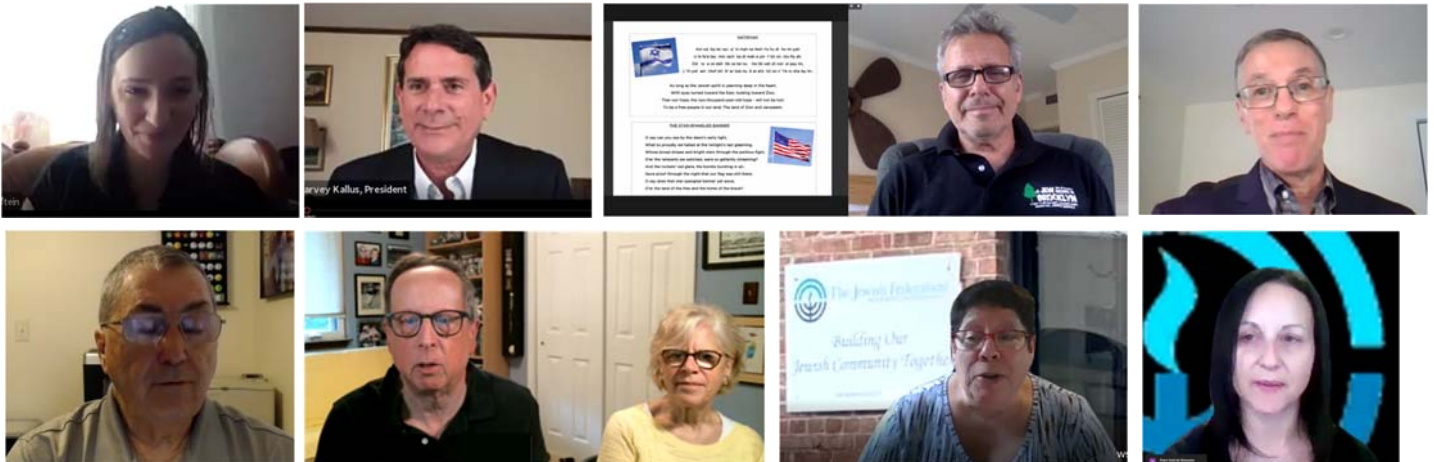


## 45TH ANNUAL MEETING HELD JUNE 13TH

Over 80 devices Zoomed in to hear from our Jewish Federation Officers on the work of the Jewish Federation and how we have adapted to the changing needs of our community. We welcomed two new trustees and thanked two for their years of service. We sadly said goodbye to Rabbis Rachel and Marcus Rubenstein and welcomed our new Executive Director, Wendy Cedar. Orange County synagogues and Jewish organizations honored special individuals who have shown outstanding service as their Volunteers of the Year. You can read their full bios in this newsletter.



- Rabbi Rachel Rubenstein opened the meeting.
- President Harvey Kallus welcomed the attendees.
- Jake Ehrenreich sang Hatikvah and The Star Spangled Banner.
- Rabbi Doug Kohn delivered a D'var Torah.
- Treasurer Jeff Harmer gave a financial report.
- Nominating Committee Chair Steve Rubinsky gave his report.
- Federation Communications Coordinator Sharon Ball read brief bios of the Volunteers of the Year.
- Vice President Rissa Cutler said warm words of farewell to Rabbi Rachel Rubenstein.

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## 2020-2021 VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

### Congregation Agudas Israel - Newburgh

**Frank Wolf** has been a longstanding Board member, serving as Financial Secretary for the past several years. During this time, Frank has also served as chairman of the House Committee. In that capacity Frank has consistently maintained the Rabbi's residence, often responding to emergency repair situations on a moment's notice. Frank always volunteers to do whatever is necessary for our Synagogue, be it setting up for an event, repairing Torah holders in the Ark, or helping to set up or repair our large outdoor menorah. Frank is always there ready to help. Perhaps Frank's most important contribution was as a role model during the Covid pandemic. Frank was the first congregant to begin attending Shabbat services in person while most of us continued to attend via Zoom.

Frank moved to the Hudson Valley from Brooklyn in 1976 as a teenager with his family. The family's first order of business was to join Congregation Agudas Israel where he has been a member ever since. Frank has been on the congregations board or executive board for approximately 20 years. Through the years he has assisted with numerous congregation projects and currently serves on the BOD and house committee. He is a retired teacher from the Newburgh Enlarged City School District and also worked as an electrician for over 30 years. Frank also volunteers with the Town of Newburgh Emergency Medical Services and the Cronomer Valley Fire Department.

### **Congregation Beth Hillel - Walden Jewish Community Center**

Nominating seven volunteers who stepped up to lead zoom programs this winter to keep our congregation engaged and connected when we were unable to meet in person.

#### **Winter Zoom Program Leaders:**

**Sandy Altman**, an elder attorney, led a workshop on the latest laws on elder law and long term care.

**Joan Garry** led us for an afternoon of family fun with a Trivia game!

**Joe Herzog** plans to teach an outdoor photography workshop. The original date was postponed and has not yet been rescheduled.

**Arthur Kruk** led a four part Jewish Interfaith Virtual Film Club where we watched and discussed movies that explored relationships with non-Jews and celebrated acceptance and inclusion.

**Ana Sussman** taught a Valentine's Day cooking class on making chocolate truffles.

**Laura Schultz** shared her passion for researching family history and genealogy.

**Yarden Sussman**, a College English major, led a play reading workshop where we read aloud and acted out plays on Zoom.

### **Congregation Eitz Chaim - Monroe**

**Joan Ostrer** has been Vice President and Lea's right hand person since they began our leadership role at Eitz Chaim. Joan is a wonderful sounding board and helps out at any given time! When we sold our building and moved, Joan was instrumental in helping to set up and manage the storage units where we held our belongings until we were able to move. Joan was invaluable in getting our new location ready for us to move in. Joan was a driving force in renovating the building - painting, choosing carpeting, moving, unpacking, shopping for kitchen appliances, just to name a few. Basically Joan strategically planned every minute detail of our new building, right down to placing signs on the doors! Joan was instrumental in planning our open house to showcase our new home. Joan is also part of the team designing our new website. No matter what we need, Joan is always first to volunteer and to help out. She certainly makes the President's job so much easier and they couldn't ask for a better vice president. Eitz Chaim is proud to recognize Joan as our volunteer of the year!

### **Congregation Eitz Chaim Sisterhood**

**Louise Silver** and her family have been members of Congregation Eitz Chaim since its earliest beginnings in the late 1970s. Together with her husband Lenny, they raised their two children in Sugar Loaf. Louise taught art for over 32 years in the Warwick Valley School District. Her summers were spent as Arts and Crafts Director at Camp Monroe. She has been involved in the Snack Program through the Eitz Chaim Social Action Committee providing daily healthy snacks to low income children in the Monroe Woodbury School District. To Louise, it is a pleasure and an honor to shop, pack, and deliver, always keeping the children in mind as she chooses what they would enjoy.

### **Jewish Family Service**

**Harriet Lefkowitz** began volunteering for JFS as a clerical volunteer. She routinely assisted the office with support tasks until she became ill and had to pause serving the community. Her health improved and last year as our county began facing COVID-19, she contacted us to resume volunteering. She wanted to get involved and help the community during the pandemic. Harriet volunteered to deliver food, went shopping for neighbors and made over 470 check in calls with neighbors throughout Orange County in 2020. She continues to volunteer today. She has completed 127 volunteer events with neighbors since January 1, 2021. Harriet is always willing to go anywhere there is a need in Orange County. She helps neighbors connect with resources, refers them for additional services and continues weekly wellness calls with Friendly Visitor Program Neighbors.

### **Jewish Federation of Greater Orange County**

Rissa Cutler is currently Vice President of the Jewish Federation and slated to become President in 2022. In her Federation experience, she has served as a Board trustee, Vice President, Search Chair and Chair of the annual campaign. It is her honor to continue to serve as Vice President and work in partnership with my fellow Federation members, clergy, executive director and county agencies in the important work we do to strengthen and unify our Jewish community.

Rissa's role as a teacher connects to our Federation mission to work toward the goal of educating our community about issues relevant and important to us. Each day she is reminded that the work we do to lift others up and unify our community is so valuable.

### *Kol Yisrael*

**Nancy Proyect** was recently appointed as the Executive Director of the Newburgh Armory Unity Center. Prior to joining the organization as its chief executive officer, she served as a board member and a volunteer. Nancy served as President of Vision Hudson Valley (formerly the Orange County Citizens Foundation) for 15 years. During her tenure, the organization established its Placemaking Initiative, published its first Orange County Quality of Life Report Card (and subsequent Report Cards), and held the first of several County, State and Congressional candidate debates.

She is a Past President of Leadership Orange and serves as Program Committee Co-Chair for that organization. Nancy is a past President of Temple Beth Jacob in Newburgh and serves on the Board of Kol Yisrael in Newburgh. She is past President of the Cornwall Community Cooperative and the Junior League of Orange County. She has served on the Board of the Orange County Arts Council, the Newburgh Armory Unity Center, and on the Town of Cornwall's Economic Development Committee.

**Elizabeth Solomon** and her husband, Klaus, joined Congregation Agudas Israel soon after they moved to New Windsor almost a decade ago. Both are now on the CAI Executive Board, and Betsy is Chair of the Ritual Committee and a member of the Planning and Programming Committee, loving CAI's commitment to working to actualize "can do". Betsy and Klaus greatly enjoy the kindness and spirit of cooperation that make CAI seem like an extended family, with outreach to the entire community for a wide range of events, from religious services led by our warm and spirited Rabbi Jacob to annual "Bark Mitzvahs" and "Car Mitzvahs" spearheaded by the amazing Mimica Hyman. Everyone is invited and welcome as well to CAI's monthly Walking Club, Movie Club, and "Scholar In Your Residence" program on Zoom.

Betsy is a retired teacher; a current avid pianist, community volunteer, wife, mother, and grandmother; and a past and hopefully future world traveler. She is honored to be chosen as one of Kol's Volunteers of the Year for her work with Nancy Proyect and Stefanie on the 2020 lighting of the CAI giant menorah as a Kol event. Betsy believes that the Kol mission is both valuable and inspiring, and she looks forward to many successful Kol events that benefit all partners and the wider community through fully-shared decision-making.

### *Monroe Temple Beth-El*

**Eben Hill** is the current 2nd Vice President and will be assuming the role of 1st Vice President in July 2021. Eben has previously served as Men's Action Club President. Eben works tirelessly for the Temple, helping out with any and everything he can, from mowing the lawn and landscaping, to doing in house repairs and maintenance including moving the pews in the sanctuary for Covid protocol to making the rest of the building Covid safe. He has a never say no attitude and is always there to support Monroe Temple in any way he can.

### *Newburgh Jewish Community Center*

**Joan Gittelsohn** is a long-time Newburgh resident and steadfast volunteer who wears her heart on her sleeve and a smile on her face. She has deep-seated philanthropic ties to Jewish Organizations in the area. She has given her time and talent as a retired teacher to many varied endeavors over many decades, including serving as NJCC Board Member for 35 years including many years as secretary, frequent contributor as a Temple Beth Jacob Board Member, 12 years as an Evercare Board Member, many years as a tutor for Literacy Orange as well as Meal Delivery with Office of the Aging. In addition, she aided in the Russian resettlement efforts that brought 125 people to safety in Orange County. Her dedication is second only to her warmth and generosity as a caring and thoughtful community member. We congratulate and thank Joan for all she has done to serve the NJCC and beyond.

### *Temple Beth Jacob - Newburgh*

**Sherrill Murray Lazarus** has been actively involved as a member of Temple Beth Jacob for over 40 years. It is absolutely and completely her "other home." She is currently serving as an executive member of the Board of Trustees at TBJ. She has taught in the Religious School, served as principal of the Religious School, and been Religious School Committee chair, as well. Sherrill was a founding member of the TBJ Rosh Chodesh group and has been part of the TBJ Sisterhood since forever and was Sisterhood president as well. She now has the responsibility (and pleasure) of coordinating the TBJ Gift Card Team because shopping is one of her superpowers and she can do it practically guilt-free when it helps the Temple! Sherrill is a Life Member of Hadassah because of the wonderful worldwide work they do. She has been chosen as TBJ volunteer of the year in large part because of her role as "the usher" as we reopened during COVID.

### Temple Beth Jacob Sisterhood

**Estelle Brown** was born and raised in Brooklyn and moved to New Windsor with her husband Howie, of blessed memory, in 1975. Their two daughters Robin and Gabrielle went through the TBJ religious school and Estelle was active in Sisterhood while they were growing up. She is a founding member of our newly revived Sisterhood and volunteers for any job that is needed, from cooking, & shopping to hosting Rosh Chodesh. In addition to Temple and the JCC, Estelle loves spending time with her daughters, sons in law and 4 grandchildren.

### Temple Beth Shalom - Florida

**Gail Conklin** not only steps up when asked, but is the first to volunteer. She is the Corresponding Secretary on the temple board. She volunteers in the office, is possibly on every committee, will go on a webinar to acquire more information on grants and other needs. Gail often will see a need and volunteer, not waiting to be asked. It takes a village of volunteers to keep a shul functioning. Some do the more upfront, obvious tasks, others do the smaller, less upfront tasks - shopping for the temple, helping in the office, volunteering for a function. Gail does it all. Gail has used her love and skill of photography to become TBS' documentarian (an official title bestowed on her by Rabbi Shinder.) At every event, big or small, you will find Gail with her camera. Her love of Temple Beth Shalom shines through in her photographs. During the last year, with virtual services, we have been blessed to enjoy slide shows of past events throughout the years. Gail lives in Middletown with her husband Danny. Daughters Shannon and Jennifer live in Orange County with their families. Gail's four granddaughters, Emma, Olivia, Addisen and Ainsley, are the light of her life.

### Temple Beth Shalom Sisterhood

First and foremost we wish to posthumously recognize our most dedicated volunteer, **Roberta Frischman**, ז"ל was our constant, always leading the charge. Roberta's care and commitment was evident in every aspect of our temple community.

**Madelyn Potter, Hailey Potter, Emma Pollock, Olivia Pollock and Allison Teshome** are always willing to help at any sisterhood function, this year they each helped fill all our holiday member gifts through the year helping keep our temple community connected. They are helping set the example for the next generation. In Roberta's honor and memory, from generation to generation, L'Dor V'Dor, we recognize these remarkable young ladies who are following in Roberta's footsteps. They have learned participation and volunteerism not only from Roberta but from their own mothers.

### Temple Sinai - Middletown

**Stacey Atlas**, a 21-year veteran of the Middletown Central School District has ties to Orange & Sullivan Counties. She assumes dual roles as both a Special Education Teacher and the Mentor-Intern Coordinator for the district. She is passionate about Special Education, connecting with students and empowering them to reach their full potential. Stacey works with new teachers who are starting their career, providing guidance and support, professional development, participates in after school committees, and grant writing. Stacey was recently voted Vice President of Middletown's Teacher Association. Between career and home, she is frequently involved with volunteer initiatives. Stacey currently resides in Sullivan County with her husband and two children. She is currently Co-Chair to Temple Sinai's Hebrew School Board.

**Barbara Weinstein**, a Marketing Consultant from Sullivan County, moved to the Catskills in 2004, volunteering for multiple nonprofit organizations. Most of these organizations have played a role in her family's life, which helped opened the door to build relationships, understand needs, and offer solutions that these nonprofits could otherwise not obtain. Her expertise includes branding & campaign development, strategic planning, and writing. Barbara currently serves as Co-Chair on the Board of Education at Temple Sinai, and she is also the Marketing & Outreach Volunteer for Nesin Cultural Arts in Monticello. Previously she was a Board Member of the YMCA of Middletown & Sullivan County, and Vice President on the Board of Directors at Nana's House Child Care Center in Rock Hill. Barbara resides in Rock Hill with her husband Jeff and their two children. Their family is rich in Jewish tradition, and they look forward to celebrating their son's Bar Mitzvah this fall.

### Temple Sinai Sisterhood

**Janet Klein-Rahamim** has tirelessly worked on planning events in person and zoom for the last few years. We are trying to make our sisterhood stronger and she has been very influential in this task. A resident of Orange County for over 27 years, Janet now resides in Pennsylvania. She is a Registered Dietitian and Board Certified Diabetes Clinical Education Specialist who spearheaded and continues to direct the Bariatric Surgery program at Garnet Health Medical Center. She is passionate about her Judaism and believes that a strong and vibrant Sisterhood helps shape the heart and core of a Jewish Center's neshama.

## THE JEWISH FEDERATION WELCOMES WENDY CEDAR AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A native New Yorker, Wendy has lived in Orange County for over thirty-five years. She comes to us with a background in managing a variety of businesses in Orange County and New Jersey. As the current co-president of Temple Beth Shalom in Florida, NY, she brings experience with fundraising, Jewish cultural and social programming, as well as a passion to support Jewish youth engagement. She is also committed to finding ways for people from different backgrounds to learn about each other and to come together. Wendy is happy to bring to the community her varied background, and passions for supporting the Jewish people and improving the world. She hopes to be instrumental in keeping Jewish life in Orange County, and beyond, vital for generations to come.



## KATHY WURSTER JOINS FEDERATION AS ZACHOR ANTISEMITISM INITIATIVE DIRECTOR



Kathy has dedicated her career to teaching students about the horrors of the Holocaust and other worldwide genocides. She spearheaded countywide initiatives to teach tough topics and has been a leader in Human Rights education for many years. As a retired teacher Kathy is uniquely prepared to work with teachers and administrators to further the work of Federation's Zachor Anti-Semitism Initiative.



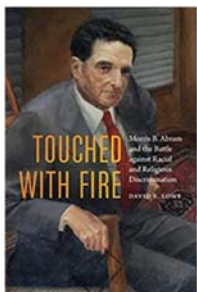
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## Sunday, 7/11/21 4PM Via Zoom - David E. Lowe "Touched with Fire" Morris B. Abram and the Battle Against Racial and Religious Discrimination

David E. Lowe has taught at three universities, consulted for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and UN Watch, and worked in the Civil Rights Division of the Anti-Defamation League. He won the 2019 National Jewish Book Award for Biography.

Morris B. Abram emerged from humble origins in a rural South Georgia town to become one of the leading civil rights lawyers in the United States during the 1950s. In addition to unmasking the Ku Klux Klan and serving as a key intermediary for the release of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. from prison, Abram carried out a successful fourteen-year battle to end the discriminatory voting system in his home state, which had entrenched racial segregation. The result was the historic "one man, one vote" ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1963. In this book David E. Lowe chronicles the professional and personal life of this larger-than-life man, encompassing many of the contentious issues we still face today, such as legislative apportionment, affirmative action, campus unrest, and the enforcement of international human rights. Abram's varied career sheds light on our own troubled times.



## RABBI EMILY COBERT WELCOMED AT TEMPLE SINAI

Rabbi Emily Cobert was born and raised in Fort Worth, TX. She grew up in a home that values Judaism, family and friends. Rabbi Cobert was active in Kadima and USY and served on her Chapter's USY Board in Fort Worth. She received rabbinic ordination with a Certificate in Pastoral Care and Counseling from the Jewish Theological Seminary in May 2021. Rabbi Cobert also received her Master's degree in Jewish Education from the Jewish Theological Seminary in May 2016. She received her B.A. degrees in both Jewish Studies and Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin. Rabbi Cobert has a passion for education and deeply cares about each individual. She wants to make sure everyone feels welcomed in a safe and warm environment and that everyone has a chance to get heard, seen and valued. Rabbi Cobert, and her fiancé, Andy

Lewis will be getting married in October 2021. They are living in Middletown with their cat, Mac. They both enjoy hiking, exploring new places and meeting new people.

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