israel, you provide shelter and respite when Israel is under attack. You support educational programs in rural areas that help lift young people out of poverty. You protect and assist the most vulnerable—the very young, the elderly and the disabled—in Israel, Ukraine and here at home.

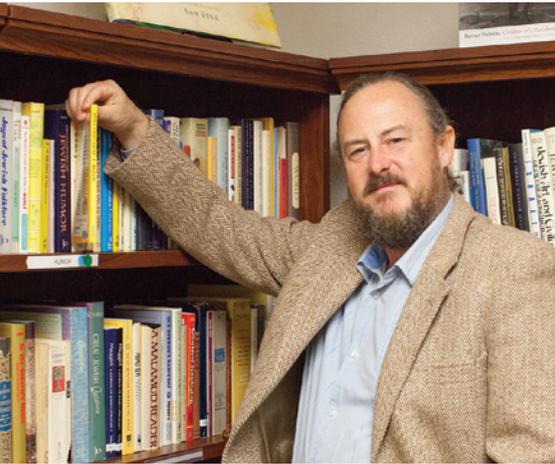
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SUNDAY
OCTOBER
25

WE MAY NOT CALL AT
THE MOST CONVENIENT TIMES...
BUT YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN
SOMEONE MAY NEED YOUR HELP.

At any hour on any given day—at home, in Israel and around the world—there may be Jews calling out for help. So on **Super Sunday, October 25**, please answer our call with a generous donation. You'll not only be aiding Jews in crisis, you'll be strengthening our entire community. So whether by text, phone or online, **answer the call.**



A NEW CHAPTER FOR THE LILA AND JOSEPH SCHER LIBRARY

Long a treasure of Federation's Bronfman Family JCC, the Lila and Joseph Scher Library is undergoing an evolution, thanks to volunteer librarian **Christopher Berry**. Finishing his Master's degree in Library Sciences, Chris has been expanding the collection begun by his predecessors **Judy Hartstone** and **Stacey Matson** while maintaining high standards of relevancy and accuracy. Beyond adding works in existing categories, such as Jewish genealogy, the Holocaust, and Israel, he also would like to acquire either the Babylonian or Jerusalem Talmud, depending on the community's preference, and wants to add a new section on Orthodox Jewish perspectives.

In the meantime, Chris, with his family, a recent transplant from the Bay Area, has been keeping his ear to the ground to find donations to the library. He found out that Left Coast Books in Goleta was moving to Oxnard and owner Simon Taylor wanted to downsize by about 2,000 books. With help from Federation Volunteer Services Coordinator **Mike Witt**, Chris spent two days hauling all 2,000 volumes from Left Coast Books and then sorted through them—finding the ones that would be appropriate for the library. The remaining books will be included in a book sale at Federation's **60 Days of Impact kickoff event** on November 1st.

In addition to the book collection and a very lenient lending system, the library also offers free computer service. Chris would like to add programs and services specifically for teens, including an art show for that age group. Calling the library, an "ideal platform to hone [his] skills," Chris adds that "Federation has come to feel like home, with both professional contacts and friendships being formed."

The Lila and Joseph Scher Library is open from Monday through Thursday, 9 am - 5 pm, and Friday 9 am - 3:30 pm.

GERRY OF ALL TRADES

If you take a class at Federation's Bronfman Family JCC, or attend events here, or simply come by periodically to check out new art exhibits, chances are you have seen and received a smile from **Gerry Gabowitz**. For nearly four years, Gerry has given of his time, talents and energy to everything from kitchen duty at Schmooze Room every Tuesday to building the courtyard Sukkah to helping staff move office furniture.

Originally from Wooster, Massachusetts, where he lived for 50 years, Gerry moved to California six years ago, following his 2007 retirement from a long career in retail. Being from the east, he had planned to retire to Miami, but a visit to his sister and niece in Santa Barbara changed his mind.

Once settled here, Gerry knew he wanted to get involved helping others. He says it "makes me feel good to do something for other people. It gives me satisfaction." In the past, Gerry had participated in the AIDS and Breast Cancer walks in Boston and the AIDS Memorial Quilt and volunteered at Boston's Jewish Community Center. He saw that our Federation was looking for help with a rummage sale and wanted to do something with the Jewish community in Santa Barbara.



Sukkah builders (L-R): Gerry Gabowitz, Audrey Solomon, Karen Raders, Eric Isaacs, Barry Shulman

saying that "It's like a family, the whole Schmooze Crew. It's so welcoming." He also is fond of the annual Santa Barbara Jewish Festival, and, of course, is on hand every year to do, as he says, "whatever you need."

*For more information on volunteer opportunities, contact Volunteer Coordinator **Mike Witt** at mwitt@sbjf.org or 957-1115, x103.*



Volunteer Gerry Gabowitz

Not long after, Gerry's partner **Audrey Solomon**—another familiar, smiling face at 524 Chapala Street—joined the Schmooze Crew. Gerry and Audrey had known each other since kindergarten in Massachusetts and their paths crossed on and off over the years.

Gerry especially enjoys being part of the Schmooze Crew,

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Just imagine what we can do if we all come together to change Jewish lives—forever. For the final 60 days in the 2015 Annual Campaign we will shine a light on the ways that you make an impact and support Jewish people through all phases of life, in ways you might not even consider.



See the back page and stay tuned for more information on the events to come. We have bold goals for these final days. Together we can move, inspire, and excite our community to truly make an impact.

Birthright Israel participants (front, l-r): Colleen Lai, Megan Weitzman, Adam Klein. Back (l-r): Taryn Pollock and Maddy Stephens

BIRTHRIGHT CONT. FROM FRONT

the Birthright Trip through [Jewish Federation], because I met a lot of amazing people from the area which made it very easy to get involved with the community."

*For more information on Birthright Israel trips, please contact **Jilli Spear** at jspear@sbjf.org or 957-1115 ext. 107.*



focus on Federation

is a publication of the Jewish Federation
of Greater Santa Barbara

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Jewish Federation
of Greater Santa Barbara

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Join our e-mail list! info@sbjf.org

Hours: Mon-Thurs: 9 am – 5 pm;
Fri: 9 am - 3:30 pm

All events take place at the Bronfman
Family Jewish Community Center
(BFJCC) unless otherwise stated.

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Jewish Federation
OF GREATER SANTA BARBARA

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Get Involved.

Here's what's happening at
Federation's Bronfman Family JCC.

SEPTEMBER

- 3** SBAA Art Opening
- 9** JWN Coffee Hour
- 12** Feed the Funk
- 13-15** Rosh Hashanah: Mon, Tues (CL)
- 16** *Jewish Death & Dying:*
The Conversation Nobody
Wants to Have
- 22-23** Yom Kippur: Wed (CL)
- 24** JWN Author Event: Dr. Lita Singer
"Cancel the Pity Party"
- 27** Sukkah building (morning)
- 27-29** Sukkot: Mon, Tues (CL)

OCTOBER

- 1** *Understanding the Iran Agreement*
- 3** YAD Sangriah Swing
in the Sukkah
- 5-6** Shemini Atzeret/Simchat
Torah: Mon, Tues (CL)
- 7** Tax Planning Seminar
- 13** JWN Coffee Hour
- 21** JWN Luncheon
- 25** Super Sunday

NOVEMBER

- 1** *60 Days of Impact*
Kick-Off Event: Federation
Open House & Art Auction
- 8-11** JFNA General Assembly
in Washington, DC
- 9** *Kristallnacht* Commemoration
- 10** JWN Coffee Hour
- 15** Advance Major Gifts Event
- 26** Thanksgiving: Thurs (CL)

For more details, visit

www.jewishsantabarbara.org



Understanding the Iran Agreement

A Discussion with Dr. Sabi Shabtai

Thursday, October 1 • 7 pm

At Federation's Bronfman Family JCC

Dr. Sabi Shabtai is an internationally recognized authority on terrorism who has served as a consultant to numerous businesses, airline corporations, police departments, SWAT teams, the U.S. Army and Navy, and several governments. Currently, he is on the faculty of the National Institute Against Hate Crimes and Terrorism in Los Angeles.

FREE

For more information and RSVP, call 957-1115
or visit jewishsantabarbara.org



60 Days of Impact Kick-Off Event

**Federation Open House
& Art Auction**

**Sunday, November 1
12:30 - 3:30 pm**

Guest speaker: **Itai Eithan Shamir**
from the Joint Distribution Committee

At Federation's
Bronfman Family JCC

FREE • Lunch served

Please RSVP to 957-1115 or
at jewishsantabarbara.org



Art at the JCC

**Santa Barbara
Art Association Exhibit**

Exhibit runs through November 10



Bell Canto by Patricia Post

Both exhibits are free and open to the public.
Exhibits are open during JCC business hours.

**Generations of Celebration
through Art**

December 3 through January 19



1st Thursday Opening Reception

Thursday, December 3

5:00 - 8:00 pm

Art, live music, appetizers and more!

Sponsored by the Morris B. Squire Foundation