

HAKOL

February • March 2026 • Greater Knoxville Jewish Community News

KNOXVILLE JEWISH ALLIANCE
GARDEN OF CELEBRATION, P7

HESKA AMUNA SYNAGOGUE
PURIM: WACKY & WONDERFUL, P11

TEMPLE BETH EL
DISCOVERING STRENGTHS IN PURIM, P15

KNOXVILLE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL
CHANUKAH THROUGH OUR STUDENTS' EYES, P19

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THROUGH THE JEWISH KNOXVILLE
BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE.**

Tara Bain, KJA Director of Community Engagement
✉ tbain@jewishknoxville.org | ☎ 865-690-6343 x4

**ADVERTISE IN
HAKOL**





We are beautifying the AJCC with the addition of Gan Chagiga, Garden of Celebration. Learn more on page 7.

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HaKOL Monthly Publication

Tara Bain
 KJA Director of Community Engagement

Courtne B.Mayo
 Layout Designer

HaKol is produced through a partnership of Knoxville Jewish Alliance, Heska Amuna Synagogue, Temple Beth El, and Stanford Eisenberg Knoxville Jewish Day School.

For advertising opportunities:
 hakol@jewishknoxville.org
 865-690-6343

Community Directory

Chabad of Knoxville
www.chabadknoxville.org

Hadassah Knoxville-Oak Ridge
www.hadassah.org/chapter/knoxville

Heska Amuna Synagogue (Conservative)
www.heskaamuna.org

Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge
www.jcortn.org

Knoxville Jewish Alliance & Arnstein Jewish Community Center
www.jewishknoxville.org

Stanford Eisenberg Knoxville Jewish Day School
www.kjds.org

Temple Beth El (Reform)
www.tbeknox.org

KEY: HA = Heska Amuna, JCOR = Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge, KJA = Knoxville Jewish Alliance, KJDS = Stanford Eisenberg Knoxville Jewish Day School, JFS = Jewish Family Services, TBE = Temple Beth El

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

February 2026 Community Calendar

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1
3:00P Wine, Cheese, Hot Chocolate & Desserts – HAD</p> <p>MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2
<i>Tu B'Shevat</i></p> <p>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong - HAS
6:00P The Jewish South: An American History with Shari Rabin – Judaic Studies</p> <p>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6
5:50P Candle Lighting
11:00A JFS Hosts Shari Rabin – KJA
1:00P HAWL Open Watercolor - HAS</p> | <p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7
6:49P Havdalah
4:00P Scholar in Residence, Rabbi Leah Berkowitz – TBE</p> <p>SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8
10:00A Scholar in Residence, Rabbi Leah Berkowitz – TBE</p> <p>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong - HAS</p> <p>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13
5:57P Candle Lighting</p> <p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14
6:55P Havdalah</p> | <p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14
6:55P Havdalah</p> <p>WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18
12:00P L&L Presents Mark Littman – KJA</p> <p>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong - HAS</p> <p>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20
6:04P Candle Lighting
7:00P Social Justice Shabbat Service – TBE</p> <p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21
7:02P Havdalah
6:30P Adult-Only 80s Glam Dance – KJA</p> | <p>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong - HAS</p> <p>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27
6:11P Candle Lighting
6:00P Purim Shabbat Service – TBE
7:00P Purim Dinner - TBE
All-Southern Schmooze – HAS</p> <p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28
7:08P Havdalah</p> |
|---|--|--|---|

March 2026 Community Calendar

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>SUNDAY, MARCH 1
9:30A Religious School Purim Festival – TBE</p> <p>MONDAY, MARCH 2
5:00P Megillah Reading & Kid Costumes - HAS</p> <p>TUESDAY, MARCH 3
<i>Purim</i>
9:00A Megillah Reading – HAS</p> <p>THURSDAY, MARCH 5
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong - HAS</p> <p>FRIDAY, MARCH 6
1:00P HAWL Open Watercolor - HAS
6:17P Candle Lighting</p> | <p>SATURDAY, MARCH 7
7:15P Havdalah</p> <p>SUNDAY, MARCH 8
10:00A Scholar in Residence, Rabbi Leah Berkowitz – TBE</p> <p>THURSDAY, MARCH 12
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong – HAS</p> <p>FRIDAY, MARCH 13
7:23P Candle Lighting</p> <p>SATURDAY, MARCH 14
8:21P Havdalah</p> <p>SUNDAY, MARCH 15
1:00P Get to Know Hadassah – HAD</p> | <p>THURSDAY, MARCH 19
1:30P HAWL Open Mahjong - HAS</p> <p>FRIDAY, MARCH 20
7:29P Candle Lighting</p> <p>SATURDAY, MARCH 21
8:27P Havdalah
10:00A Caroline Hicks Bat Mitzvah – TBE</p> <p>SUNDAY, MARCH 22
Amadeus Concert Ensemble with Brian Salesky - KJA</p> <p>FRIDAY, MARCH 27
7:35P Candle Lighting</p> <p>SATURDAY, MARCH 31
8:33P Havdalah</p> |
|---|--|---|

Calendar Highlights

Temple Beth El

www.tbeknox.org

Scholar in Residence – Rabbi Leah Berkowitz
February 7 & February 8 | Temple Beth El

Rabbi Leah Berkowitz is a rabbi, teacher, and author based in Philadelphia, PA. Find out more at lehrachelberkowitz.com

Rabbi Raina Siroty • Rabbisiroty@tbeknox.org

Knoxville Jewish Alliance

www.jewishknoxville.org

80s Glam Dance
February 21, 2026 • 6:30-8:30pm | Arnstein Jewish Community Center

Join us for a totally tubular time as we rewind to the 80s at the AJCC! All tickets sold will support the programming efforts of the KJA!

Shannon Martindale • program@jewishknoxville.org

Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge

www.jcortn.org

Model Seder
March 22, 2026 | 2:00-5:00pm | JCOR

Join JCOR and PJ Library for a fun and educational model seder. We'll play Passover games, learn Passover songs, and demonstrate some ways to have a meaningful and family-friendly seder.

Contact Ronnie Bogard • events@jcor.info

Heska Amuna Synagogue

www.HeskaAmuna.org

Family Friendly Very Awesome Community Seder
April 2; RSVP by March 21 • 5:00 pm | Heska Amuna Synagogue

Heska Amuna invites All to our 2nd Night Seder! Schmooze at 4:30 pm; Seder begins promptly at 5 pm. Reservations required; **RSVP by March 21** at www.HeskaAmuna.org or 865-522-0701. Passover dishes may be ordered for 1st Night, too.

Marc Forman • marcforman@hotmail.com

For the most updated community calendar, including services, ongoing classes, and programs, please visit www.jewishknoxville.org/calendar or scan the QR code.





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President's Message

Author: Judith Rosenberg, KJA President

Dear Community Members:

At our annual meeting this past December, I remarked that 2025 started (and concluded) against a backdrop that has been troubling, complicated, infuriating, and downright scary for the global Jewish community. The rise in antisemitism and terror acts both in the U.S. and around the world has been painful, unsettling, and impossible for us to ignore, even as so many other people do just that, or whose own news consumption and social media patterns mean they might not even know what we're facing. If the beginning of 2026 is any indication, this landscape is not going to change anytime soon.

For me, the mission of the Knoxville Jewish Alliance matters even more, and I am more honored than ever before to serve in our leadership. We're working hard to ensure we are here not just for today, but for

generations to come, and that the generation walking around right now wants to engage in what we're doing. I invite you – actually, I implore you – to join us. A wise man once told me that if we want a strong community, we have to stay in the game and work hard for it...even though it's always c to watch and criticize from the bleachers or just stay home entirely.

We are committed to welcoming everyone and anyone who wants to be part of what we have to offer. Whether someone comes through our (highly secure) doors seeking community, wishing to learn more, wanting a cultural connection or a deeper engagement with Jewish life...we want them to find a place here. Our strength comes from sharing and spreading the love we have for our heritage, religion and culture. It comes from opening our doors, not from hiding behind them.

I hope to see you soon.

Introducing AJCC's Gan Chagiga

Author: Emily Moorhead-Wallace & J. Taylor Wallace, New Roots Art Services

We are delighted to introduce the Gan Chagiga project (Hebrew for "Garden of Celebration"), a new community initiative blossoming at the Arnstein Jewish Community Center. Created to bring beauty, connection, and inspiration to the greater Knoxville Jewish community, the Garden of Celebration is rooted in the Jewish values of tikkun olam, care for one another, and shared responsibility. Our hope is to expand the welcoming environment of AJCC where people of all ages can gather, reflect, celebrate, and feel a deeper sense of belonging.

Located at the heart of our community, the garden will feature plants traditionally used in Jewish holidays and rituals, inviting hands-on learning and sensory connection to shared heritage. From herbs and fruiting plants to symbolic flora tied to Jewish celebrations, the garden is designed to honor tradition while encouraging curiosity, conversation, and care for the land.

The project includes community planting days, educational workshops, intergenerational activities, and outdoor celebrations rooted in Jewish tradition, alongside partnerships with local organizations. Through these experiences, we aim to strengthen community

ties, celebrate Jewish culture, and create meaningful moments for families and individuals alike.

To make this vision a reality, we invite your support. Your generous donation will help fund garden infrastructure, educational programming, accessible pathways, and ongoing care; ensuring the Garden of Celebration remains a welcoming, inclusive space for all. Every gift, large or small, helps this shared vision take root and grow. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution today.

Want to get your hands dirty? Join us for Good Deeds Day on April 12 as we plant the new Gan Chagiga. Your support will not only help create a beautiful gathering place at the AJCC but also nurture the bonds that unite our community.

To donate, visit the Knoxville Jewish Alliance donation page:
<https://jewishknoxville.app.neoncrm.com/forms/donate>

To learn more about the project, visit:
<https://emoorheadwallace.com>

KNOXVILLE JEWISH ALLIANCE



BOWLING NIGHT

APRIL | 16 | 6 PM

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Maple Hall
414 South Gay Street

www.jewishknoxville.org/preschool-ajcc

Celebrate Purim at Home

Dress Up!
Dress as your favorite Purim hero, PJ Library book character, reuse a dance or Halloween costume, or make something wacky and fun! Purim is the perfect time to be as fancy, silly, and brave as you'd like!

Read Books!
PJ Library has children's books about Purim for all ages from board books to chapter books - scan here for a great list. Books about courageous Queens Vashti and Esther inspire bravery in kids!

Music, Podcasts & Videos!
Scan the QR below for a link to PJ Library's Purim playlist on Spotify, two amazing kid-friendly podcasts about Purim, and even see the Purim story told in American Sign Language!

Eat!
Every Jewish gathering needs something yummy, and one of the four mitzvot of Purim is to enjoy a party and feast. Don't forget the special triangle-shaped Hamantaschen!

Share with Others!
Two mitzvot of Purim involve sharing joy with those around us. One is to send mishloach manot (gift baskets) to friends in the community. Another is to donate money to those in need because our joy is not complete unless we help spread happiness to others.

Make Noise!
We drown out the name of the evil Haman (boo!) with graggers, instruments, stomping, whatever you can find! What fun graggers can you make at home?

For more ideas, visit pjlibrary.org/purim, and check out the free download [A Time to Hope](#), a PJ Library family guide.

A Community United by Light

By: Shannon Martindale, KJA Director of Programming

On the eighth and final night of Chanukah, our community gathered outdoors at the Arnstein Jewish Community Center for a Southern Fried Chanukah Celebration filled with music, laughter, and connection. Under the open sky, generations came together to celebrate the light of Chanukah and the strength of our shared community.

A particularly meaningful moment was the lighting of the menorah by nine members of our community, each honored for the ways they serve and uplift others. Avi Finley, Jeff Becker, Bernard Bendriem, Sari Kagan, our Shinshinim Avigail and Yaheli, Rabbi Raina Siroty, Ilana Shteivelman, Rabbi Ahuva Loewenthal, and Barbara Mintz. As each candle was lit, the night itself seemed to grow brighter, not only with flame, but with gratitude and pride for the people who help our community shine.

The celebration was truly multigenerational. Children from our community delighted the crowd with beloved Chanukah songs; their voices sparking smiles and spontaneous singing along. Nearby, kids bounced between inflatables, games, and a lively silent disco, while teens, parents, seniors, and first-time visitors alike mingled, talked, and shared the evening together. Everywhere you looked, there was movement, music, and connection.

A lively concert by Joe Buchanan set the tone for the evening with his unique blend of traditional melodies and contemporary sounds. He created moments of joyful singing, clapping, and pure Chanukah spirit. Boxed dinners from Potchke Deli gave people a chance to sit, eat, and enjoy one another's company.

More than a celebration, the night reflected the heart of Chanukah; illuminating the dark with the power of light, resilience, and community. As the candles burned brightly and as the evening wound down, it was clear that the connections made and the joy shared would continue well beyond the holiday.

On behalf of the KJA and Chabad, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our community partners: Hadassah, Heska Amuna Synagogue, Temple Beth El, Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge, Stanford Eisenberg Knoxville Jewish Day School, PJ Library and Potchke DeliSynagogue, Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge, Knoxville Jewish Day School, PJ Library, Potchke Deli, and Temple Beth El.



Photo Credit to Jared Iroff-Bailey



Photo Credit to Jared Iroff-Bailey

KJA Contributions

KJA Contributions as of December 31, 2025

Jeffrey and Shelly Abrams

David and Joyce Beerman

William and Ellen Berez

Barbara Bernstein

Timothy and Angela Brunelle

Raeus Cannon

Debbie and Jeff Abrams-Cohen

Laurence Faber

Frank and Laura Floyd

Adam and Jennifer Friedman

Joe Garofalo

Scott Hahn

Ellen Schnoll and Terry Haywood

Louise Lindsay

Robert Blitt and Stephanie Kodish

Harvey and Marilyn Liberman

Barbara Mintz

Deborah Roberts and Don Mossman

Janice and Howard Pollock

David and Shelia Popkin

Pat Rosenberg

Gilya Gerda Schmidt

Larry Silverstein

Wacky and Wonderful

Author: Rabbi Adam J. Rosenbaum



One challenge of writing for a publication is avoiding the temptation to write whatever is passing through your mind at the moment, until you realize that you have no idea whether these thoughts will make sense to the reader, not to mention to yourself, and then you are placed in the predicament of needing to actually organize your thoughts before you place them on paper, and that's highly necessary, because if you don't, you might wind up with several sentences that go on and on and on, much like the sentence you're reading right now, and then you realize, in between the milliseconds that you gather for thought, that you haven't even taken a breath for several minutes, which hopefully forces you to stop even though you are in the middle of a paragraph because you can't go on forever like this. (Whew!)

Absurd, you say? Welcome to Adar, the month when the wacky and wonderful meet as one, most noticeably during the holiday of Purim.

How wacky is Purim? The rabbis tell us that we should listen to the story of Purim, rooting for the good guys and booing the bad guys – and then, we should feel free to change our allegiances later in the day!

How wonderful is Purim? The rabbis also insist

that our joy must increase during the month of Adar; hence, we have a mandate to feel great, especially on the holiday itself.

How wacky is Purim? The holiday is based on the book of Esther, a scroll that many scholars deem a parody of the rest of the Bible, in which, among other things, a human king is made to see reason (something you rarely see elsewhere in the Bible).

How wonderful is Purim? This same book celebrates the triumph of a woman who discovers that her role in the kingdom can be used not only to save herself, but an entire nation.

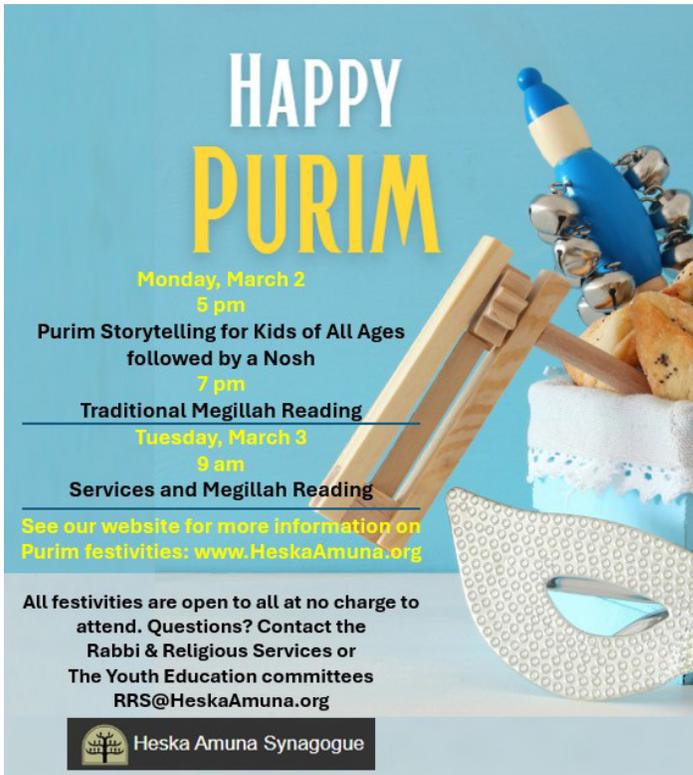
How wacky is Purim? We're supposed to shout – in synagogue! During services!

How wonderful is Purim? We are also supposed to devote our energy to sharing our food with others: the people we love, and the people we don't know who need it so badly.

They say that, beneath all the humor (or attempts thereof) lies an element of truth. This is Purim in a nutshell. You would be hard-pressed to find another occasion that uses so much silliness to reinforce the ideas of happiness, self-empowerment or generosity.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that many of the rabbis claimed that, in days to come, should all of the other Jewish holidays be abolished, Purim would remain. This is not to say that Purim is the most important holiday; rather, I believe that the rabbis were teaching us that the lessons of Purim will always be needed, even in a world to come. So, even if your stream of consciousness keeps you from catching your breath, stop for a moment this March to enjoy Purim, for both the ridiculous and the sublime.

HESKA AMUNA SYNAGOGUE



HAPPY PURIM

Monday, March 2
5 pm
Purim Storytelling for Kids of All Ages
followed by a Nosh
7 pm
Traditional Megillah Reading

Tuesday, March 3
9 am
Services and Megillah Reading

See our website for more information on Purim festivities: www.HeskaAmuna.org

All festivities are open to all at no charge to attend. Questions? Contact the Rabbi & Religious Services or The Youth Education committees
RRS@HeskaAmuna.org



Heska Amuna Synagogue

In 2025, Heska Amuna welcomed these new members into our congregational family:

- Suzanne Brown
- Larry Cantor
- Kara & Jason Collins & Family
- Joel Dryer
- Mary Evars-Goan
- Brett Mandel
- Shain Raley
- Harriet Ruderman
- Spencer & Brittany Smyser & Family
- Alan & Amy Steinberg



2ND NIGHT CONGREGATIONAL Passover Seder

Heska Amuna invites all to our Second-Night very Family Friendly very awesome Community Seder
Thursday, April 2 ~ schmooze 4:30-5 pm.
Seder will start promptly at 5pm. Join us!

Reservations Required. Please RSVP by March 21.
Sign up at www.HeskaAmuna.org
or call the office (865)522-0701 to reserve a seat at our table.
(PS. See our website to pre-order Pesach treats for your table, too).

Southern Schmooze 2.0

Author: Marc Forman, Programs Vice-Chair

Once again Heska Amuna Synagogue will be attending the Southern Schmooze event at Camp Ramah Darom in the mountains of Clayton, Georgia. This year's event will be held from Friday, February 27 until Sunday, March 1. The congregations from Chattanooga, Greenville, SC and Montgomery, AL also will be in attendance.

The Southern Schmooze is an opportunity for the participating Southeast synagogue communities to connect as individual congregations and celebrate Jewish life as a region. Come together to share in the joys and challenges of being a part of a growing and vibrant Southern Jewish Community!

During the fun, exciting, and uplifting weekend you can expect a very spirited

Ramah Darom Shabbat, delicious kosher meals, snacks, and beverages (I vouch for these personally), and an abundance of programming and activities. Some of the activities from last year were sushi making, tie dye t-shirts, adult happy hour, games, hikes to two beautiful waterfalls, and fellowship.

The weekend also has programming for Children and Teens, so bring them along. You can ask last year's attendees about how meaningful, uplifting, and fun this weekend was. We will help to arrange for carpooling and can provide you with other information, just call the office.

Registration is now open for members of the Heska Amuna family: <https://www.ramahdarom.org/southern-schmooze-shabbaton/>.



Contributions by Caring People

Contributions by Caring People Through Jan 5, 2026

YOM KIPPUR APPEAL

Rabbi Adam J. Rosenbaum & Family · Judi & Martin Abrams (in appreciation of my beautiful family) · Rich Adlin · Linda Anderson · Jason Bailey (in support of our local Jewish community) · Marion & Larry Bayer · Sandy Parker & Steven Beber (in memory of all who are no longer with us) · Nancy & Jeff Becker · Sue & Jerry Becker · Anne & Bernard Bendreim (in memory of Madeleine Sol Bendriem) · Barbara Bernstein · Wendy & Ted Besmann · Abraham & Judy Brietstein · Ken & Susan Brown · Robin Brown · Adam Brown · Angela Brunelle · Michael Burnett · Alex Callen & Rachel Tamaroff · Jerry & Susie Candy · Larry Cantor · J.P. Dessel · Joyce Diftler · Joel Dryer · Markus Eisenbach · Alice Farkas · Frank & Laura Floyd · Marc Forman · Luetta Gay · Howard Golden · Wendy & Earl Gurevitch · Scott Hahn · Mark Harris · Josh & Kim Hedrick · Heather Hirschfeld · Mark Homer (in memory of Stephen Homer) · Carol & Morris Ickowitz · Martha & Marty Iroff · George & Janet Iversen · Herb & Elise Jacobs · Matthew & Mary Ann Kremer · Linda Kutsubos · Marilyn & Harvey Liberman · Peggy & Mark Littmann · Carole & Bob Martin · Mary Ann & Jennye Merrell · Michael Messing & Joyce York · Anita & Jeff Miller · Rosalie & Stephen Nagler (to support the Security Fund) · Marie & Charles Perelman · Jose Marti Piedrahita-Angulo · Shain Raley · Sandy Robinson · Karen Robinson · Stephen & Kim Rosen · Pat Rosenberg · Bernie Rosenblatt (in memory of Lesley Rosenblatt) · Nicki Russler · Gilya Schmidt · Mary Linda Schwarzbart (in appreciation of our dedicated leadership and staff) · Mark & Betty Siegel · Joe Sitver & Anita Kay · Linda Gray Slovis · Alan Solomon & Andrea Cartwright · Gary & Heather Spiegelman · Melissa Sturm · Ben Sulman · William Thompson · Jill & Doug Weinstein · Matthew & Lindsay Weiss-Hilton.

Additional Contributions (cont. from page 13)

Contributions by Caring People Through Jan 5, 2026

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to Marc Forman &
Will Thompson (Simchat
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Rosenbaum who led Torah
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Aliyah
In Memory of Ann Manas;
Mazel tov to Marc Forman

& Will Thompson (Simchat
Torah Honorees); Yahrzeits
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In Honor of Bernard Cohn
Sue Koller

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Pat Rosenberg
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Linda Kutsubos
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Carolyn Fay

Yahrzeit Plaque

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Purim

Author: Raina Siroty, Rabbi Cantor



Who needs Halloween or Mardi Gras? Purim's costume parade has it all: glittering Esthers, bearded Mordecais, dramatic Hamans, regal Ahasueruses, and sassy Vashtis. But the heart of Purim lies beyond the costumes. Beneath the noise and feasting is a story of courage and character—an invitation to remove our own masks and discover the strengths that lie within each and every one of us. The holiday's heroes and villains show us the way.

Vashti is no longer cast as a vixen but as a figure of integrity. By refusing to display herself for the king, she models moral courage and self-respect, as we read of her refusal to be paraded around as an entertainer for the King and his friends.

Her story reminds us to stand up for ourselves when we are presented with a situation that we aren't comfortable participating in.

Esther, often seen as passive, grows into her identity. Only by understanding who she is and what her Judaism means to her can she risk revealing herself to save her people. Purim challenges us to do the same: take one step toward Jewish practice, learning, or ritual that may at first feel foreign, but could become meaningful.

Mordecai embodies humility and conviction. He refuses to bow towards injustice, mourns openly for his people, and remains grounded even in triumph. His example urges us not to ignore suffering—near or far—but to speak out by refusing to stay silent.

From **Ahasuerus** (and Haman), we learn what not to be. The king's many indulgences and poor judgment show how easily excess can obscure responsibility. Purim invites us to reassess our priorities and recognize how much we already have—from seeing our children dress up in costume with a grogger in hand, to the simple joy of eating a freshly baked hamentaschen.

As for **Haman**, his downfall reminds us that hatred ultimately destroys itself. Purim calls on us to confront prejudice where we see it and to share this story as a celebration of friendship, justice, and forgiveness.

Wishing you a Chag Purim Sameach!

How Volunteering Can Make Your Community a Better Place

Author: Dan McLaughlin, President

Volunteering isn't just about giving up your free time—it's about making your neighborhood a stronger, happier place to live. When you lend a hand, you're not only helping others, but you're also creating connections that make your community feel more like home.

Think about it: when people come together to serve food at a shelter, coach a youth sports team, or pick up trash at the park, they're doing more than just the task at hand. They're building relationships. These connections matter because when neighbors know each other, they're more likely to support and look out for one another.

Volunteering also helps meet real needs. Many local organizations can't run without people willing to pitch in. By sharing your time, you might be helping kids learn, making sure families have enough to eat, or simply bringing some joy to someone who needs

it. Each act of kindness, no matter how small, adds up to something much bigger.

And here's the best part: your actions can inspire others. When people see you giving back, it often encourages them to do the same. Before long, one person's effort can turn into a wave of positive change throughout the community.

Volunteering also feels good! Helping others has been shown to boost happiness, reduce stress, and give you a sense of purpose. It's a win-win—you're making a difference for your neighbors while also doing something great for yourself.

At the end of the day, volunteering makes your community stronger, kinder, and more connected. So whether you have an hour or a whole afternoon, consider finding a way to give back. You'll be surprised at how big an impact you can make.

Caroline Jayne Hicks to become Bat Mitzvah



Caroline Jayne Hicks will be called to the Torah on March 21, 2026.

Caroline is a seventh-grade student at South Doyle Middle School and is the daughter of David and Deborah Hicks and the sister of Jack. Caroline's passions include playing volleyball, spending time with her friends and pets, and listening to music. For her Mitzvah project, she is raising money for animal welfare by creating thoughtful gifts for fellow pet lovers. A dedicated and enthusiastic student, Caroline excels in writing and math and brings focus, energy, and positivity to everything she does. Known for her great sense of humor and boundless enthusiasm, she loves making her friends laugh and is excited to celebrate this meaningful milestone with family and friends.

Hands on, Hearts on, Minds on Learning

February/March Update

Author: Norma James, Temple Beth El Religious School Director

Rabbi and author Leah Berkowitz be at Religious School Sunday, February 8th. It will be an exciting day for all ages. Rabbi Berkowitz is a well-known author of children's books and will share her stories with our younger students. Queen Esther's Comfy Pants is loved by children everywhere. For our older students, Rabbi Berkowitz will lead a session on writing Midrash. There will also be sessions on Saturday and Sunday for our adults.

Our Shinshinim will teach the students about Israel in February. Yaheli and Avigail love working with all ages of students and sharing the culture of Israel with them. They really love how the older students ask lots of questions and soak up everything they teach.

Calling all Parents: February 15th from 10 to 12 come make Hamantaschen with our Sisterhood. No experience necessary, and we love having veteran bakers. The hamantaschen you bake will be sold to the congregation and at our RS Purim Festival. This is a great opportunity to make new connections and learn a new Jewish tradition. Coffee and snacks provided.

Purim Festival is March 1st. Don't miss it! It's that time again! Bring your family and friends to enjoy our famous Purim Festival. We will be in the sanctuary, the patio and parking lots weather permitting. We will invite our Jewish Community organizations to add their own booths and activities to ours. Of course, the popular bounce house will return. Rabbi Siroty will read the Megillah in our sanctuary. Our RS Parents will set up their kosher hotdog

cafe on the patio, and Sisterhood will sell Hamantaschen. The community is invited to join the fun. Parents, if you want to volunteer to help plan this event, contact Norma James or Tara Bain, tarakearbain@gmail.com.

Purim Shabbat on Friday March 6th. This year we will have a *K-Pop Demon Hunter* shpiel directed by Jesse Weckstein and starring our children. The Purim service and play is at 6:00 with dinner to follow. This will be fun for the whole family. Don't forget to dress in costume.

Spring Break is Sunday, March 8 and Sunday, March 15. Have a wonderful and safe spring break. We return on Sunday, March 22nd.

Caroline Hicks becomes a Bat Mitzvah Saturday, March 21st.

Religious School Family Seder Sunday, March 29th. Parents are invited to join us for our Seder to make it a family event. Watch for Norma's email to sign up to bring food and to volunteer. This is one of our favorite events and is always well attended.

Save these B'nai Mitzvah Dates:

Juni Jordan: Saturday, April 11th
Hannah James: Saturday, May 16th
Alyssa McGhee: TBA

Contributions by Caring People

Donations listed were received as of December 31, 2025

BEILER FLORAL FUND

Ron & Melissa Feinbaum and
the Miller's
*In memory of Sadie Rich Miller &
Marvin Miller*
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*In memory of my beloved
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Mr. John Lomax
In memory of Murray Weinstein
Pat Rosenberg
*In memory of Gene Rosenberg &
Celestine Yatsko*
Will Wright
In memory of Jesse Ryan Wright

Chanukah Through the Eyes of KJDS Students

Author: 4th & 5th Grade Students at KJDS



Ramukah by Adin Ferency

Our 4/5 class planned a Chanukah party for the whole school called Ramakuh Rams. It was really fun because we got to surprise the younger kids. We hid in the PE closet and made clues for them to follow so they could find us. When they finally did, everyone was so excited.

We ate Ramen (that's why it was called Ramakuh Rams!) with the younger students, we got to fill donuts with them, had a visit from our school mascot, and we did fun Chanukah activities together like Hit the Greeks and Pin the Shamash on the Menorah. The party was a lot more fun because our younger buddies were there doing everything with us.

This experience taught me that KJDS really listens to students' ideas. I loved how the school took our input, worked with us when we didn't all agree, and made sure everyone got to have fun. It felt great to see our ideas come to life and to celebrate Chanukah together with our younger buddies.



Bringing Chanukah to American House by Claire Rosenbaum

Hi, I'm Claire from KJDS. I went to American House to celebrate Chanukah with the seniors. We made Chanukah-themed sun catchers, and it was really fun to watch the seniors make them with their buddies. I think the seniors enjoy having young kids visit because they always seem so happy when we're there. It feels really nice to bring them joy.

The senior I was paired with was in a wheelchair, and I think she said she was 93. She wanted us to do the craft because she thought it would be fun to watch us. She was so excited to take her sun catcher back to her room.

I love making people happy, and I really look forward to going to American House each month.



Celebrating with Our Special Friends by Levi Wilhelm

At KJDS we have a tradition called Special Friends. It is when we get paired with older people in our community who are like grandparents to us. This is really special because not everyone has grandparents nearby. To some special friends the students are like their grandkids. This helps make everyone feel included and loved. It makes holidays even more special to spend with them. Having Special Friends makes our school feel like a big family.

When we do programs with our Special Friends, it always feels exciting and meaningful. At the Chanukah party, we did so many fun things together. We made balance hats, decorated donuts, played Chanukah bingo, sang songs, played human dreidel, ate latkes, and lit the menorah. It was really fun doing all of this side by side.

As a student at KJDS, I get to learn a lot about my Special Friend. I like hearing their stories and spending time together. I asked my special friend, Ernie Gross, how it feels to be a special friend and this is what he said: "I love seeing my special friends grow over the years, getting to know them better, and enjoying Judaism together."

The KJDS Family PJ Party by Shaked Paldor

Here at KJDS, we have lots of special parties, and one of the most fun is the Chanukah pajama party.

At the PJ party, we did so many games and activities. The party brings everyone together and makes KJDS feel like a family. We had a great time eating latkes, decorating doughnuts, lighting the Chanukah candles, playing musical chairs, and so many other happy Chanukah traditions. Everyone played dreidel, and it was so much fun!

I also loved seeing the older kids being kind to the younger kids, like giving up their chairs for them. Celebrating the PJ party with teachers, parents, and students made it extra special. I really loved being part of our KJDS school community!



Chanukah Through the Eyes of KJDS Students cont.

Author: 4th & 5th Grade Students at KJDS



The Menorah Contest by Oliver Kilgore

The KJDS Menorah Contest was so much fun! Here's how it worked: you could enter a menorah into the contest, and after about three weeks, all the menorahs were judged in four categories: most creative, most eco-friendly, most beautiful, and most original. There were nineteen menorahs in total!

Two of my favorites were menorah four and menorah one. Menorah four was a candy menorah with four M&M tubes as the stands and two Skittles boxes as the base for the candles. Menorah one was a carrot menorah, where thin slices from the inside of the carrots were used as candle holders. Menorah four was made by Lucas Butcher, and menorah one was made by Noa Olinzok.

Some of the really unique materials people used were candy containers, Legos, dinosaurs, cardboard, homemade snow, twigs, and vegetables. It was so cool to see everyone's ideas and creativity come to life!



Teacher Led Chanukah Party by Laine Leavy

I loved this KJDS Chanukah party! My favorite part was the science experiments. Alex showed us how fire needs air to keep going. He put a candle in water and then covered it with a cup, and the fire lasted longer because of the air trapped inside the cup. It was so cool to see science in action!

There was also an escape room with lots of puzzles. We had to open envelopes to figure out all the puzzles, and when we solved them, we got a code that helped us "escape." We did it—we escaped!

Something that made me laugh, that day was my birthday. I got to open the chest, and there was a paper that said, "Happy Birthday Laine!" My prize was a heart-shaped seed packet for the spring.

With Mr. Lev, we had to make up verses for "I Had a Little Dreidel" and then vote on one to sing at the Shabbat party. My group's verse was: "I have a little dreidel, I made it out of tape, and when I tried to spin it, it stuck straight to my cape!"

KJDS makes learning meaningful and fun, and this Chanukah party was the perfect example!



Chanukah is special at KJDS by Avishai Sanders Goldman

Chanukah is celebrated in many places, but at KJDS it feels really special. At KJDS, we focus on being a community and bringing everyone together. We include the younger kids and try to make everyone happy, which makes everything feel extra fun.

This year, we had five Chanukah parties, and even on days we didn't have a party, we still lit the Menorah together as a school. We did so many fun activities! I really loved making latkes, donuts, and ramen with some of the younger kids. One of my favorite things was painting donuts with icing and a paintbrush. It was messy but super fun!

We also played cool games and did a lot of exciting things that made everyone laugh. The teachers and students spent a lot of time planning and preparing, and you could really tell. Chanukah at KJDS is not just fun, it's full of friends, laughter, and community, and I always look forward to it!

A Night at the Races: Alumni Derby Celebration

Author: Bonnie Boring, KJDS Board member and Alumni parent

On the first Saturday in January, Knoxville Jewish Day School alumni, families, and friends gathered for a joyful “Night at the Races” Derby-themed alumni event—and what a night it was! More than 30 alumni, along with parents and community members, came together to reconnect, reminisce, and celebrate the lifelong bonds that begin at KJDS.

The evening was filled with laughter, friendly competition, and plenty of Derby flair as guests showed off their most creative hats. Alumni took part in horse-racing games, cheered on their picks, and competed for prizes for both winning racers and best Derby hat. The night also included a meaningful Havdalah celebration, grounding the fun in shared tradition.

Events like this are a reminder that when you join the KJDS family, you’re joining more than a school—you’re becoming part of a community that lasts a lifetime. The relationships formed here continue to grow and thrive long after graduation, connecting generations of students and families.

If you didn’t receive a flyer for this event, or if we may not have your most up-to-date contact information, please reach out to Bonnie Boring at unlresources@aol.com so we can be sure you’re included in future alumni gatherings.

We look forward to many more opportunities to come together, celebrate, and keep the KJDS family close and connected for years to come.



Curiosity, Questions, and Cow Eyeballs: Science at KJDS

Author: Louise Lindsay, Innovation Coach

“Who do I talk to about ordering eyeballs?”

This was the first question asked at the KJDS professional development session upon returning from winter break. While it may sound like a strange request, it perfectly captures what thinking about science at KJDS looks like. Fourth and fifth grade students will soon be dissecting cow eyeballs in an upcoming unit, exploring what eyes look like and how they work.



Exploration is at the heart of science learning at KJDS. Students are first introduced to concepts by activating prior knowledge. For example, they are asked to think about their own experiences with speed in cars or on roller coasters. They are then given tools to explore, heading outside to test how speed affects a roller coaster’s ability to stay on track when upside down. From there, students begin asking questions and forming ideas about how things work. Only after these steps does the teacher guide them through scientific laws and concepts.



This approach not only engages students in meaningful learning but also teaches them to use what they already know to investigate, experiment, and draw conclusions. Even our youngest students are capable of this kind of thinking.

In a recent investigation of pulleys, students lifted objects that were too heavy to lift on their own. They also discovered that pulling a pulley straight down was more effective than pulling it horizontally. And, as you might imagine, they had countless questions about how pulleys work and how much weight they could lift.

Science is about thinking, testing ideas, forming hypotheses, and often revising them. Science education that encourages this process nurtures confident thinkers and curious young scientists. It’s also a whole lot of fun.



KINDER & KIN

Where Jewish tots (babies-age 5) and their grown-ups play, laugh, and connect!

WHEN?
Fridays in February
10:00 - 11:30 AM

WHERE?
Knoxville Jewish Day School
Parents Day Out Classroom
8042 Gleason Drive
Knoxville, TN 37919



T JEWISH STUDIES

This lecture series was made possible with support from the Department of Religious Studies and College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Tennessee.

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Jewish Joy, Imperial Power, and the Rabbis of Roman Palestine

TUESDAY, FEB. 24 • 6 PM

Reexamine rabbinic history under Roman rule, exploring the complex relationship between public joy and imperial power in Palestine, the Roman world, and other asymmetric political systems across time.

EREZ DEGOLAN | Fordham University

REGISTER: tiny.utk.edu/DeGolan



Plain Violence: Against Reparative Readings of the Hebrew Bible

TUESDAY, MAR. 24 • 6 PM

This lecture argues that plain sense interpretation of biblical violence better addresses its challenges while preserving the communal centrality of the Jewish Bible, unlike modern attempts to “repair” its narratives.

EMILY FILLER | Drew University

REGISTER: tiny.utk.edu/Filler26



Indian Ocean Trade in the 11th and 12th Centuries:

A View from the Cairo Geniza THURSDAY, APR. 23 • 6 PM

Examine the lives of Jewish merchants from Fustat (Old Cairo) engaged in Indian Ocean trade during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, revealing their perilous journeys, goods exchanged, and the records in the Cairo Geniza that illuminate their networks, laborers, and families.

PRATIMA GOPALAKRISHNAN | Princeton University

REGISTER: tiny.utk.edu/Gopalakrishnan26

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Past President's Reflections

Author: Barbara Mintz, Chapter Past President

At this printing, I have finished my three-year term as Chapter President and what a fabulous experience it has been! I learned Hadassah is so much more than I ever expected. During my term, Hadassah has become one of the top ten hospitals in the world. They built and opened the Gandel Rehabilitation Center to provide extensive mental health care as well as opened a new Breast Cancer Center offering all services patients and families might need. It is not just those big things! Hadassah serves one million patients each year. They can't build "regular" hospital rooms. Our hospitals have underground floors, bullet-proof and bomb protected walls and windows on all floors so staff and visitors are also protected.

This presidency has also afforded me the opportunity to be a more significant part of my Jewish Community. I knew only that KJA had a pool and a few activities and I dreaded, at first, my new obligation to attend board meetings. I underestimated all of it! Hadassah and I were welcomed into the mix of organizations, respected, and supported. I was able to give time and energy to the board, on sub-committees, and at events.

It has been my privilege to serve Hadassah, the people in Israel, the members of this Chapter, and my Jewish Community. My sincere thanks to "my" board that stayed with me during my tenure and all of the givers and volunteers to this incredible organization. Thanks for every opportunity to lead and learn.

President's Reflections

Author: Julie E. Stein, Chapter President



For my first President's section, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Julie Stein, and I am the new President of the local chapter of Hadassah here in Knoxville-Oak Ridge. I moved to Knoxville a year and a half ago from Sarasota FL. I grew up

in New York, and I have lived all over the United States. I am a Patent Attorney by training although I no longer practice.

One of my goals upon moving to Knoxville, where I knew no one, was to get involved in the Jewish community here. As a life member of Hadassah, our VP of membership, Anita Kay, reached out to me when I

first moved here and made me feel very welcomed. In addition, I met Nora Messing at an AJCC pool party, and she further introduced me to people within the Jewish community, many of whom were also members of Hadassah.

Needless to say, it didn't take long for me to get involved in the Hadassah Knoxville-Oak Ridge chapter, as it was a great way to continue to meet people at various events, while also continuing to learn about Hadassah's great and important fundraising work for its hospitals and its Youth Aliyah villages in Israel. I first volunteered to be the 2026 Hadassah Directory Chair and now the 2026 President.

I am super excited for the coming year, and I look forward to continuing to meet people and engaging in interesting and meaningful events to support Hadassah's goals.

Chapter's New Executive Board for 2026

Author: Julie E. Stein: Chapter President

As the new President, Julie Stein, I want to take a moment and thank all of the past local Hadassah board members for their work and continued support. I also want to specifically thank Barabara Mintz for her past service as President and I look forward to working with her and everyone involved with the new board.

On that note, I would also like to introduce the Hadassah Knoxville-Oak Ridge Chapter's Executive Board for 2026:

President: Julie E. Stein

VP Membership: Anita Kay

Financial Officer: Laura Floyd

Recording Secretary: Ashley Hudson

VP Education: Dale Rosenberg

Members at Large: Carol Ickowitz, Hilary Shreter, and Jill Weinstein

VP Fundraising: Air Grimsley

VP Programing: Barbara Mintz

Book Club News February 2026 & March 2026 Book

Author: Rhonda Sternfels

The books and discussions we have are always very informative, inspirational and exciting. We welcome you to participate in our Hadassah Book Club meetings, at 7:30PM, the third Tuesday of every month, Zoom-only format, even if you don't read the book. We always select our books. Email book suggestions for next year to Harriet Cooper, spock52@prodqiy.net.



THE WOMEN

BY KRISTEN HANNAH

FEBRUARY 17, 2026

In 1965, nursing student Frankie McGrath joins the Army Nurse Corps in Vietnam. She faces life and death challenges, has deep friendships and returns to a divided America.



LULU DEAN'S LITTLE LIBRARY OF BANNED BOOKS

BY KRISTEN MILLER

MARCH 17, 2026

In a small Georgia town, a battle over banned books unfolds when someone secretly replaces "wholesome" books in Lulu Dean's lending library with banned books, sparking unexpected changes in the community. A Funny and Poignant Novel about Censorship, Friendship, and Unexpected Connections

If you have any questions, feedback, or want your name and email added to our list of Hadassah book club members, please contact Rhonda Sternfels resternfels@comcast.net or call: 865-607-8863

Hug a Tree This Tu B'Shvat!

Author: Dale Rosenberg, Hadassah Education VP

Judaism is both old and new. Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan called Judaism an “evolving civilization.” One example is the old/new holiday of Tu B'Shvat –New Year of the Trees.

Why do trees need a New Year? In ancient Israel, our bible and rabbinic writings tell us that trees were important. References to and stories about native trees abound in our texts. Fruit and nuts were used as offerings at the Great Temple in Jerusalem, and the rules required that the age of trees be ascertained. Tu B'Shvat was set as the date when all trees were deemed one year older.

With the destruction of the Second Temple the holiday disappeared for over 1500 years. Noting the proliferation of tree imagery in Jewish mysticism, the 16th century Kabbalists in Tsfat brought it back. They invented a Tu B'Shvat seder, mixing mystical/spiritual insights with consuming fruit and nuts and wine. Later, Hasidism spread this practice in Europe and it

eventually found a foothold in America. Early Zionists worked to reforest our ancient land, a practice that continued with the State of Israel. Tu B'Shvat became a holiday to acknowledge those efforts.

More recently, climate activists like Rabbi Arthur Waskow added ecological concerns to the mysticism of the Tu B'Shvat seder. Israeli ecologists introduced practices that encourage sustainability and reintroduction of native flora. The Jewish National Fund and Hadassah have partnered throughout Israeli history to work on tree-related projects, most recently in creating a calming shade tree garden at the Eshkol Resilience Center, where PTSD sufferers are treated.

Today, Tu B'Shvat is acknowledged as both a mystical and ecological holiday, celebrating our interwoven ties to the land and to our spiritual life. Tu B'Shvat falls on February 2, 2026, starting at sundown on February 1. Enjoy the beautiful trees of Tennessee – on the holiday and always!



Hadassah Shabbat Zachor 5786

In honor of Hadassah's 114th birthday

Annual Hadassah Shabbat Zachor Commemoration:
February 28, 2026 at 10:00am
At the Jewish Congregation Oak Ridge
Cold Luncheon to be served



Annual HMO Fundraising Banquet

Author: Barbara Mintz

Our annual fundraiser banquet was held on November 9 at Chesapeake's. There were 68 attending including members, associates, and some guests. Our theme was Transforming Our Perspective on Mental Health. Barbara Mintz welcomed everyone and then a full brunch was served.

After a delightful meal, we listened to a dynamic presentation from our guest speaker Ben Harrington, MA. Ed. He shared some interesting local history on mental health services in Knoxville and the east Tennessee area. He spoke about the potential negative impacts that technology can have on our mental health across all ages. He spoke about many aspects of social media including texting versus

conversations, Facebook Friends versus personal ones, AI, and more. He also talked about current focuses and mental health services in our area currently as well as thoughts on directions and needs in the future. He answered many questions directly and with clarity. We thank him for such a meaningful and applicable presentation.

Next, the audience heard about our Chapter's National and Regional Awards this year. We also recognized Marc Forman as our 2025 Associate of the Year. Many thanks were given to our Grand Hostesses and Hostesses who enabled us to send thousands of dollars to our hospitals in Israel. They included:

COUPLES \$250

- Barbara Levin and Josh Gettinger
- Carol and Morris Ickowitz ♦
- Janet and George Iversen ♦
- Kim and Stephen Rosen ♦
- Mary Evars-Goan and John Goan, Jr. ♦

GRAND HOSTESS/ HOST \$180.00

- Anita Kay*
- Anita Miller
- Barbara Bernstein*
- Barbara Mintz**
- Brooke Jacobs
- Harriet Glasman
- Hilary Shreter
- Kathy Goldstein**
- Mary Ann Merrell*
- Melissa Sturm
- Nancy Becker
- Penny Lukin
- Reba Herzfeld **
- Rhonda Bogard***
- Mike Glasman

HOSTESS \$90

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne Bendrium Carol Martin Dina Kramer Ellen Berez Harriet Cooper Jenny Pfeffer* Jill Chasen Jill Weinstein *** Judi Abrams Julie Stein Laura Floyd * Linda Anderson Marilyn Liberman Marla Brody Mary Beth Liebowitz | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Linda Schwarzbart Nora Messing Peggy Hedrick Peggy Littmann * Pessa Brody Rosalie Nagler Shelley Hecht Shuli Mesa* Susan Silber |
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KEY

- * Chai Society
- **Silver Chai Society
- *** Keeper of the Gate
- ♦ Associate



Guest speaker, Ben Harrington

There were many others to thank as well. First, we thanked Andrea Cone for her role in setting a date, working with Chesapeake's for space arrangements, table designs, and selecting our menu. She also found our guest speaker. Rachel Safer and Shuli Mesa registered and welcomed us. Julie Stein helped run our video and lead the hamotzi. Mary Evars-Goan ensured our buffet ran smoothly. Seth Mintz, Morris Ickowitz, and Marc Forman helped with set-up and clean-up. Thanks also to Rhonda Sternfels for introducing our speaker. We must also thank our board members for making calls and lining up all of our givers. We sincerely thank everyone in attendance for their participation. It took a team of Women Who Do!



Sarah Scheinman and Eli Robinson Say Ca-Ching for Change!

KJCFF is proud to welcome our newest donor advised fund, the Scheinman-Robinson Ca-Ching for Change Fund. Sarah and Eli live in Washington, DC with their adorable one year-old daughter, Shellie Peach. Eli is no newcomer as he and brother, Asher, advise the KJCFF EAR Fund. He also works with Asher and mom, Karen Robinson, on the KJCFF PACE Fund. For those keeping score, this is the 7th fund connected to the Robinson family spanning four generations. The continuity of philanthropic leadership in our Jewish community is hard to beat, but we hope you are willing to try. Mazal tov and todah rabbah, Sarah, Eli and Shellie!

You don't have to be a Robinson or live outside of East Tennessee, but apparently it helps. If you want to join the rush to open a fund, call Stephen at 865-599-1853.

Legacy Intent Letters are No Laughing Matter

I have often joked that "you don't want to be worth more to the community after you are gone than you are when you are here." I have also said all estate intention letters will receive a thank you gift of 5 free hang-gliding lessons. Come on, foundations can be humorous too, can't we? Joking aside, legacy intent letters are a great method to build the future of KJCFF and the Jewish community of Knoxville. Our family of funds is now a generation old and we have built tremendous credibility in our community. No matter if you feel like you will live forever, we will be here when you don't. Let us know that you plan on putting KJCFF in your estate plan. If you are willing to share the good news, you might start a trend that launches us to the next level. Give it some thought and careful planning with your estate advisors or a representative of East Tennessee Foundation

If you want to have a few laughs about the inevitable, email Stephen at Stephen.rosen@raymondjames.com.

KJCFF accepts online donations for all of our funds!

If you would like to donate, go to www.jewishknoxville.org/kjcff. It is found on the KJA website under the fifth header from the left, "Jewish Knoxville." Click on the third drop down item, "Knoxville Jewish Community Family of Funds." Read our eloquent Mission Statement then scroll down and click on "online donation." You can type a word in Search Funds or scroll to the fund(s) of choice. Or, just call Stephen at 865-599-1853 and he'll walk you through it.

Rhythms of Time

By: **Rabbi Ahuvah Loewenthal**

It's likely that you're opening your newly arrived issue of HaKol in the month of Adar.

"*Mi She Nichnas Adar, Marbin b'Simcha*," says the Talmud (BT Ta'anit 29a) -- "When the month of Adar comes in, we increase in our joy." Why? Because with Adar comes Purim.

Many of us grew up thinking of Purim as a children's holiday, a time for carnivals and dress-up play and treats. If our children are grown, some of us may feel like the holiday doesn't belong to us anymore. But I invite you now to revisit Purim as something more. We can see Purim as a potent spiritual experience; one closely related to Yom Kippur.

"Purim related to Yom Kippur?" I hear you ask with great puzzlement, eyeing me suspiciously. YES, and I'm not making this up.

In the Torah, the Day of Atonement is referred to as *Yom Ha Kippurim*, which can also be translated as "The Day Which is Like Purim." Rabbi Isaac Luria, "The Ari," the most famous of the sixteenth century kabbalists based in Tzfat, mused on this seeming oxymoron – how could Yom Kippur possibly be like Purim? He drew a strong connection between Purim and Yom Kippur. Here are some of The Ari's observations, as well as some of my own.

Seemingly Opposite

How can it be that Yom Kippur and Purim are alike?

After all, Yom Kippur is the most solemn day of the Jewish year, while Purim is the wildest, most Dionysian of days, sometimes thought of as a "Jewish Mardi Gras."

Yom Kippur is a time of asceticism. The *Mishnah* prohibits eating, drinking, anointing with oil, bathing, and sexual relations. Yom Kippur is clearly a time of turning away from physicality.

In contrast, "a person should drink on Purim until he cannot distinguish between 'cursed be Haman' and 'blessed be Mordechai.'" The Megillah reading is loud and raucous. There is much eating of *hamantaschen*. Purim is an intensely sensory day. (Incidentally, both fasting on Yom Kippur and drinking on Purim are prohibited if they pose a health risk to an individual).



Transcending Ordinary Reality

Still, in spite of the surface contradictions, there is an underlying connection between these two days. The ways that we keep both of these holy days take us outside of ordinary perception. Whether through an ascetic fasting on Yom Kippur or through indulgent drunkenness on Purim, we alter our consciousness. We take ourselves out of our regular day-to-day lives.

What is the aim of removing ourselves from the ordinary world? We do so as a way to release deep emotion. On Yom Kippur, we seek to release our pent-up angst; on Purim, we seek to release our pent-up giddiness. In either case, the goal is catharsis. We set aside a fixed day to drain off excess, an important practice to maintain a stable, balanced life the rest of the year. As Rabbi Arthur Waskow z"l explains in *Seasons of Our Joy*, the year cycle of Jewish holidays embraces the full range of human emotions. Our holidays provide outlets for all manner of feelings, within safe parameters.

What We're Wearing

It's a Yom Kippur tradition to wear a *kittel*, a simple white garment that also functions as a burial shroud. Among the several symbolic meanings of dressing in a costume of white is our desire to think of ourselves as clean, pure, at our most ideal.

It's also a Purim tradition to dress in costume. Wearing costumes of the characters in the Megillah reading is popular practice. In Israel and in some traditional communities in North America, many people use costuming as an opportunity to embrace the upside-down topsy-turvy

essence of Purim. The topsy-turviness of Purim derives from numerous plot reversals in the Megillah, most notably the reversal of the decree against the Jews.

Cross-dressing, even in highly traditional communities, is smiled on during Purim and even the *Shulchan Aruch*, the most widely consulted code of Jewish law, authorizes men dressing as women and women dressing as men on Purim. Cross-dressing is one way to become topsy-turvy, particularly in traditional communities where gender roles are strictly followed the rest of the year.

People express the upside-down nature of Purim by dressing in other kinds of “opposite” ways. For example, at one yeshiva I attended, a college-age Reform female student and an older Orthodox female teacher swapped clothing and perfectly impersonated each other’s mannerisms.

People’s costumes may humorously hint at a “shadow side.” A mild-mannered Clark Kent type might let out his inner Superman. As on Halloween, buttoned down adults may choose this one day of the year, Purim, to be a bit unbuttoned. A tender-hearted social worker might try on being Haman for a day. If Yom Kippur attire lets us appear as our most pure selves, Purim gives us an opportunity to dress as our least pure selves.

You’re Not So Bad, Yourself...

If Yom Kippur reminds us to tune up our higher selfless instincts, Purim reminds to not neglect our lower, baser instincts. Each is given due consideration in a time-limited way. So as not to get carried away, we observe these holidays communally so we can supervise one another.

On both of these holidays, we come together to support one another in the fearful process of looking within. How we feel about ourselves varies widely, often from one day to the next. In reality few of us are completely virtuous or completely crooked.

On Yom Kippur, although we work to be our best selves, we communally acknowledge that we are not perfectly good. On Purim, though we would like to exaggerate and pose as our bad old selves, we communally appreciate each other’s shadow side, and in doing so, realize that we are not really so bad!

Is This Under Control?

The theme of casting lots appears in each of these holidays. On Yom Kippur, Leviticus 16:8 tells how the *Kohen Gadol* cast lots to determine which of two goats was to be sacrificed and which was to carry off the sins of Israel into the desert. In *Megillat Esther*, Haman selected the date of his proposed

annihilation of the Jews by casting lots (*pur* is Persian for “lot”).

In these holiday texts, casting lots symbolizes relinquishing control. On Yom Kippur we might relinquish control through not eating. We may become increasingly aware of our connection to G-d through the fast. G-d’s presence might be quite clear to us -- in our liturgy and in our hearts. We may discover that although we have relinquished control of our bodies, we will be OK. A successful fast may inspire in us a feeling that G-d is in control; that we can trust that an external Force will sustain us.

On Purim we might relinquish control by drinking alcohol. G-d does not seem to be present -- *Megillat Esther* is the only book in the Bible that never mentions G-d. And raucous drunken celebration is not generally associated with connecting to a Divine Presence. This might make some of us nervous. If G-d doesn’t seem to be present – if there doesn’t seem to be anyone monitoring our wild behavior – will we be OK?

The Sages of the Talmud were also anxious about this. They asked the very same question and answered it with this comical story (BT Megillah 7b):

Rava said: “a person must get drunk on Purim until he cannot distinguish between ‘cursed be Haman’ and ‘blessed be Mordechai.’”

Rabbah and Rabbi Ze’ira made a Purim feast together. They got drunk. In his stupor, Rabbah stood up and killed Rabbi Ze’ira. The next day, Rabbah prayed for him and revived him.

The following year, Rabbah said to Rabbi Ze’ira, “Come, let us celebrate the Purim feast together!” Rabbi Ze’ira replied, “maybe not – you can’t always count on a miracle!”

Clearly, we had to learn how to not get too far out of control. By celebrating communally and keeping our excesses within limits we don’t need miracles to live through Purim.

G-d may seem absent in our Purim narrative, but G-d in fact is present in our lives. G-d has given us free will and the ability to regulate ourselves. Our inborn desire to protect ourselves and to preserve affirming social connection will stand us in good stead.

I look forward to another expressive (and safe) Purim together!

P.S. Try calculating the *gematria* (numerological values of the Hebrew letters) for the phrases ‘cursed be Haman’ and ‘blessed be Mordechai’!

JCOR Brings Joy To Chanukah Celebrations!

Chanukah Party at JCOR, Chanukah Program at VIVA, and Candle Lighting at the JCC



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Join Us for Purim Family Ed Feb 22nd, 1-3PM



Join Us for Purim Celebration & Dinner March 2, 5:30-8:30PM



JCOR Family Ed Model Seder March 22, 2-5PM



JCOR Community Seder 2nd Night April 2, 7:30 PM

Lighting Knoxville: A Chanukah to Remember

By: Rabbi Yossi Wilhelm



Even before Chanukah officially began, the light was already glowing. Our pre-Chanukah women’s event brought together a wonderful group of women for an evening that was creative, cozy, and meaningful. We crafted beautiful floral menorahs, enjoyed a delicious latke and cheese board, and shared a thoughtful conversation about Chanukah’s lessons and what they mean to us as Jewish women. A lighthearted get-to-know-you game made it easy to meet new friends, making it a delightful evening all around.

Night One: Light in the Cold

On the first night of Chanukah, our community bundled up, zipped coats to our chins, and gathered downtown in Market Square to light a public menorah. Despite the frigid temperatures, the warmth was unmistakable. We came together in solidarity, Jewish pride, and resilience.

This year, once again, Jews around the world faced hatred and persecution, painfully underscored by the terror attacks at Bondi Beach. And just like the Maccabees, we chose not to hide. We chose to stand tall. We chose light.

Guided by the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s message—a little bit of light dispels a great deal of darkness—we fought darkness with light, fear with presence, and hatred with Jewish pride and joy. We were honored to have Mayor Kincannon and Judith Rosenberg, KJA president light the shamash, a pillar of our community Avi Snati light the menorah, and were addressed by Congressman Burchett and Bryan Goldberg, community leaders, a children’s choir, lively music, pita and falafel, a snow globe photo booth, and even Dreidel Man making the evening both powerful and festive.



Night Three: An Israeli Chanukah Celebration

A unique Chanukah gathering for Israelis was held at Chabad of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Together, we explored the deeper message of the holiday, the triumph of light over darkness, and each participant left with a personal resolution for the days ahead.

The night was warm and lively, highlighted by exceptional food prepared by Yasmin, a premium cigars and bourbon station, great raffles, and a welcoming, family-like atmosphere that made the evening truly special.



Night Five: CTeen Latke Wars

On the fifth night, CTeen Latke Wars took over. After donut decorating and a Greek yogurt bar, teams tackled a secret ingredient and got to work, producing golden, crispy, fluffy latkes full of creativity and bold flavor.

Latkes were judged on presentation, creativity, use of the secret ingredient, and taste by our honorable judges, Mrs. Jami Quartararo and Rabbi Shaul Perlstien from Chattanooga, TN. A Dreidel Spin-to-Win game and Chanukah treats wrapped up a night full of laughter and fun.



The Final Night: Together

On the final night of Chanukah, KJA and Chabad, joined by all the Jewish institutions of Knoxville, hosted Southern Fried Chanukah. It was a joyful reminder that celebrating holidays with our community is always a delight, these moments reaffirm the incredible power of community





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February 13

Mathis Bush • CW4 Fred H. Caylor • Isaac Cohen • Rose Friedman • George Gudis • Robert Hyatt • Rose Imbrey • Yetti Liebman • Lela Lippner • Ellen Markel • Dorothy Moiger • Doris Plachter • Sam Pollack • Inez Rayman • Bettie Reich • Peggy Sachs • Randall Schwartz • Morris Shagan • Dennis Silver • Anne Simon • Diana Steinfeld-Hicks • Frances Sturm • Joan Tumpson-Rivlin • Samuel A. Wender

February 20

Evelyn Adelman • Abram Badalov • Herbert Davis • Matthew Derby • Gussie Dresner • Deborah Rabin Freeman • Yvonne Fribourg • Jacob Joseph Gelber • Erma Gerson • Riva Golden • Diana Harris • Ira Jacobs • Bertram H. Joseph Jr. • Hyman Kligman • Yetta M. Konigsberg • Mariya Luchanskaya • Sylvia Miller • Harry Moskowitz • Roy Mostov • Louise Nichols • Kenneth Palmer • Celia Polasky • Eleanor Radoff • Henrietta H. Samuel

February 27

Lalla Block Arnstein • Jack Balaban • Daniel Davis • Edwin Deitch • Benjamin Epstein • Jeffrey Epstein • Jerome S. Gerson • Johanne Gillman • Rose Greenberg • Isaac Gutman • Fannie Fisher Harris • Lucas Helm • Samuel Herrmann • Bennett Herzfeld • Blanche K. Jacobs • Edward H. Jacobs • Gussie Kligman • Isadore Misne • Sarah Nechamkin • Zelik Oleinik • Arthur Pardee • Genevieve Reich • Gersh Sherman • Charles Strasburger Jr. • Annie Striner • William P. Wright

March 6

John Baker • Morris Bart • Martin Cohen • Stewart Crosier • Sally Feldman • Marjorie Freedman • Louis Gassel • Daryle Gross • Harry C. Gross • Yulia Ioselev • Ginda Katz • Rosa Kern • Martin Koplan • Elaine Lewis • Robert Loebel • George Marshall • Sylvia Kessler Robinson • Goldie Rosenbaum • Faisel Schuck • Arthur Shor • Toby Slabosky • Alan Stark • David Striner • Melvin Sturm

March 13

William Brody • Anna Kolodkin Bush • Richard Davis • Mark Eisenstadt • Morris Friedman • Jacob Katz • Dora Kohen • Leopold Levi • Leonard D Licht • Julia Markman • Ann Mostov • Arthur Pasternak • Anna Wallace Rosenbloom • Jessica Hiller Rosenthal • Faye Wansker

March 20

Vittorio Argentini • Augustine Bressler • Josef Cahn • Bertha Diamond • Robert Feinberg • Thomas Feinberg • Bertha Goldberger • Nanette Hyatt • Carl Kaplan • Germain Kern • Bertha Oleinik • Lester Popkin • Fe Serrato • Sarah Steinberg

March 27

A. Dave • Bryan Feldblum • Drysdale Wheaton • Eli Yatsko • Hyman Markowitz • Isaac Bressler • Lillian Silverman Richer • Paul Friedman • Rebecca Wheaton • Roza Galinskaya • Shmulik Dragif • Yetta F. Manis Speert

April 3

Pearl Ades • Gordon Brown • Sam Chandler • Karina Dunn • Stuart Elston • Irwin Freedman • Peter Holz • Edith Ivins • Lesley Krakauer • Sarah Licht • Marley Silverstein Rogers • Jack Rosenberg • Stanley Vogelfang • David Williams

Yahrzeits



Heska Amuna Synagogue Yahrzeits

February 7

Oda Anderson · Louis Balloff · Logan Brown · Yetta Burnett · Stanley Cantor · Eugene Cornez · Max Finkelstein · Milton Finkelstein · John Gitman · Lele Lippner · Katie Manachoff · Anita Merlin · Joseph Richer · Esther S. Rosen · Myer Sachs · Frances Sturm · Clarice Weinstein

February 14

Monte Abrams · Joseph Billig · William Brotman · Ethel Brown · Harold Brown · Isaac Cohen · Herbert Davis · Mark Dischler · Albert Fadem · Abraham Fay · Samuel Green · Leonard Handler · Louis Joffe · Frances Klein · Alfred Levin · Barnett Mackta · Yenta Roodine · Mollie Saroff · Randy Schwartz

February 21

Emily Botnick · Isaac Corkland · Gerson Corkland · Gertrude Danziger · Rose Delinsky · Elizabeth Farkas · Joseph Gluck · Evelyn Hagler · Elliott Jaffrey · Marcia Katz · Ronald Lawhead · Rose Leeds · Zelda Levin · Florence Lieberman · Helene Messing · Harry Moskowitz · Nathan Oleshansky · Kenny Palmer · Fannie Pearce · Miriam Ring · Max Robinson · Doris Rothbart · Ethel Rywell · Dave Scott · Morris Shagan · Roslyn Shamitz · Marilyn Shorr · Abe Slovis · Roberta Smith · Anna Snyder · Rita Solomon · Ethel Wittenberg

February 28

John Abrams · Edith Brotman · Lillian Ellin · Charles Euster · Samuel Fayonsky · Sol Foster · Sophia Geller · Mary Ginsburg · Annie Green · Herman Linke · Hercolino Lourenco · Edwin Markoff · Paula Rader · Judith Rattner · Ruben Robinson · Anna Rosenbloom · Edith Ross · Nathan Samet · Barney Schiff · Linda Schroeder · Elsie Shorr · Toby Slabosky · Herman Werner · Aaron Wise · Mayer Zucker

March 7

Pauline Botnick · Max Burnett · Goldie Craycroft · Rudolph Deitch · Geraldine Diftler · Debby Freeman · Anis Goelman · Albert Goodstein · Pearl Goodstein · Dora Green · Marvin Hecht · Norma Herz · Leah Herz · Benjamin Homer · Herman Hoor · Ruth Kaplan · Esther Kisilinsky · Louis Klinkowstein · David Leibowitz · Bessie Liberman · Yetta Nadler · Ida Nius · Oscar Pfeffer · Elsie Rattner · Morris Rattner · Sam Rosenblatt · Dorothy Schnoll · Joyce Simon · Esther Strauss · Melvin Sturm · Rae Weisberg · Leah Wise

March 14

Marion Abrams · Irving Bayer · Samuel Jacobs · Freda Jaffe · Paul Kanfer · Lillian Kanter · Monte Kaplan · Bernard Kronenberg · Elizabeth Limperis · Pearl Meyers · Caroline Nadler · Theodore Nius · Joslyn Presser · Sarah Robinson · Milton Ross · Max Rubenstein · Lazar Schwartz · Caroline Schwartz · Arnold Schwarzbart · Martin Shersky · Isaac Slovis · Kevin Tinley · Jacob Winick · Eli Yatsko · Sarah Zwick-Daum

March 21

Morris Bart · Gordon Brown · Mary Brown · Sam Chandler · Amoz Chernoff · Chris Colston · Matilda Davis · Ida Finestone · Elisabeth Gay · Fay Gluck · Marvin Gordon · Jacob Katz · Harold Leibowitz · Margaruite Mandell · Beatrice Owens · Casper Perelman · Rosalyn Raskin · David Renert · Lillian Richer · Melvin Robinson · Jack Rosenberg · Frances Schanowitz · Miles Siegel · Trudy Steinberg · Michael Tamaroff · Esther Thompson · Lillian Weinbren · Max Weinstein

March 28

Ben Bernstein · Julius Binder · Molly Chazen · Israel Cohen · Pearl Collins · Bessie Green · Dale Hasden · David Krauss · Samuel Levy · David Nathan · Ronald Rosenblatt · Yetta Rosenfield · Gertrude Roth · Abraham Scott · Isadore Wender

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- *French Cafe Dinner Buffet*
- *L'chaim at the Finish Line (21+)*

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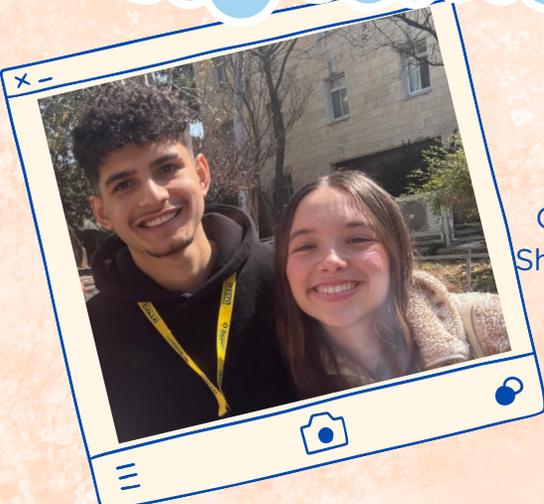


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Bernard and Barbara Winick Bernstein Archives of the Jewish Community of Knoxville and East Tennessee

The Way We Were in 1972: BBG Beau Dance



Some of the attendees at BBG's 1972 Beau Dance held in October.

Top row, left to right: Marla **Brody**, Janet **Goodfriend** (now **Avallone**), newly elected beau Marty **Iroff**, Debbie **Maisel**, Kathy **Shorr**, Susan **Chernoff** (now **Hilbuch**), Beth **Greene** (now **Perel**). Middle row: Shari **Goodstein** (now **Goodstein-Hartuv**), Dina **Saroff** (now **Mirsky**), Lisa **Cohen** (now **Cohn**), Heidi **Ross** (now **Hassenfeld**), outgoing beau Robin **Ross**, Anne (now uses middle name Stephanie) **Brown**. Bottom row: Debbie **Silverstein**, Barri **Bernstein**, Erika **Fine**. Thanks, The Marla **Brody** and Marty **Iroff** continue to live in Knoxville. Janet lives part-time in Maryville.

Kathy **Shorr**'s sister Susan Shorr **Brown**, Dina's sister Melanie Saroff **Collie**, Heidi and Robin's cousin Mary Linda **Schwarzbart**, Stephanie's cousin Ivan **Cooper**, Debbie **Silverstein**'s brother Larry, and Barri **Bernstein**'s mother Barbara still live in Knoxville. Thanks to Erika **Fine** for donating the photograph, to Larry and Debbie **Silverstein** for identification, and to the Archives's Center Menorah collection for confirmation of the date and the beaus. The Archives needs your photos. Send your photos of "The Way We Were" (identifying who, what, when, where) to archives@jewishknoxville.org, or contact the archivist at (865) 690-6343.



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More information to come via KJA Connections!