

Savannah JEWISH LIFE

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Savannah Jewish Life
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SJF President: Kenneth Sadler
SJF President-Elect: Matthew Allan
SJF CEO: Sam Friedman
Savannah Jewish Life Editor: Michelle Allan

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Letters to the Editor
Savannah Jewish Life is a community publication. Letters should be civil and considerate in tone and not contain personal attacks, random attacks on businesses, or defamation. All statements of facts must and may be edited for length, clarity, or factual content. The opinions expressed are always the writer's. All letters must include the author's full name, address, and phone number (only your name, and if appropriate, job title and organization or business name, will be published). No more than two letters from the same author will be published within 12 consecutive months. Submit letters to savannahjewishlife@savj.org. Savannah Jewish Life retains full and sole discretion about which letters to publish.

Savannah Jewish Federation Mission Statement
Charged with raising, collecting and distributing funds, the Savannah Jewish Federation seeks to advance the welfare of the total Jewish community. The Federation strongly supports Israel and world Jewry. Additionally, the organization strives to preserve the civil, political, economic and religious rights of all Jews to develop an articulate, intelligent, and constructive Jewish community and to promote mutual understanding with the community at-large.

The objectives of the Savannah Jewish Life Magazine are to foster a sense of community among the Jewish people of Savannah by sharing ideas, information, experiences and opinions, and to promote the agencies, projects and mission of the Savannah Jewish Federation.

Savannah Jewish Life is published quarterly four times a year, with a deadline as follows:

Spring Issue- March, April & May- Deadline February 1

Summer Issue- June, July & August- Deadline May 1

Fall Issue- September, October & November- Deadline August 1

Winter Issue- December, January & February- Deadline November 1

Please send all Savannah Jewish Life materials to: savannahjewishlife@savj.org
Please send eNews newsletter submissions to: news@savj.org

Shalom Savannah

Sam Friedman, Chief Executive Officer



Dear Friends,

As the High Holidays draw near and the scent of apples and honey fills our homes, I find myself thinking about jars. Not just the kind we dip our apples into, but the jars we fill and label throughout the year—intentionally or not.

We label others: secular, observant, old-school, new-to-town, too much or not enough.. We label ourselves, too—often more harshly than we realize. But this season calls us to do something radical and holy: to drop the labels and see the sweetness within each soul.

Just like a honey jar doesn't need a label to be recognized for what it is—rich, golden, and essential—our community doesn't need labels to know who belongs. We all do. That's the magic of Jewish life in Savannah. Whether you show up to shul weekly or only on Yom Kippur, whether you give tzedakah quietly or lead the charge—your presence matters.

I have been what I like to call a professional Jew for nearly 20 years, and I can tell you this: the most enduring gifts I've seen—the ones that built buildings and seeded legacies—didn't come from a place of ego or expectation. They came from a deep belief in the future. From a desire to make sure the next generation has the same chance to taste the sweetness of belonging that we've had. The recognition that community matters.

So this year, as we prepare our hearts for teshuvah, for reflection and renewal, I invite you to do something simple yet profound: drop a label. On yourself. On someone else. And then pick up something even more powerful: a jar of honey. Share it with a neighbor, a newcomer, someone you haven't seen in a while. Let it be a symbol of what's possible when we see one another not for what we have been, but for what we can become—together.

As we look ahead to 5786, your generosity ensures that this community continues to grow, support, and inspire. If this message has stirred something in you—hope, gratitude, a sense of belonging—I invite you to translate that feeling into a gift to your favorite local Jewish organizations.

However you give, and whatever you give, it helps preserve the sweetness of Jewish life in Savannah for generations to come. I know Jen and I will be.

May this season be filled with joy, compassion, and courage. May our jars overflow. And may we step into 5786 with open hands, open hearts, and a vision for a sweeter tomorrow.

L'shanah tovah u'metukah,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sam Friedman'.



82ND ANNUAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

7:00 PM

L'Shana Tova

**The Biners
Stan and Peg
Walt and Melanie
Sarah, Karla, and Jonah**

**L'shana Tovah! To all our friends and family may we all
have a Peaceful, Healthy and Happy New Year!
Tami & Lenny Tishberg**

Happy New Year

**From
Marilyn and Jim Farley**

**Best Wishes for A Happy and Healthy
New Year!**

**Fondly,
The Kulbersh Family:
Harriet and Paul
Dana, Eric, Ross, and Alyssa
Brian, Jennifer, Alec, Peri, and Josie**

**Happy New Year and
Long Live Israel**

**from Scott Center, Tatsiana Shakhmuts,
Sofia Center, and Leo Center**

**Linda & Michael, Stephanie, Jonathan,
Lilly, Amelia, and Isabelle Zoller; Becca,
Eric, Adeline & Zachary Zoller Stone wish
everyone a happy and healthy New Year**

Skippy, Marc, Karen & Parker

Jill, Ken, Ben & Carly

**Wish a happy, healthy enjoyable
New Year to all.**

**L'Shana Tova and thank you
for a wonderful first year in
Savannah!**

Jennifer and Sam Friedman

**Wishing everyone a peaceful and
joyful year**

**Arlene and Allan, Jami and Scott, Brett and Jennifer,
Skylar, Madelyn, and Margot**

**L'shanah Tovah! May it be a good
and sweet year for all.**

**From the Silbermanns
Larry, Sally and Hattie**

**Shana Tova Savannah! Learn some history, tell me yours
at SavannahJewishTreasure.com
Walking Tours and more. 505-238-6600**

Andrew Walcoff

President, Jewish Educational Alliance



As we enter the High Holiday season—a time of deep introspection and spiritual renewal—I’ve been thinking not just about what the year ahead may bring, but about the story we’re all part of here at the JEA.

Almost 100 years ago, the Alliance’s Executive Director William Pinsker asked, What do people actually gain from being involved in the J? That’s still the question that matters most.

In this chaotic, polarized, and uncertain world, the JEA should be a place of constancy. It is our anchor- a place where we come not just to swim laps or attend programs, but to be together. To learn. To Celebrate. To care for one another. In a time of flux, we offer something grounded, something real. And as we approach the High Holidays, which are rife with themes of moving from chaos to repair, it’s worth taking a moment to reflect on the Alliance’s important role in our community.

This past year, we’ve made enormous strides. Thanks to the vision and groundwork laid by my predecessor, Allison Konter, and the dedication of so many in our community, we’ve invested over a million dollars into improving our physical space—and there’s more to come. Additional improvements to the physical plant (the auditorium, the indoor pool solarium, and more) are imminent. These aren’t just facility upgrades; they’re symbols of our optimism. They’re bricks laid in hope.

And I’ll tell you what else gives me hope: the people. Our staff, our board, our members, our volunteers. The commitment you all have demonstrated to seeing the Alliance thrive is nothing short of inspiring. **You** are moving us from chaos to repair.

We begin this new year with a simple but powerful conviction: that by working together, we can build something better. That optimism isn’t just possible—it’s essential. And that the Alliance—**our** Alliance—is more than a building. It’s a home.

Shanah Tovah U’Metukah—may your year be sweet, meaningful, and full of promise.

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The advertisement features a large photograph of three young women smiling and holding up white cups with green straws. They are in a room decorated with blue and white streamers and balloons. In the background, a dining room with round tables and white tablecloths is visible. The AC Hotels logo is in the top right corner, and contact information is at the bottom.

Matthew Allan

President-Elect, Savannah Jewish Federation



By the time you receive this magazine, our Jewish community, and Jews around the world, will be approaching Rosh Hashanah, as we enter the year 5786. As for me, I'm entering year one of a two-year term as president of the board of directors of the Savannah Jewish Federation.

This role, like the rest of the board, is a volunteer position, the result of nomination from other community members. My task as president is to help oversee the operation of the Federation in community affairs. The role of the Federation is to help our Savannah Jewish community, and Jews communities worldwide, to thrive and flourish in secure environments. We take seriously the Talmudic concept of Kol Yisrael arevim zeh ba-zeh, or all Jews are responsible for each other.

Here in Savannah, the Federation is the major source of funding for the JEA, both the physical building and grounds, as well as its day to day operations. We provide funding for Jewish Family Services, to help our community members in times of need. We are a major donor to Shalom School, subsidizing tuition costs for families and their children enjoying Jewish education. BBYO, Chabad, Hillel—there is hardly a Jewish institution in Savannah that does not receive funding through the Federation.

In our post-October 7th environment, Jews have been re-thinking security. The Savannah Jewish Federation has a full-time, on-site security consultant, provided through the national Secure Community Network (SCN). Every Jewish institution from Savannah to Brunswick, is provided with training and security updates from our consultant, Richard Ray. SCN works on behalf of over 50 national Jewish nonprofit organizations, 146 Federations, and over 300 independent communities across North America. If you have attended anything connected to our Jewish institutions in Savannah, you have been the beneficiary of SCN's role in securing our community. On October 9th, Michael Masters, the National Director of SCN, will be visiting Savannah to provide important information and updates at our annual campaign kickoff. Security is more than the physical safety of our institutions and its members. I invite you all to come listen and to ask questions.

I also want you to think of that word, "security," in a different manner. The real security of the Jewish people is in our ability to continue as a people, to make sure that we are providing opportunities for Jews to practice and explore our Judaism as we see fit. Educating our children in our meaningful and fascinating tradition provides security for the Jewish people by ensuring our children wish to raise Jewish children. Providing spaces and opportunities for Jewish life and contributing to Jewish education, engagement, and outreach is one of the most important ways the Savannah Jewish Federation contributes to the ongoing security of our Jewish community and future.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Linda Sacks, for her role in heading the nominating committee, which put together our newest iteration of the Federation's board of directors. Outgoing Treasurer Steven Hollander is to be commended for his oversight of our finances, as well as for his continuing role as the chair of our Community Security Council. And finally, the community owes a debt of gratitude to Kenneth Sadler, our outgoing President. Kenneth has served multiple leadership roles in the Jewish community, in some cases serving those roles multiple times. He's a fine example of community leadership.

I encourage you to learn more about how you can help the Savannah Jewish Federation fulfill its mission to help our Jewish community thrive and flourish. Please feel free to contact me at SJFpresident@SavJ.org.



Rabbi David Cantor

Congregation Agudath Achim



Every Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we are invited to contemplate our mortality, a personal practice worthy of Nobel Prize consideration.

In his will, Alfred Nobel set aside a fortune to fund prizes to encourage “the greatest benefit on mankind” in the areas of physics, chemistry, physiology/medicine, literature, and peace. His inspiration was the experience of what Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur invites us to practice at least once per year: the active contemplation of our death.

For Nobel, the impetus was an error in reporting: when his brother died, the papers mistakenly ran the obituary that they had prepared for Alfred: “The Merchant of Death is Dead.” Having made his fortune in the arms industry, Nobel was motivated to attempt to change his reputation by challenging others to make the world a better place. And as someone who grew up associating the word “Nobel” with “Peace Prize”, I would argue that he succeeded: it was only as a rabbinical student researching a topic for a sermon that I learned of his original ignominy.

Perhaps if Nobel had had the benefit of a Jewish upbringing, he may have come to his epiphany earlier in life; perhaps not. But certainly we, as members of the Jewish community, should take his lesson to heart: there is a value in asking the questions, “If I were to die today, what would my legacy be? How would I be remembered?”

Steven Covey, in his “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” suggests writing your own obituary as an exercise in discovering what—by your actions in life—you have valued, as a first step in deciding where best to spend your energies. If you want to be known as someone who always called your parents (or children) every week ... then you need to actually call them if you are not already doing so.

On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur the Book of Life that is opened is the one you yourself have written. You are the author, and the holiday invites you to also be the editor, to decide what you will write for yourself in the coming year.

May you inscribe yourself for the betterment of humankind, yourself, and your family. My blessing for you at this season is to use this time of contemplation in a Nobel Prize-worthy way.



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NOVEMBER 30TH - DECEMBER 28TH

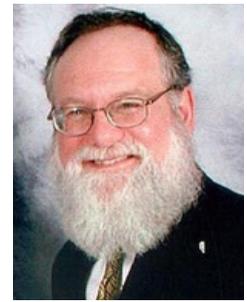
JANUARY 25TH - FEBRUARY 22ND

MARCH 22ND - APRIL 26TH - MAY 31ST



Rabbi Avigdor Slatos

Bnai Brith Jacob



Every hour of every day we hold our breath as we listen to the news reports never knowing what to expect. A herculean attempt for peace began in 1993 but unfortunately our worst fears are materializing before our eyes as we speak. Our great passion for harmony and accord besmirched the clarity of our vision as we chose to overlook the obvious and grasp the olive branch at almost any price and any cost. How is it possible that every substantial gesture and transference of land should be ignored? That the bestial brutality of October 7th be swept under the table with a few sentences of criticism, while daily condemnations of Israel persist? How can a true peace be achieved when our partner teaches and preaches our destruction? How could leaders of the free world been so mesmerized as to ignore the obvious?

In spite of images that reveal the core enmity toward Israel and Jews throughout the world, leaders persist in recognizing a Palestinian State. Certainly, they argue, the world opinion cannot be ignored. Certainly, leaders of the free world can deliver the promises offered. Certainly, peace is the only alternative which men must and will achieve, but how?

In our daily prayers we ask the Almighty to bestow upon us His blessings of health, success, etc., The final prayer which is the climax of the entire service is when we beseech G-d to present us with His ultimate blessing of peace. The Kaddish prayer that follows the service concludes with Oseh Shalom, etc., " may He establish peace upon us." True peace is a Heavenly blessing and can be achieved when the peace process includes Divine guidance. Every day we pray for the welfare of Jerusalem as we say "Veleyerushalayim Earcha," etc., rebuild your city Jerusalem as an everlasting structure. Peace can be a reality when Klal Yisroel realizes that Jerusalem is not an international city, nor is it a political bargaining tool but rather it is G-d's city, His chosen sacred location for His Temple the Bais Hamikdash. When Israel builds and fortifies Jerusalem as the city when Abraham build the altar for Isaac, where Noah brought offerings after the flood, where King David established the Holy city, where King Solomon built the Holy Temple of G-d, then the structure shall be established everlasting.

As Yom Kippur comes to a close, after twenty-five hours of fasting and praying, just prior to the final Shofar blast, the Chazen takes three steps backward and begins to sing the final Yom Kippur prayer, His voice rings out with the words "Oseh Shalom" and instantly the entire congregation begins to sing out loud with a fervor and enthusiasm.

A chill goes down the spine as we sense a moment of unity as never before. A plea unto G-d emanating from the very soul of the entire congregation.

A bond and a oneness as can only be imagined. Such devotion is within our grasp and may G-d accept our prayers and find us worthy of being partners in building His city of Jerusalem, His Holy Land of Israel, and enjoy the true peace for all man-kind that can only come from Oseh Shalom!

בס"ד

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Rabbi Zalman Refson

Chabad of Savannah



Change isn't easy.

Even when we know something needs to shift — in our habits, in our mindset, in how we show up — there's a strong pull to stay with what's familiar. It's human nature. Even if the old ways don't serve us anymore, at least we understand them. The unknown, even when it holds promise, can feel unsettling.

And yet, real growth only happens when we leave our comfort zone — when we push forward into new territory. That in-between stage, when you're no longer who you were, but not yet who you're becoming, can feel disorienting. Vulnerable. Lonely.

Now imagine doing all that in a world that doesn't always welcome who you are.

For us as Jews, it's not just personal growth we're navigating — it's the courage to publicly and proudly embrace our identity at a time when antisemitism has become far too common.

That's why the Jewish calendar doesn't leave us to figure it out on our own.

It gives us a spiritual roadmap.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur call us inward — to reflect, examine, and strip away what no longer belongs. These days are intense, honest, and often emotional. We emerge more self-aware but not yet grounded in the new self we're aiming to become.

That's where Sukkot comes in — not as an afterthought, but as a gift. A divine embrace.

The Sukkah is simple, even fragile. But inside it, we are held by something eternal. It's a space where we find stability after the intensity. Where we reconnect with our people, our purpose, and with G-d. It reminds us that we are not walking this journey alone — and that our Jewishness is not a burden to be hidden, but a source of deep strength, joy, and pride.

In a world that may try to dim our light, Sukkot reminds us to shine brighter — to dance, to sing, to celebrate what it means to be a Jew without apology or fear.

By the time we leave the Sukkah, we're no longer unsure. We're steady. Ready to carry our growth — and our Jewish pride — into everyday life.

From our family to yours, we wish you a year filled with clarity, courage, joy, and an unshakable sense of pride in who you are. Shanah Tova!

Fall/Winter 2025



Sunday, September 28th - Reverse Tashlich-Beach Clean Up

Sunday, October 12th - Sukkot Celebration

Sunday, November 23rd -with Shalom School

Sunday, December 14th - Oy Vey 5K and Chanukah party



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Rabbi Robert Haas

Congregation Mickve Israel



Last year, I barely achieved a kosher victory during Passover. By the completion of the holiday, I just couldn't take it anymore. I had long tired of bananas and eggs (and don't even mention matzah), and I, spiritually and physically, just needed a tuna fish sandwich.

When it comes to food, every year, the same two questions enter my mind before Yom Kippur begins. How will my sermon jokes fare, and will I struggle to complete the full day fast? Some years Yom Kippur passes without even the slightest grumble echoing out from my stomach, while during other years, my body screams for even the most personally detested of all cuisine, cilantro.

I often wonder whether my ancestors struggled as mightily as I do during their Yom Kippur fasts. How did the first Israelites entering Canaan alongside Joshua survive the full day without eating or drinking anything? However, before we can debate our ancestors' fasting aptitude, we must first ask a more appropriate first question. "Did our ancestors actually fast on Yom Kippur?"

In the book of Leviticus, we read, "Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you. You shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring an offering by fire to you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before your God." (Leviticus 23:27-28)

You might have noticed that the Torah never actually references the idea of a fast here. In fact, not a single book in the Hebrew Bible connects Yom Kippur to fasting. God simply commands us to practice "self-denial" or asks us to "afflict ourselves," depending on how we translate the passage.

What exactly did self-denial mean to our ancestors? Did they refrain from simply eating foods they enjoyed or did they deny themselves the pleasure of playing a musical instrument or playing games with the family or watching College or NFL football, if Yom Kippur hit our calendars on a Saturday or Sunday. We just don't know.

Even with these questions, fasting remains the most probable of all possible answers here, because God speaks to everyone in the community at the same time. "You shall practice self-denial," translates as "you" in the plural. God calls upon "you," everyone, to practice self-denial. And if everyone hopes to practice self-denial in the same exact manner, fasting seems the most plausible. We don't all like playing the same games and while refraining from eating cilantro remains a blessing for me, other people would consider it a tragedy. There is a very good chance that our ancestors fasted on Yom Kippur. After all we are Jewish, and we are experts on food. Haven't we all been eating food for thousands of years?

Self-denial for everyone translates into celebrating a holiday as a community, each of us practicing self-denial in the exact same manner. With so much diversity in our community and so much dissention in our world, practicing anything at all with my entire community, for an entire day, reminds me that I am part of something much grander than myself. I am not even just part of my synagogue Jewish community here in Savannah, I am connected eternally to everyone person in every Jewish community.

The Talmud teaches us that the Book of Life opens for every single one of us on Rosh Hashana. The few truly holy among us will enter immediately. The even fewer number of people who acted truly wickedly will not enter at all, and by and large, the majority will take the next days after Rosh Hashana to convince God of our value by asking and giving forgiveness. (Rosh Hashana 16:8) As we read in Proverbs, "He who covers up his faults will not succeed; He who confesses and gives them up will find mercy." (Proverbs 28:13).

I read so much about the divisiveness found on this planet we call earth. When the High Holidays approach, I instead want to focus on the invisible lines that connect us all together. The self-denial we practice on Yom Kippur reminds us that we remain attached to all people in the Jewish community who live today, who lived yesterday, and who will live tomorrow. May we never forget our connections.

Let's Go To The Movies

The Savannah Jewish Federation recently applied for and was selected to participate in the City of Savannah's Cultural Arts Spotlight Usage Program. This program exists to further the access to the arts and performing opportunities for local nonprofits. *Bad Shabbos* will be shown on **Thursday, October 9th at 12:00pm** at the **Ben Tucker Theater, 201 Montgomery Street**.

Bad Shabbos is a dark comedy that turns a traditional Jewish Friday night dinner into total chaos. When an unexpected guest shows up at a family's Shabbat table — tensions rise and a few outrageous twists turn the evening into one unforgettable night. Written and directed by a team of rising Jewish-American filmmakers, *Bad Shabbos* offers a sharp, hilarious look at family dynamics, identity, and the struggle to keep tradition alive in a modern world. Think *Knives Out* meets *Meet the Parents* — with a challah on the table and plenty of guilt to go around.

This is not just another indie flick. *Bad Shabbos* has been generating buzz at film festivals for its bold storytelling, fresh humor, and standout performances. It's the kind of movie that will have you laughing one minute and gasping the next — all while thinking about your own family gatherings in a whole new light.

Whether you're part of the Jewish community or just love a good comedy with heart, *Bad Shabbos* is a must-see. So grab your friends, your family, or just yourself — and come enjoy the film that puts the "oy" in "joyous occasion."

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9TH
12:00PM



SAVANNAH
Cultural Resources



Savannah
Jewish
Federation

Security Quarterly

Richard Ray



The year seems to be flying by! It seems like only yesterday when we were enjoying the four inches of snowfall this past January in Savannah. Now, it's August, 98 degrees outside, kids are back in school, and the High Holidays are just around the corner!

Considering the upcoming the High Holidays, when celebrating this year with family and friends, my colleagues and I at Secure Community Network (SCN) want everyone to have a wonderful time, and to also remain safe. Whether at a synagogue or an event at another venue, maintaining situational awareness is key to ensuring your safety. Unfortunately, with the recent increase of threats and attacks against the Jewish community in North America, a heightened level of situational awareness is required.

Situational awareness, allows a person to understand what is going on around them and determining if it is normal for the situation that they are in. Also, they are forming options and taking action to reduce the risk to themselves and loved ones. Along with situational awareness, we need to take additional steps to ensure a secure environment for our synagogues and other venues where community events are planned. SCN has created a checklist, for steps to take in creating a safe and secure environment.

- **Convene a Security Committee; appoint High Holiday Security Manager; discuss current plans, procedures and proposed security plan.**
- **Conduct a security survey of your facility and neighboring area, paying specific attention to ensuring emergency exits are clearly marked and clear of obstruction, landscaping is carefully maintained, walkways are clearly marked, and camera and alarm systems are working properly.**
- **Request a meeting between the Security Committee and with law enforcement; review and discuss High Holiday schedule as well as security survey and assessment, and request support from law enforcement, to include increased patrols, presence as well as training (if offered) on suspicious behavior, reporting, etc.**
- **Determine your security plan for the High Holidays, reflecting current organizational policy, facility enhancements and maintenance requirements.**
- **Ensure that greeters and ushers attend High Holiday security training, including situational awareness, scenario-based responses, identifying suspicious behavior, encountering unknown persons, countering an active threat, and evacuation/lockdown drills.**
- **Establish layered perimeter security procedures, with guards and protective measures placed at strategic access points throughout your property and building.**
- **Secure parking areas with controls in place for automobile and pedestrian access and traffic flow.**
- **Implement access control measures (e.g. limit points of entry)**
- **Review and train on emergency response procedures, to include lockdowns and evacuations**
- **Convene Security Committee, volunteers and security personnel for a final briefing in the days leading up to Rosh Hashanah.**

The staff at SCN wishes everyone a wonderful and safe time during the High Holidays. During your celebrations, please remember, security is the responsibility for all members of our community, not just law enforcement or community leaders. If you see something that looks out of place or suspicious, say something.



Report An Incident

25-26
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www.savannahjea.org

Edward Small Legacy Project

A new film series celebrating film producer Edward Small is headed back to his roots with a screening of *Solomon and Sheba* on **Sunday, September 7th** at the JEA.

The Edward Small Legacy Classic Film Series aims to celebrate the work of the independent film producer. Small produced the 1959 biblical epic *Solomon and Sheba*, which stars Yul Brynner and Gina Lollobrigida as King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, respectively.

With raw talent and boundless rebellion, Eddie got his “start” in film by skipping school and venturing into the Savannah Theatre to pass the days. Enduring verbal and physical abuse from his father, he followed his heart’s calling and earned a spot in a traveling minstrel show at the age of seven.

When Eddie returned a year later, the abuse continued and at age eleven, Eddie ran away from home to New York City where he hustled and slept in flophouses to survive. Eddie secured a job as a pageboy at the Astor Hotel where he brushed shoulders with likes of Barrymore, Bernhardt, Belasco and more, leading to a career in scouting and booking talent. As his roster grew with names like George Burns and Mae West, he started the world’s first talent agency for film actors and directors.

Small eventually added movie producer to his resume, shaping early Hollywood and championing a model of independent film production that defied the major studio monopolies. In addition to “Solomon and Sheba,” Small produced films such as 1934’s *The Count of Monte Cristo*, 1939’s *The Man in the Iron Mask*, and 1957’s *Witness for the Prosecution*.

Join us for this special afternoon with Roy Cranman, Shellie Schmals and Karen Botnick Paz, the team behind the Edward Small Legacy, for a Q&A and screening of this classic film. **Tickets are \$7 and can be purchased at the door or in advance at savj.org.**



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"Our brisket is widely recognized as the best in the entire southeastern USA. While brisket is often linked to southern barbecue, its true origins can be traced back to the small shtetls of Eastern Europe. Just ask my great-grandmother, Karolina Lycka."

– Wes Putman, Owner of Papa's BBQ & Seafood on Whitemarsh Island

2nd Lieutenant, Milton L. Hymes, Jr., WWII MIA Airman, Finally Returns Home

Jennifer Rich

On Friday, July 18th, 2025, a remarkable military ceremony and funeral took place at Bonaventure Cemetery. Second Lieutenant Milton L. Hymes, Jr., one of Savannah's own who had been declared missing during WWII on June 20, 1944, was finally laid to rest with full military honors.

Milton Hymes, Jr. was the son of Milton L. Hymes, Sr. and Georgia H. Hymes. Born on April 21, 1922, he was the second of four children. The only boy, with an older sister Jean Hymes Pittman, and two younger sisters, Comer Hymes Gay, and Natalie Hymes DeLettre.



The family lived on 39th St and Abercorn St. He was a very caring brother and warm, funny kid who grew to be very open-minded, and curious young man. He was known for being adventurous and willing to change plans in the spur-of-the-moment if something was going on in town that sparked his interest. He learned to play the violin, was athletic, loved to dance at Johnny Harris's and was a member of the Glee Club and the ROTC at Savannah High School.

The Hymes family were active members of Congregation Mickve Israel and the Savannah Jewish community. Milton was confirmed with Rabbi George Solomon's 1937 Confirmation class, along with Irving Victor, Adele Kleiner, Alice Zerman, Eugene Rothenberg,

Louis Alexander, Milton Kassel, Miriam Schmalheiser, Stephen Traub and Rolla Willensky.

In April 1942, the month of his 20th Birthday, and just four months after Pearl Harbor, Milton enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. He attended Bombardier school in Houston, (Big Spring), Texas and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. While in Texas, he met the love of his life Mimi. Once they met, they were inseparable and were engaged to be married after Milton returned from the war.

In June 1944, Milton was assigned to the 565th Bombardment Squadron, 389th Bombardment Group, 2nd Combat Bomb Wing, 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force, in the European Theater. (dpaa.mil/news-stories/id-announcements) Two weeks after participating in D-Day invasion, his squadron left England on June 20, 1944, on a mission to destroy an oil factory in Politz, Germany. Milton was the navigator on a 10-man crew B-24J "Liberator" bomber. His plane along with others were flying closely in a box formation using smaller fighter planes to protect the large bombers as they flew thousands of miles to their target. Several hours into the flight, nearing Denmark and preparing to make their approach, the formation met with enemy fire from German war planes. Explosions caused Milton's bomber and another to collide. Both planes went down and only three of the twenty airmen survived. Of Milton's bomber, only the pilot and co-pilot were able to bail out and Milton, along with seven of his fellow crewmen, were declared missing in action.



Confirmation plaque hanging in
Congregation Mickve Israel

At home, Milton's mother and sisters had been grieving the loss of Milton, Sr. who had died from a long illness. Learning of Milton's plane crash and his unknown whereabouts was absolutely devastating. For the rest of Milton's mother's and sister's lives, they would never know what had happened to him. Milton's nieces and nephews knew that they had "holes in their hearts" that could never heal as the pain of his loss and the unknowing endured.

75 years after Milton's family received the terrible news, in 2019, Danish recreational divers alerted the Royal Danish Navy to finding a WWII-era aircraft wreck. A .50 caliber machine gun with a damaged serial number that partially matched the guns on Milton's aircraft was recovered. Soon after, the Royal Danish Navy cleared the site of all unexploded bombs, and together with the Defense Department's POW/MIA Agency (DPAA) partner, the University of Delaware, an underwater survey was taken, and it was determined that they could do further archeological work. 16

Over the next 5 years the site was excavated and miraculously, Milton's remains were found along with two other crew members. The family was alerted to the findings and the possibility of requiring DNA for confirmation earlier this year. The family was soon informed that Milton had "very unique" dental records that confirmed, without a doubt, that the remains that had been at sea within the B24 bomber for 75 years were Milton's. The family couldn't believe that their uncle had been found.

During winter and spring of this year, the family moved forward quickly in combined effort to bring Milton home. They were determined to bury him next to his mother and father at Bonaventure. First, they had to receive permission from the owner of the space next to Milton's mother, Georgia Hymes. Milton Gay (Milton Hymes' nephew) and his cousin Sue Solomon (who is the family genealogist) underwent the work to gain permission. They soon learned that Milton Hymes, Sr.'s sister, Natalie had died as a young woman and her husband had purchased a plot in Bonaventure for her and the rest of the family. After Natalie passed away, he married Natalie's sister Birtie, and they had children together. Their grandson, Malcolm Bloom, gave Milton's family permission to bury him next to his mother and father.

Approximately 60 members of Milton's family attended his funeral. It was an emotional day with the Patriot Guard Riders, a motorcycle club of veterans and first responders, escorting the casket containing his remains, full military honors, attendees from the Mighty Eighth Museum, military veterans, many from the surrounding community and Rabbi Robert Haas officiating the ceremony. To watch the funeral, visit www.youtube.com/mickveisraelsavannah, search for Milton Hymes Funeral

The family can now begin healing a wound that spans generations. They also found new connections with each other as they worked through the past months of planning. The Mighty Eighth Museum played a pivotal part in their efforts and in recognition of their uncle's service, the family has donated his wartime medals, photographs, and personal items—including the telegram that first notified the family of his missing status—to the museum. The Museum will include these items in their new exhibit, "Service Above Self", which will honor the sacrifice of the Eighth Air Force airmen who lost their lives in WWII.

Milton is survived by the children of his sisters and their spouses: Ira Pittman, Jr, Milton Pittman and Donald (Jean) Pittman; Milton Gay and Barbara Margulis; Debbie Ray, Dewey DeLettre, Jr, Danny DeLettre, and David (Natalie) DeLettre.

POW/MIA ~ Welcome Home

Milton L. Hymes, Jr.
US Army Air Forces
2nd Lieutenant
Navigator
Age 22
Savannah, Georgia

Service ID: O-703098

565th Bombardment Squadron
389th Bombardment Group
2nd Combat Bomb Wing
2nd Air Division
8th Air Force

B-24J Liberator
S/N: 42-100351

Killed in action 20 Jun 1944, B-24J crashed into Baltic Sea near Denmark after mid-air collision
Crash Site located in 2019 by Royal Danish Navy, unexploded ordnance cleared in 2021
Remains, ID Tags and material evidence recovered between Aug 2021 - Jun 2024
Accounted for 5 Jun 2025
Identified via DNA, Dental, Anthropological and Material Evidence
Laid to rest in Thunderbolt, Georgia

www.indianapitt40.org

WELCOME TO THE



Jason & Laurel Allmond
D. Carvel Mullings & Diana Christmas
Sean Conlen & Priti Nath Nahm
Saber Motlagh & Kiana Kamal
Powell Lawton & Anisha Cook
Jonathan Cushman
Kenieshia Cushman
Mary Shuman
Matt Burnett & Savannah Selfridge
Jason Walsh & Brienne Walsh
Ryan & Jessica Armes
Haydar Ezik
Mitchell & Savannah Pickett
Elie Raskin
Elise Le Gallo
Nicholas & Tiffany Bourgeois
Matthew & Katie Hashiguchi
Teri Yardley

Matthew & Claudia Baughman
Joshua Lewis & Kristjan Thompson
Sarah Mankin
Jody Trumbull
Randy Tate
Ian Baez & Sarah Alffi-Baez
Maygan Palacios
Mary Shuman
Kelly Marden
Stephanie Hamilton
Matt & Elise Higgins
Ross & Sarah Thompson
Jessica Estes
Brian & Ann Reynolds
James & Bethany Norwood
Samantha Ross
Robbie & Holly Eidson
Micah West
Manius Sultan & Hollyn Green

Nadra Hill
Alex & Kelsey Ries
Kimberly Stewart
Oscar & Devin Ruiz
Nick & Ruth Mantee
Margo Webb
Fayne Whitlock
Robert & Christine Rushing
Matthew & Jordan Fitton
Jonathan & Adam Bridges
Kyle & Virginia Gray
Jerry & Sarah Parker
Taya Person
Derek & Antonette Gray
Lynn Clifton
Mikhail Mostov
Mat Kiley & Tracy Somer
Tom & Ashley Oxnard

OPERATION ISAIAH SEPTEMBER 22-OCTOBER 17



*This is my chosen fast...
Share your bread with the hungry
Take the homeless into your home.
Clothe the naked when you see him,
Do not turn away from people in need.
- Isaiah 58:6-7*

Isaiah was a prophet whose words are read on Yom Kippur each year. In this spirit, join your Savannah Jewish Federation and Jewish Family Services during Operation Isaiah by doing a mitzvah this High Holy Day season and donate food to those in need. Visit Savj.org to make a monetary donation or place non perishables in the bins located around the community.

Congregation Agudath Achim
Congregation B'nai Brith Jacob
Congregation Mickve Israel
Jewish Educational Alliance
Rambam Day School
Chabad of Savannah

Please join us for

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Thursdays at 12:30 PM
Jewish Educational Alliance

Enjoy a delicious meal,
conversations with friends,
and an engaging speaker.

All meals are served with
salad, vegetable and dessert



Reservations are required
by the Tuesday before
by calling 912-355-8111

SEPTEMBER 4

Vital Bridge Wellness:
Healthcare and Aging

SEPTEMBER 11

Yoga and
Mindfulness

SEPTEMBER 18

Dementia and Alzheimer's
Disease with
Dr. Joel Greenberg

SEPTEMBER 25

NO FOOD FOR THOUGHT
ROSH HASHANA

OCTOBER 2

NO FOOD FOR THOUGHT
YOM KIPPUR

OCTOBER 9

Food For Thought Field Trip!
Breakfast TODAY @ 10:30

OCTOBER 16

Awarded Author and local
Savannahian Annelore Harell

OCTOBER 23

Hope Haven
with Cathy Baxter

OCTOBER 30

Spooky Savannah: Part 2

NOVEMBER 6

The Enneagram

NOVEMBER 13

Bethany Organization's
Foster Care & Adoption

NOVEMBER 20

The General Assembly 2025

NOVEMBER 27

NO FOOD FOR THOUGHT
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

DECEMBER 4

National Sock Day! Wear Your
Most Fun Socks Today

DECEMBER 11

Israel Update

DECEMBER 18

First Annual Food For Thought
Dreidel Tournament

DECEMBER 25

NO FOOD FOR THOUGHT
CHRISTMAS

JANUARY 1, 2026

NO FOOD FOR THOUGHT
NEW YEARS DAY

This quarter, we have some different and unique Food For Thought days planned. Please see below for all the details, and don't forget to mark your calendars!

Thursday, October 9- we will have our first Food For Thought Field Trip to the Savannah Cultural Arts Center for a free screening of *Bad Shabbos*. We will meet at the JEA at 10:30 for brunch and will take a bus downtown for the movie (pre-registration and attendance at brunch is required to access the bus).

Thursday, December 4- celebrate National Sock Day by helping us KICK OFF our first ever Savannah Jewish Federation Sock Drive. In lieu of \$7.00, please bring in socks to donate. Also, be prepared to wear your most fun socks for a chance to win a fun prize!

Thursday, December 18- we will have our first Food For Thought Dreidel Tournament! Be prepared to spin to victory! Chanukah prizes given to the winner!

Montag Gallery: Fall Artist Spotlight

September 1-30: Andrea and Mark Mathews

Reception Sunday, September 8, 2-4pm

Andrea and Mark Mathews are a married couple living in Savannah. In 2020, during lockdown, Mark watched some videos on paint pouring. After trying the technique, they fell in love with creating art.

Their works are varied by utilizing different types of paint and mixed media methods. Oftentimes, excess paint is removed from the canvases and cut out for necklaces. This process allows for all creations to be unique since no two strands can be identical.

Their slogans are “Art you look at, art you can wear, and art you use” also “not fine art, but fun art!” Their work has been sold at craft fairs, shop SCAD, and is currently in the gift shop at Congregation Mickve Israel.

Andrea is a sign language interpreter. She recently retired from SCAD after 26 years of service, although she still contracts with Georgia Southern University and helps with medical interpreting. Mark, a Savannah native, works for Stagefront Presentation Systems as an audio-visual installer. Two of their main passions are Dachshunds and creating art together.



October 1-30: Sukkah Celebration

Make paper chains and celebrate all month long:
Interactive participation encouraged for all ages



November 1-29: Leslie Fitzgerald

Reception Thursday, November 6, 5-7pm



Leslie took her first painting lesson in high school and majored in art in college. After a 40-year hiatus while she pursued a career, first in book publishing and then as a business broker, she returned to her easel in 2019. Her paintings are almost exclusively devoted to landscapes, historical sites, and scenes of the Coastal South.

After 25 years in Savannah, she is still inspired by the beauty of the region and described her creation process in detail:

“Until I moved to Savannah from the Northeast, I had never painted a landscape but you do not have to live here very long to be inspired by the beauty and colors of our world—blue, green, gold...bright year round with almost no hint of the grayness of northern winters. I primarily paint local land-, marsh, and seascapes and scenes of Savannah...all “close to home” and “up close.” I love the process of painting and the playfulness of working in oil because it gives me the freedom with color and texture to represent the ever-changing world around us.”

Her work may be found at the **LAA/SoundView Gallery** at the Landings Palmetto Club on Skidaway Island and is showing at the **Historic Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival** October 18-19th. lesliefitzgerald.com @lfitzgeraldart

For information about the Montag Gallery, contact Katie Griffith, Arts & Ideas Coordinator, artsandIdeas@savj.org



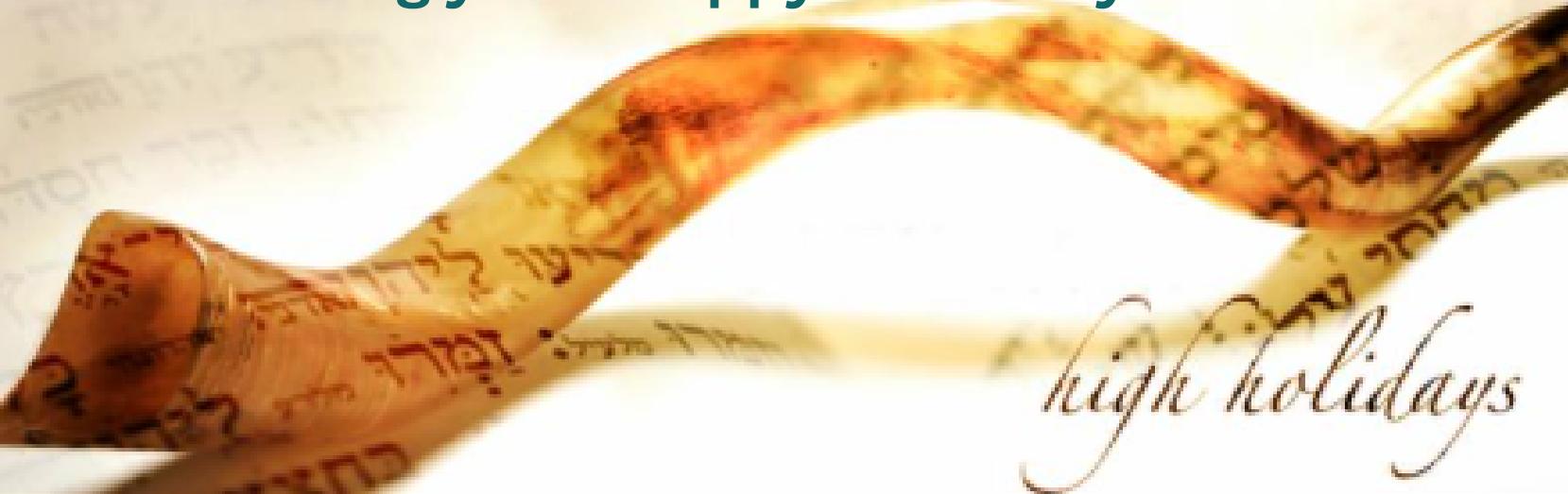
CONGREGATION AGUDATH ACHIM

SAVANNAH GEORGIA'S CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE

RABBI DAVID CANTOR

MORGAN MCGHIE, PRESIDENT

Wishing you a Happy & Healthy New Year!



Rabbi David Cantor



Cantor Ben Mernick

Join us for High Holiday Services

Rosh Hashana
September 23 - 24

Yom Kippur
October 1 - 2

Congregation Mickve Israel



High Holiday Schedule 2025/5786

Selichot | Saturday, September 13
 Erev Rosh Hashanah | Monday, September 22
 First Day Rosh Hashanah | Tuesday, September 23
 Second Day Rosh Hashanah | Wednesday, September 24
 Erev Yom Kippur | Wednesday, October 1
 Yom Kippur | Thursday, October 2
 Pizza in the Hut | Sunday, October 5
 Erev Sukkot | Monday, October 6
 Sukkot | Tuesday, October 7
 Sukkah Palooza & Consecration | Friday, October 10
 Erev Simchat Torah | Monday, October 13
 Simchat Torah & Yizkor | Tuesday, October 14

the Shalom Y'all Jewish Food Festival™ Congregation Mickve Israel

November 9th
11:00am - 4:00pm

Come celebrate at Monterey Square as we return with an unforgettable day of delicious Jewish cuisine, lively entertainment, and community spirit! This festival is not just about food; it's a vibrant gathering that unites people of all ages and backgrounds from Savannah and beyond.

Taste authentic dishes, enjoy engaging performances, and connect with friends, family, and neighbors. Whether you're a local or visiting from coastal Georgia, there's something for everyone to enjoy!



MENU

- JEWISH COMFORT FOOD
 - Matzo Ball Soup
 - Noodle Kugel
 - Israeli Salad (w/or w/out Couscous)
 - Blintz Souffle
 - Potato Latkes with Toppings
 - Cholent
 - Knishes
 - Hummus with Pita Chips or Carrots
 - Barrel Pickles
- MEATS AND SUCH
 - Corned Beef on Rye
 - Pastrami on Rye
 - Tongue on Rye
 - Chicken Shawarma
 - Chopped Liver with Pita Chips
 - Hot Dogs and Chips
- HOLIDAY SWEETS AND SAVORIES
 - Honey Cake Loaf
 - Hamantaschen
 - Sisterhood Sweets Shop
 - Challah
- BEVERAGES
 - Traditional Egg Cream
 - Sodas, Bottled Water, Dr Browns
 - Ice Tea (Y'All)
 - Beer or Wine
 - Coffee, Hot Chocolate, Tea



SHABBAT SERVICE TIMES



Friday nights
6:00 pm

Saturday mornings
11:00 am

www.youtube.com/mickveisraelsavannah



SHALOM SCHOOL

Sundays at CMI
9:30am - 12:30pm

Wednesdays at AA
4:45pm - 6:30pm

www.theshalomschool.com



Kids' Night Out

Parents enjoy a night OFF
while your child enjoys a night OUT!

Aug 30

Sep 20

Oct 25

Nov 15

Dec 13

Jan 24

Feb 21

Mar 14

Apr 18

May 9



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CELEBRATE

HIGH HOLIDAYS

Inspiring High Holiday Services with Meaning and Melody!

ROSH HASHANAH:

SEPT. 22 - SEPT. 24

ROSH HASHANAH DINNERS

Community holiday
brisket dinners

ROSH HASHANAH SERVICES

Morning services
Children's program
Shofar in the park

**VISIT JEWISHSAV.ORG
OR CALL 912-844-2477
FOR FULL SCHEDULE**

YOM KIPPUR:

OCT. 1 - OCT. 2

YOM KIPPUR EVE

Kol Nidrei Service

YOM KIPPUR SERVICES

Morning services
Children's program
Neilah & Break-fast

- > Open to all! No Affiliation Necessary
- > Traditional and Inspirational Services
- > Warm and Friendly Atmosphere



**Chabad
of Savannah**

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Savannah, GA 31401
rabbi@jewishsav.org

Wishing you and yours a happy,
healthy and sweet new year!

Why Jewish Education Still Matters- More Than Ever



Eva Locker, Director



As we prepare to welcome students back to Shalom School this fall, I've been reflecting on the "why" behind what we do; and why, in 2025, Jewish education remains not just relevant, but essential.

We live in a world filled with information. Our kids can ask a question and get 100 answers in under a second. But information is not the same as identity. Knowledge is not the same as connection. What Jewish education offers is not just facts and figures, it's a foundation. A sense of belonging, of rootedness, of purpose.

This summer, I had the privilege of spending time in Israel with my 7-month-old granddaughter. Like all good Jewish grandmothers, I came armed with loads of baby toys, stories, and unsolicited advice. But beyond the usual baby bliss, this visit was deeply moving. We were there during a time of tension and war, when too often the street sounds included both laughter and sirens. Holding her in my arms, I found myself thinking: what kind of Jewish world will she grow up in? What stories will shape her? And more importantly how will we tell them?

More than ever, I felt the weight and the privilege of being part of a people with a long memory, a strong backbone, and an enduring spirit. It reminded me why we do what we do; Why Jewish education matters not just in calm times, but especially in turbulent ones.

It's not just learning the Aleph-Bet or memorizing the brachot (though we do that well). It's about giving our children the tools to understand who they are, where they come from, and how to carry our traditions forward with wisdom, compassion, and maybe a little attitude. After all, Jews have been questioning everything since Abraham said, "Are you sure about destroying Sodom?"

We must teach our children not only what Jews have gone through, but more importantly, how we have lived and celebrated. With joy, creativity, resilience. That's what Jewish education is all about.

Here in Savannah, we're lucky to have a tight-knit, historic Jewish community. Our school builds on that legacy: not with dusty textbooks, but with lively conversations, messy holiday crafts, and questions that often begin with, "Wait... but why?"

And that's exactly what we want.

Jewish education today is about preparing our kids for a meaningful life. One grounded in values, history, and community. It's about making sure they know they belong to something bigger, something enduring. Something that includes Shabbat dinners, Purim costumes, and the collective agreement that bagels should never, ever be toasted in public.

So, to our parents and grandparents: thank you. Your commitment is what keeps Jewish learning vibrant and alive. You're not just dropping off your kids, you're handing them the keys to a rich, complex, and beautiful heritage.

As we begin the new school year, I invite you to come see what we're building. Join us for a holiday program, our Grandparent Brunch or just come to read a story. Let's keep showing our kids that Judaism isn't something they have to do, it's something they get to be part of.

Shanah tovah!

Wishing you a year filled with peace, meaning, growth, and just enough matzah balls to remind you who you are.

A Sweet Start to Our Journey Together

Amy Blechman, Director



As we begin a brand-new school year at our preschool, we're filled with excitement and joy. The laughter, curiosity, and wonder of young children remind us just how special this time of year is. It's not just a new school year—it's also a new year on the Jewish calendar, as we prepare to celebrate Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

The Jewish New Year is full of great traditions for early childhood. It is a time for traditions that appeal to the senses. Children can explore Judaism through the sound and feel of the shofar and through the sweet taste of apples and honey. We also introduce the idea of cycles through round raisin challah. The shape of the circle is a perfect visual to helping children understand the cyclical nature of life, and how we come back to celebrating the new year again and again each fall. As we hear the shofar and dip apples in honey, we wish all of our families a Shanah Tovah U'Metukah—a sweet and happy new year.

This fall, along with welcoming many new families to the program, we welcome five new permanent team members: Tiffany (Ti) Calpo has joined the three-year-old team as an assistant teacher. She recently moved to Savannah from New York and also teaches piano lessons. Kelsey Borgiet is also a new 3s assistant teacher who moved to Savannah from south Florida where she taught a 4-year old class. Ceteria Brown joins the 3s teachers as a part time lead teacher. Cece, as she is known to the kids, previously taught middle school and is learning how much fun 3 year olds are. Serenity Lopez has joined our two-year-old team as a part time assistant. She is working on her degree in elementary education and has found a passion for early childhood. Angie Quarterman has joined our program as a full-time floater and assistant teacher. The new additions to our team have allowed us to stay open until 6 pm for families who need the extended hours. The long-term goal is to also add a before care option so that we can meet the needs of working families in our program.



In Judaism, the year moves in cycles. Just like the seasons change and the moon waxes and wanes, we come back to special moments again and again—like Shabbat, holidays, and first days of school. But each time, we are a little different. We grow, we learn, and we see the world with new eyes.

This idea of learning and growing over time is part of something very special in Jewish thought: the idea of masa, or journey. Even our youngest learners are on a journey—a masa of discovery, friendship, and becoming who they are meant to be. Each song they sing, each block they build, and each friend they make is a meaningful step on that journey.

As teachers and families, we are walking alongside them, helping them feel safe, seen, and celebrated. Together, we'll explore the world through a Jewish lens—asking questions, celebrating holidays, and noticing the beauty in everyday moments. In this way, we help our children learn and grow with strong connections to Jewish traditions and values.



Rambam Day School

Ester Rabhan, Principal



The sound of children's laughter in the hallways, the excitement of new school supplies, and the hum of learning beginning again—these are the sounds we will soon hear. These are the sounds that generate a warmth and a welcoming feeling within the halls of Rambam. These are the sounds of daily life in our school.

As the doors open to welcome students back, we're reminded that the start of school is more than just a date on the calendar. It's a fresh chapter, new opportunities, and the start of another productive year. It is a time for teachers to recommit not only to giving over excellent academics but to also inspire our students to grow in character.

At Rambam Day School, our goal is to provide students with more than just knowledge. We intend to develop thoughtful, kind, and responsible Jewish leaders who are deeply connected to their heritage and ready to thrive in the modern world. From the youngest learners just beginning to explore the aleph-bais, to our oldest students delving into holy Jewish text — every grade is a part of this sacred mission.

We're thankful for our dedicated teachers, who approach every day as a chance to inspire. We're thankful for our parents, who entrust us with the great responsibility of educating their children. And we are thankful for our students, whose curiosity, spirit, and passion remind us why what we do is so important.

To all those who believe in the value of Jewish education, we hope we give you cause to be proud of all we accomplish.



Savannah Jewish Federation

2026

Campaign Kickoff

Thursday, October 9th

6:30pm Dinner

7:00pm Keynote Speaker

Michael Masters

Director of Secure Communities Network

\$36 per person

RESERVATIONS FOR DINNER, PROVIDED BY BBJ CATERING, REQUIRED
RESERVE AT SAVJ.ORG OR BY CALLING 912-355-8111

Mah Jongg And More

Robin Rackoff



What do my car and a mule have in common? They're both hybrids! Even the clementines I toss into my grocery cart are hybrids. And when I think about it, so was my Jewish upbringing.

My mother grew up in a strictly Orthodox home—one of my uncles even became an Orthodox rabbi. My father, on the other hand, came from a much more secular household. When they married, they met in the middle, agreeing to keep a Conservative home. That meant kosher food in the house, but anything was fair game at a restaurant. Friday nights, my mother lit Shabbat candles, and we had a dinner of roast chicken. But come Saturday? We were free to eat as we pleased.

The exceptions—and this is the “hybrid” part—were the Jewish holidays, when my mother would shift back to her Orthodox roots.

Take Yom Kippur. Each year, we observed Kapparot, a ritual where a chicken is swung over your head to transfer your sins to that bird. Thankfully, by the time I came along, my mother had found a loophole. Instead of a chicken, I only had to swing a handkerchief filled with eighteen cents. Whew. That was close. Also, my mother made sure we didn't turn on any electricity, and we even tore our toilet paper in advance. Tearing toilet paper didn't feel like “work” to me, but apparently, it counted, so we tore, in advance.

To pass the time without TV, we played games. The Mah Jongg table stayed set up in the living room, a lamp burning steadily all holiday long. My friends and I would also play Nuts—a game where each player tossed a nut, trying to knock another one already on the ground. We used the same bag of filberts year after year. I always thought the game deserved a better name. Why not call it Filberts? (By the way, if you haven't seen “filberts” in the store lately, look for hazelnuts—same nut, more appealing name!)

In the end, being a hybrid was okay—a mix of the old and the new. My childhood Judaism wasn't one thing or the other; it was a blend. Sometimes we swung chickens, sometimes we swung a handkerchief. But that blend gave me something whole: a sense of tradition that could bend without breaking. Now that's a good hybrid, better than a mule! Here's to a sweet New Year.

On The Personal Side

Mazel Tov To

Tzviki Rabhan, son of Sara Brana and Rabbi Ephraim, who became a bar mitzvah on June 14th at Congregation Bnai Brith Jacob.

Charlie Karpf, son of Suzy and Ben, who became a bar mitzvah on August 23rd at Congregation Mickve Israel.

Andrew Walcoff, on his installation as President of the Jewish Educational Alliance.

Jekka Lee and **Chase Reiss** on their engagement.

Rabbi David Cantor, on his installation as Rabbi of Congregation Agudath Achim.

CELEBRATING A SIGNIFICANT EVENT, SIMCHA, OR MILESTONE?

WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT!

SUBMIT TO SAVANNAHJEWISHLIFE@SAVJ.ORG



Have a teen in 8th to 12th grade who wants to make new friends, wants attend conventions, and more?



Register at bbyo.org/become-a-member



savbbyo@gmail.com

David Finn AZA Advisor
Will Goldberg
Wexler Clark BBG Advisor
Jordan Jaffie

Charity Fashion Show Celebrates 100+ Years of Local Hadassah Leadership

Hadassah is having a party on September 14 3-5 PM, and you're all invited to the JEA to celebrate 100+ years of training leaders, fundraising for Israel, supporting Jewish causes, advocating for women's health and wellness issues, and volunteering in the Savannah area.

Volunteers are strutting the runway, so others can walk! Money received from donations, congratulatory notes and sponsorships all support the new Gandel Rehab Center near Jerusalem. Opened early to accommodate the growing need after October 7, this facility handles physical and psychological trauma.

Hadassah Savannah Members are hoping to raise over \$10,000 to match earlier 2025 donations, to purchase a recumbent bike and staff training at the new hospital.

The modest \$18 single admission fee (with discounts for students and military and \$25 per person for reserved tables) includes the show, featuring fashions and a pop-up boutique provided by stylist Kathi Rich, the installation of a new board, and the premier of a short film honoring past presidents.

Reservations can be made with payment online using the QR code or website link, or by check to Hadassah sent to the JEA, 5111 Abercorn Street.



TICKETS

Outgoing President Joanna Rich remarked when asked why a fashion show, "This is at least the 4th one in the last 100 years, with the last one back in 2012 for our parent organization's 100th—so, in tribute to all those that came before—it was about time!" Co-President Carol Greenberg added, "For Hadassah Savannah women, the power to heal our world together is always in fashion!"

A Film 30+ Years in the Making

Thirty-one years ago, over a dozen women got together to listen to Jean Weitz's report on her most recent trip to Israel. What made this event so unusual was the participants were all presidents of Hadassah Savannah, our local chapter, which is celebrating its charter's centennial year starting with a fashion show on September 14 (3-5 PM) at the JEA.

Then, Anita Karnibad pointed to each president in turn, starting with Frances Rabhan (z'l) —Hadassah's 3rd President, and asked them about some of the salient moments during their presidencies. J. Ron Higgins (z'l), a beloved Savannah entrepreneur affectionately referred to as "Hollywood Ron", was there to film it. The newly edited raw footage digitized by John W. Jamerson IV, of Jamerson Media, will premiere at the Sept. 14th event, as part of the chapter's centennial festivities with proceeds from ads, donations and sales going to the new Gandel Rehabilitation Center near Jerusalem for new rehab equipment.

Hadassah's ideals of treating patients, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background, captured the imagination of Savannah women as early as 1916, four years before women were granted the vote and just four years after Hadassah was founded in Baltimore. They raised funds to send two nurses to the Holy Land to open a maternity, milk and trachoma family care clinic, which today has become the largest tertiary care hospital in the Middle East.

Sally Sanders and Susan Rosenzweig Moray talked about amazing connections they made through Hadassah, and Ida Wilensky, Sadye Rabhan and June Arkin (all of blessed memory) shared memories mixed with passion and humor, as they gained respect as community leaders.

The organization is unusual, not only for supporting Hadassah Hospitals and providing cutting-edge research, which they share around the globe, but because as Hadassah women have built this unique hospital, the hospital helped create a unique set of leaders, right here in Savannah.

For more information about the event, or to find out how you can support Hadassah's lifesaving work, contact Carol Greenberg MStarArts@gmail.com.

The Savannah Jewish Federation Gratefully Thanks Our Contributors

Donations made 05/01/2025-07/31/2025

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ALLAN ULLMAN PLAYGROUND FUND

In memory of Harriet Ullman
Sally Krissman
Cathy Shriver

Donating to a Savannah Jewish Community Foundation of Savannah fund is a wonderful way to honor a special simcha or life cycle event, honor the memory of a friend or loved one, or recognize someone in the community.

Visit www.savj.org to see a complete list of funds and to make a donation.

REVERSE

TASHLICH

Sunday

September 28th

11am-1pm

TYBEE ISLAND PIER

Please join the JEA and SJF for our 2nd
community waterfront cleanup!

All ages are welcome.



TRANSPORTATION IS AVAILABLE ON A LIMITED BASIS WITH RSVP

