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Have an item you'd like to share? Need to reach the editor of L'CHAYIM? Send an email to LChayim36@gmail.com.

Participate, volunteer, recruit, donate!

By Sherri Zucker, Federation Co-President

I've been asked several times, "What does the Jewish Federation need?" People want to know how they can contribute to make our organization stronger and better able to fulfill our mission within the community.

I have four suggestions: participate, volunteer, recruit and donate.



■ Sherri Zucker

Participate
Your participation in Federation programs and projects is vital. Our Jewish Federation staff puts a great deal of effort and expertise into creating programs that are interesting, and projects that are meaningful. Your participation breathes life into the plans that have been made. And participation is contagious. When you participate in a Jewish Federation program or project, you're tacitly encouraging the participation of others.

Volunteer

Our volunteers are one of our best assets, and several Jewish Federation programs would not exist but for the volunteers. The Senior Lunch Bunch, food pantry, Jewish Film Festival, IsraelFest and holiday gift bags to seniors are a few of the areas where volunteers are critical. In 2019, Senior Lunch Bunch volunteers logged approximately 1,815 hours, and that's just one program! Volunteering is a great way to have a "hands on" experience and meet other active and engaged men and women. If you're able to, please consider giving of your time.

Recruit

Recruiting your friends (and family) is not something we often think about, but it's really important and has a big impact. When you bring a friend with you to a film festival movie, author event or senior lunch, it introduces that event and possibly our organization to someone

new. In addition, well-attended events are more positive, energizing and productive. Volunteer opportunities are also a wonderful way to get someone else involved and lighten the workload for everyone.

Donate

One of the most important things you can do is to make a donation to the Jewish Federation. Your donation may take the form of an annual gift, an endowment, a program sponsorship or a L'CHAYIM ad. You may also support Jewish Family Services with a gift to the Marcia Can Help indigent fund and the food pantry. Financial contribu-

tions are crucial for our fiscal stability, and they determine the scope of our outreach to the community. The generosity of your gifts has a direct impact on all that we do.

I want to thank everyone who participates, volunteers, recruits and donates. Each year, with your support, we come a little closer to realizing our vision of "A Jewish Community that is based on Jewish values such as Tzedakah (benevolence), Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) and K'lal Yisrael (taking responsibility for one another)." ▲

Be a "REEL" Supporter of the 2022 Jewish Film Festival. For complete information, see page 16.

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Sunday, January 9th
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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L'CHAYIM invites correspondence on subjects of interest to Jewish people. Partisan political opinions will not be published, but opinions on subjects affecting the Jewish community are welcome. All inquiries regarding copy for L'CHAYIM should be directed to the editor. All news material must be very clearly printed or typed (not in all-capital letters) and double-spaced. Electronic submissions encouraged. The editor reserves the right to edit for space and content.

Photographs should be clear, black-and-white or color prints. If you wish a photograph returned, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope of appropriate size.

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Tuesday, October 5**

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To strengthen and enrich the Jewish Community by providing and supporting philanthropic, educational and social service programs locally, in Israel and throughout the world.

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Program notes

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

I hope everyone feels renewed for the new year. I know it's a mitzvah to hear the shofar and I made sure I did, albeit virtually. I still feel blessed and invigorated for 5782.

I am a Libra. Libras are known for being charming, beautiful and well-balanced (not to toot my own horn, ok, well two out of three ain't bad). We thrive on making things orderly and aesthetically pleasing. We also crave balance, and we can be equally as self-indulgent as we are generous. Almost all of those traits fit me to a T. (Ask my co-workers and my family.)



■ **Debbie Sanford**

So you can imagine the internal struggles I am dealing with working on programming during a pandemic (again, for another season.) Will it be virtual or in person? Where it's in person, can we do it outside? How many people can we have? How many feet apart should they be? Should I decorate? Will people show, etc... In my mind, it's maddening! So bear with me, I am trying. Trying to create programs that you will enjoy, that will make you happy during and afterwards, and even something that may bring some laughter into our world. I know I need it.

So...we have partnered with a few other Jewish Federations in Florida to bring a fantastic virtual program into your homes on Monday, December 6 at 7:00 p.m. Have you heard of Sharon Geller? She is hilarious. I actually saw her in person back in New York in an Off-Broadway show called *Old Jews*

Telling Jokes. Have you seen it? It's so funny! Although I was the youngest person in the audience, I got every joke and probably laughed louder than anyone in the theater. So when I heard we had the opportunity to host her for an event, I jumped on it. I hope you tune in! It will be fun and I'd love to see you all laughing alongside me. You can visit our website to register, and you will receive a link in a confirmation email. There is no charge. It is our Hanukkah gift to you.

In October, we have Pam Jenoff as our Read the Book; Zoom the Author on the 5th at 10:00 a.m.; another great Out & About Film on the 19th; and at the end of the month, a virtual program, "Conversations with Jewish Authors." During this weeklong program, tune in each day at noon to spend an hour with some of our Jewish Book Council authors. Bring your lunch! We hand-picked some great books and they are all available to purchase at Copperfish Books in Punta Gorda or online at copperfishbooks.com. This year you will notice they are all women with issues relevant to us, our families and our history.

Other important dates to add to your calendar:

- ◆ Sunday, January 9 – Community Breakfast
- ◆ February 6-27 – Jewish Film Festival
- ◆ Thursday, March 24 – Author Event at Lakes Regional Library (It's about mahjong)
- ◆ Sunday, April 24 – Holocaust Remembrance Program
- ◆ Sunday, May 1 – ISRAELFEST 2022

For more info or to register, visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org.

Stay well! See you soon.▲

PJ Library Fall Festival

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

A few weeks ago, on a sunny Sunday at Lakes Park, PJ Library families got together for a Fall Festival. There were delicious snacks and books about the High Holidays. The kids, led by Jewish Federation staff member Jodi Cohen, made their own honey jars. The highlight of the event was the entertainment, the Critterman Live Animal Show.

The kids and their parents learned about animals, had the opportunity to hold and touch them, and took some fun pictures with a snake, tortoise, bird, bunny, lizard and alligator. I walked away from the snake demo, but happily let a cute cockatiel rest on my shoulder for a few minutes. Even some Jewish Federation board members who attended – Carolyn Gora and Valerie Franklin – got in on the fun. Valerie pet

Oreo the bunny, and Carolyn bravely let a very long snake rest on her shoulders. Lee Strauss, a volunteer, enjoyed the alligator the most. Everyone had a great time.

A postcard with upcoming family events was recently mailed to all PJ Library families, so please keep it handy. Our next event is a Make and Take at the Alliance for the Arts in November.

If you are interested in signing up for PJ Library books or sponsoring this program, please visit our website at www.JewishFederationLCC.org.▲

PJ Library is generously sponsored by the Roth Family Foundation, Harold Grinspoon and the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties.



The Jewish Federation Annual Campaign provides the resources to strengthen and enrich our Jewish community locally, in Israel and around the world.



This year please consider making an additional campaign contribution in honor or memory of a loved one. Because kindness is contagious, we would like to highlight your generosity in L'CHAYIM and notify personally those whom you honor. You may choose how your generosity is noted and how we share your mitzvah with the community.

TRIBUTES

In memory of Michael Golding - Aug. 2, 2021. He helped the needy.
from Marty Freling

In honor of all the work the Federation does
from Alan & Harriet S. Josephson

In memory of Howard Atkin's mother
from Steve & Toni Goodman

Changing your address? Keep L'CHAYIM coming to your home. Email loriramos@jfedlcc.org.

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Honoring a special person through a tribute gift to the Jewish Family Services of Lee & Charlotte Counties is a wonderful way to recognize a simcha or remember a loved one. Not only does your gift show your family and friends that you care, it goes to work helping Jews in need and building vibrant communities locally, in Israel and around the world.

Visit our website & Make a Gift
jewishfederationlcc.org/tribute-memorials

A personal Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties tribute card will be sent to the honoree or bereaved on your behalf, reflecting a personal message if you wish.



HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES SERVES



Local Jewish Education and Culture

- ✧ Community-wide Jewish Education and Culture Programs for all ages including the Jewish Film Festival, Jewish Author Events, Israel Celebrations, PJ Library, Israeli folk dancing, social groups, etc.
- ✧ **L'CHAYIM** published monthly and weekly newsletter to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues and events.
- ✧ Community Relations activities include monitoring anti-Semitism and issues of separation of church and state in the community.
- ✧ Israel Advocacy and Initiatives to strengthen local Jewish community ties with Israel. Holocaust Education through the Holocaust Museum of Southwest Florida to middle and high school students in the community.



Overseas

- ✧ Funding to the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) for full spectrum social services to Israel and Jewish communities in 60+ countries around the world.
- ✧ Partnership 2Gether relationship with the Hadera-Eiron Region in Israel.



Local Seniors Services

- ✧ Holiday baskets and teen visits to seniors and senior facilities for Rosh Hashanah, Hanukah and Passover.
- ✧ Seniors & Volunteers Lunch Program.
- ✧ Emerging and pressing needs related to senior housing, health and socialization.



Local Case Management Services

- ✧ Non-sectarian, individual and family outreach, information and referral services.
- ✧ Individual life coaching and support services.

Local Emergency Services

- ✧ Food Pantry and Publix food cards.
- ✧ Emergency financial assistance grants.
- ✧ Education and aid associated with natural disasters.



Local Community Engagement

- ✧ Addressing pressing community needs related to volunteerism, institutional collaborations and community assessment and planning.

Jewish Community Foundation

- ✧ An endowment that ensures the long-term financial base of charitable, social and educational programs in our community.
- ✧ Needs-based college scholarships and study scholarships in Israel.
- ✧ Projects and programs aimed at Jewish community enrichment.



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Jewish Family Services update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

Years ago, my boss rigged an employee Muscular Dystrophy Association fundraising competition so that I was the winner. My prize? The honor of wearing a billowy clown costume and a wild rainbow wig, painting my face and then visiting children in the hospital. My afternoon with the kids was intense, but the moment that stands out took place as I was leaving the hospital.

As I walked through the lobby on my way to the parking lot, people commented on my clown attire and gawked. A tall man and woman came up to me so the young girl that the man was holding could 'say hello to the clown lady.' The couple was handsome and well-dressed. Out of habit, I invented a story about their status and privilege, and then resented them as a result of my insta-assumptions that sprung up in one nanosecond. And then. And then the woman asked if I "happened to know where the children's oncology unit was?"

Everything changed in that moment. All of my *mishegas* about this family went out the window because I was reminded, yet again, that you never really know where someone has been or where someone might be going. Literally. You cannot discern what goes on inside someone's soul based on a designer raincoat or a chic haircut. You think you know what kind of life someone is leading by what's visible from the outside, but it is never that simple. Ever.

This took place 25 years ago and I think about it almost daily. We are two weeks into the Jewish new year and my prayers and lessons remain the same: Compassion.

Food insecurity, defined as the disruption of food intake or eating patterns because of lack of money and other resources, is real in our community. Jewish Family Services food pantry clients show up wearing everything from work uniforms to t-shirts. Some people are shy, aloof or friendly. People drive up in old cars, newer cars, trucks held together by wire. Every

single person is grateful to receive bags filled with peanut butter, rice, soup, cereal, beans, toothpaste, deodorant and toilet paper.

When people come to the pantry for the first time, we collect their contact information. We do not ask about annual income. I do ask if anyone's income was/is affected by Covid because some financial aid eligibility is based on that. Every month I hand out information about Covid vaccinations, free oil changes, job fairs, financial aid, mobile food pantries offering fresh food and anything else that might be helpful. I always ask people how they are doing, and I not only listen to what they say, but I look in their eyes and read their body language. It is a daily exercise in compassion.

I thank all of you: for keeping the food pantry stocked and helping clients keep their lights on and cars running; for taking an extra grocery tote with you to the store to fill up and drop off; for thinking of JFS when you see the BOGO bins and for the cases of food from your Costco runs. Thank you for ordering toiletries online and having them delivered. Thank you for honoring your loved ones with donations to the Marcia Can Help fund.

Speaking of gratitude, we are ever-thankful for the Jewish Family Services volunteers who work hard to keep our small-but-mighty food pantry running smoothly and for reaching out to our elders. A special shout out to Gail Mishler for creating an online database of food pantry clients. We are now paperless! Big bubbly thanks go out to Arnie Obstein, Barbara Gribin, Carolyn Gora, Debbie Feinberg, Doreen Kostel, Gail Mishler, Harriet Lipschutz, Jodi Engelman, Joyce Rosinger, Judith Yevick, Katie Keen, Linda Silver, Rachelle Luna, Ruth Lefberg, Samantha Guterman, Sara Hersch, Suzanne Orkin, Tracey Seigel, Trudy Barch and Valerie Franklin.

Friendly Visitor Program

In 1975, my parents and I heard a Rosh Hashanah sermon that immediately became Cohen shtick. The rabbi talked about "Shema," as in "Shema Yisrael," and how important it is to hear, to listen. Over the years, our conversations often began, "Shema, I need to tell you something," or simply "Shema."

The Friendly Visitor Program is

about the power of Shema. It is about calling or Zooming with one of the Jewish elders in our community and listening. What's true is that some of our elders don't have any family, aren't in touch with their family or are feeling isolated and lonely.

It's been 18 months since our last senior luncheon, which I described as a cross between a Sweet 16 party,

with people who would like to have a Friendly Visitor.

Aging with Attitude

Senior Planet from AARP is a phenomenal resource that uses technology to change the way we age. Senior Planet (seniorplanet.org) offers courses, programs and activities to help seniors learn new skills, save money, get in shape and make new friends. Many

JFS NEEDS

From time to time Jewish Family Services clients need housing, storage, household items, etc. While the Federation does not have the capacity to keep these items on hand, JFS NEEDS, published in L'CHAYIM and in our weekly newsletter, will list items as the needs arise in the hope that some in our community have the resources on hand to donate.

CURRENTLY:

- Looking for a housemate or rooming situation.
- Does anyone have a car they don't use or need?

Call 239-481-4449, x 2 or email jodicohen@jfedlcc.org

a Bat Mitzvah and a wedding. There was such frivolity and joy as the volunteers and participants mingled together. People loved noshing, kibbitzing and learning together. If you are able to choreograph your time to free up 15 minutes on a regular basis, why not reach out to someone? Please be in touch with me and I will connect you

classes are free and range from Digital Storytelling to Meditation to Everything Zoom. The website has book reviews, a sex advice columnist, current articles about ways to engage with technology and many other features. You can sign up to receive weekly emails that are fun and informative.▲

A Night of LIGHTS & LAUGHTER with Sharon Geller's



Monday
December 6
2021 • 7pm
Via Zoom

A Talmudic Take on Comedy

Made Possible by the
Arthur and Beatrice
Michaels' Endowment
Fund for Adult Senior
Programs and Services

About the importance of laughter in Judaism with examples taken from the Torah, the Talmud and including, of course, jokes!



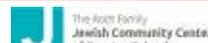
SHARON GELLER is a comedic actress who has appeared on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE 4 times and on THE TODAY SHOW as "Lucy." Since 2012, Sharon has performed in the national touring company of the off-Broadway hit "OLD JEWS TELLING JOKES."

For more information
contact Jeremy Lisitza
at jlisitza@jfedlcc.org
or 941.343.2113

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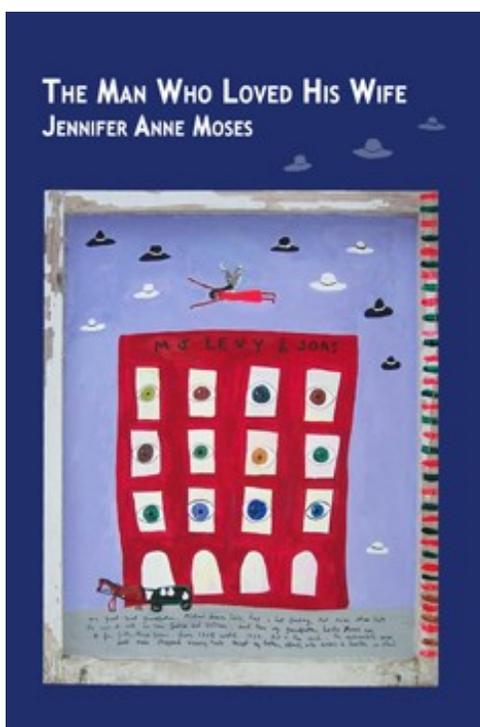
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| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
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| Jodi Engelman | Katie Keen | Linda Silver |
| Suzanne Orkin | Tracey Seigel | Harriet Lipschutz |
| Trudy Barch | Ruth Lefberg | Valerie Franklin |
| Barbara Gribin | Joyce Rosinger | |
| Sara Hersch | | |

CONVERSATIONS WITH JEWISH AUTHORS

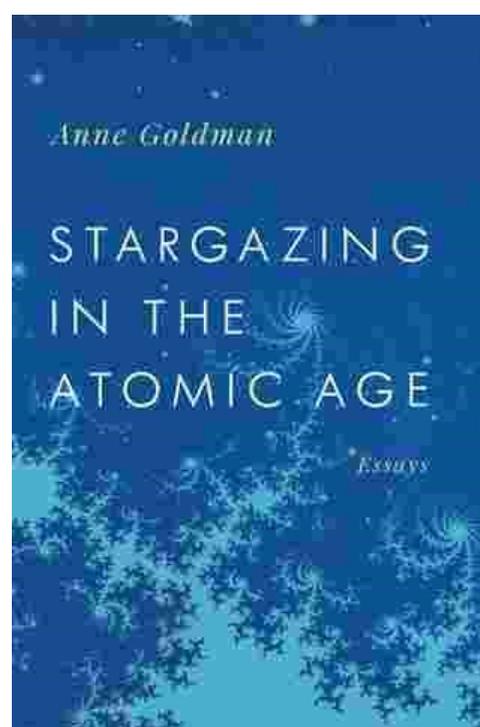
VIRTUAL EDITION

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Zoom from the comfort of your Living Room!



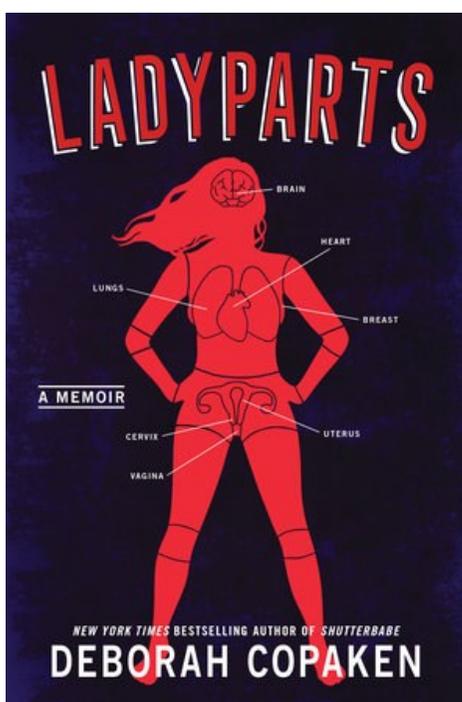
October 25th

Whether in Tel Aviv, suburban New Jersey, or the Deep South, the characters who populate the pages of *THE MAN WHO LOVED HIS WIFE* grapple with God, their loved ones, fate, death, hope, Hitler, transcendence, and the 4000 year old history of Judaism.



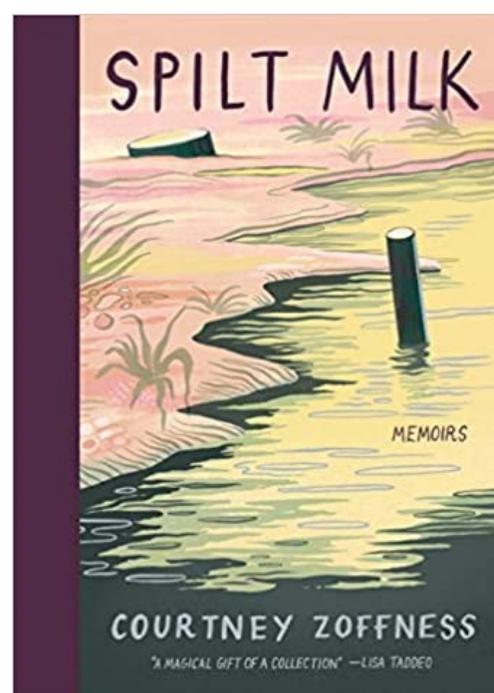
October 26th

During World War II, with apocalypse imminent, a group of well-known Jewish scientists and artists sidestepped despair by challenging themselves to solve some of the most difficult questions posed by our age.



October 27th

A frank, witty, and dazzlingly written memoir of one woman trying to keep it together while her body falls apart. Side-splittingly funny one minute, a freak horror show the next, quintessentially American, *Ladyparts* is an era-defining memoir for our time.



October 28th

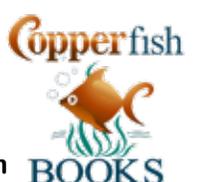
What role does a mother play in raising thoughtful, generous children?

Spilt Milk is an intimate, bracing, and beautiful exploration of vulnerability and culpability.

October 25 - October 28 at 12:00 P.M.



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Tickets are \$5 or \$18 for the series & go on sale September 13, 2021

Visit: JewishFederationLCC.org/virtual-events for more information

A prayer for our time

By Brian Simon, Federation Past-President

Dear God,
Someone I care about is sick.
I'm scared, and the only thing
I believe I can do to help them heal is
to make a plea to You.



■ Brian Simon

That's the essence of prayer right there, isn't it? Recognizing that we don't have the power to make a change and hoping that God might.

I've been adding a lot of people to our synagogue's "Mi Shebeirach list" recently. The causes have been cancer, Covid, even a liver transplant. Every Shabbat, in synagogues across the country, we pause to offer a prayer on behalf of the sick. It's a relatively new ritual that has become ubiquitous because so many of us find it personally meaningful and also because of a very powerful song.

"When I was young, the *Mi Shebeirach* was said between rabbi and patients. No big deal about it," Rabbi Michael Schorin, Lee Health chaplain, told me. "As the spiritual world changed, in Judaism it became more popular. And then all of a sudden Debbie Friedman wrote the music. I think the music popularized the text. Then it took off."

"She made it a staple of Shabbat services," said Rabbi Nicole Luna of Temple Beth El. "It's a hugely meaningful part of the service."

Friedman co-wrote the song "Mi Shebeirach" with Rabbi Drorah Setel. According to Setel, they were asked to create it in 1987 for a special ceremony, "as a way to accept emotional and spiritual pain while still embracing life. In other words, as a path to healing." The recorded version was released in 1989.

What's interesting is that the healing prayer was not a meaningful part of services before. Rabbi Schorin said the prayer "wasn't firmly fixed in my knowledge base" when he started hospital work in the 1980s.

Rabbi Marc Sack of Temple Judea recalled sometime around the year 2000 when his congregants in Tampa suggested having people come say the names of the sick under a hand-held canopy during the Shabbat service. "I thought it would be a big interruption in the service. I didn't think anyone was going to come and stand underneath it, and I was totally wrong,"

Rabbi Sack said. "People were *thronging* to stand underneath that canopy."

The origins of the prayer date back to Babylonia, according to Rabbi Amy Perlin, who wrote her rabbinic thesis on it. Generally, Jews are not allowed to ask for things from God on Shabbat. It took until the 12th century for rabbis to allow *Mi Shebeirach* to be said for individuals, and another thousand years for it to reach today's level of resonance.

May The One who blessed our ancestors bring blessing and healing to _____ . May the Holy One mercifully restore him/her to health and vigor, speedily granting him/her a complete healing – healing of the soul and healing of the body...

The healing prayer has broken through in a society that is trying to negotiate a widening divide between rationality and spirituality.

"We Jews can be analytical, scientific, rational and have a relationship with God at the same time," Rabbi Sack said. "Sometimes we're one, and sometimes we're the other. We live with the tension, and I think that's fundamental to the Jewish way of thinking."

As much as I appreciate the prayer, I have to confess that it feels a little *not* Jewish to ask God to heal someone, especially when their condition is terminal. Friedman suffered from a chronic neurological condition for 20 years before her death in 2011.

Although there may be scientific evidence to support the role of prayer in healing, Friedman's intent was not to deny the reality of physical suffering.

"You can't take the pain away, for God's sake. You can't pretend it's not there," she told Jonathan Mark of *The Jewish Week*. "You're going to have these afflictions for however long we live and we're going to have to learn how to manage for as long as we live... like Jacob wrestling with the angel only to walk away limping but healed. Yes, I'm injured, I'm hurting, I'm broken, but it's only my body, my soul is whole. That's healing. It's not throwing away the crutches."

The twist of the song is that they didn't just ask for healing as in the traditional prayer, but for "a renewal" of body and spirit. And they asked for agency. Although we may feel helpless, we want to have a role in the process.

Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing...

"If you're praying for courage and strength, prayer gives you hope,"

Rabbi Luna told me. "It focuses on what's most deeply in your heart. I'm not going to ignore the reality that plenty of times we pray for healing and it doesn't happen. Knowing someone is praying for you gives you strength."

In 2016, Gila Silverman of the University of Arizona published a study of how Reform and Conservative Jews in Tucson use the *Mi Shebeirach*. "The use of Hebrew, being with other Jews in a synagogue setting, and using a prayer from the traditional liturgy catalyzes a reconnection to Judaism that feels both personally and traditionally authentic. What's at stake for the Jewish community is the meaning of being Jewish and the relationship of the individual Jews to the collective."

In 2020, Silverman wrote again about the *Mi Shebeirach* in connection with the pandemic. The prayer "reminds us that it is up to us to watch out

for one another. Traditionally, you do not say the *Mi Shebeirach* for yourself; you say it for someone else. It is one of the many ways we can connect to each other, prompting us to reach out in whatever ways we can to ensure that we help each other to stay healthy and, when needed, that we help each other continue moving toward healing – physically, emotionally and spiritually."

"At the end of the day," said Rabbi Luna, "I believe that love and concern and human connection – that's what's real. That's what we have control over. We're saying (the prayer) *with* you. To be with someone in their pain is such a gift. It's telling somebody 'I care about you.'"

And let us say, Amen.▲
Brian Simon is former president of the Federation. His views are not necessarily those of the Federation or its board.



HotWorks.org 26th
Estero Fine Art Show™
October 23 & 24, 2021
At JetBlue Park
11500 Fenway South Dr, Fort Myers, FL

Sue Ayala, Glass



HotWorks.org 5th
Naples Fine Art Show™
October 30 & 31, 2021
At Naples Italian-American Foundation
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Letters must include the writer's full name, full address and daytime phone. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. We reserve the right to edit for length and/or accuracy. Letters do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of L'CHAYIM nor its advertisers. We cannot acknowledge or publish every letter received.

I can't be 55

By Keith Grossman

In September, I turned 55 years old. It doesn't seem that old, but frankly, it's a lot of time.

Do you have some time to think about time with me? Fifty-five years.



■ Keith Grossman

Twenty-thousand seventy-five days. Four-hundred eighty-one thousand eight-hundred hours. That's a lot of time. How do you measure a life? (Yes, I'm trying out for the cast of *Rent*.)

Salvador Dali thought about time. He saw it as omnipresent and having a mastery over us. He portrayed it as Camembert cheese melting in the sun.

Now, I want you to know, I don't normally discuss age. I don't find "age" humor especially funny. After all, how many different cards can Hallmark create showing a cake being devoured by an inferno of candles? I stopped laughing when I was eight. That was a long time ago.

However, it's important to recognize time can be a fickle friend. When you first start out in life, you are eager for experiences and adventures. But you have to wait. At some point, you want to be respected like the adults you know. But you have to wait. You are told, "Give it time." You are taught that you can only gain experience with time, and any of your ideas have to

stand the test of time.

I thought a lot about time when I was younger. I couldn't wait to turn 16, so I could drive by myself. I couldn't wait to turn 18, so I could be treated legally as an adult. I couldn't wait to turn 19, so I could legally drink alcohol. Then, Florida played a cruel joke and changed the drinking age to 21, three months before I turned 19. I had friends who were grandfathered in. For them, age didn't bring wisdom, but it sure brought alcohol.

But then suddenly, you feel like you're running out of time. You realize time waits for no one. You have to make time for the things you didn't have time to do before. Make the most of your time. It's crunch time.

And, of course, time isn't guaranteed. Time catches up with you. You could be out of time tomorrow.

Some people believe the amount of time they have is predetermined by God. That we each have a clock counting down the number of our days. If you could only walk around with this clock above your head, displaying what's left of your time. On second thought, it would probably be a sort of Blind Man's Bluff, where everyone else can see the countdown of your time and you can't.

As I accelerated toward 55, I was like that 15-year-old kid again. I thought about all the benefits that would come with my new age. It was about time.

I could move into a 55 and over community! No kids to yell at to get off my lawn. Whose got that kind of time?

I realized tons of big-name stores offer discounts. I was excited to discover a website called Biggest List of Senior Discounts. I'm still too young for many, but hey, I can shop at Bealls and Goodwill.

There are also senior discounts at restaurants. I can drown my 55 blues in endless cups of coffee at McDonald's. I'm prepared to attack a stack of pancakes at Perkins. I'm thrilled to see IHOP appreciates a man of my duration.

Probably most importantly, I realized that with age comes the ability to say whatever I want. With age comes a sharp tongue. I look forward to shredding a person's ego faster than those chefs at a Kobe steakhouse. And who's going to stop me? I'll do that Edward Scissor-tongue thing, and they'll be like Jack Nicholson at the end of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

I'm sure you have thought about some of these things before, but I hope some of my thoughts arrived in the nick of time. ▲

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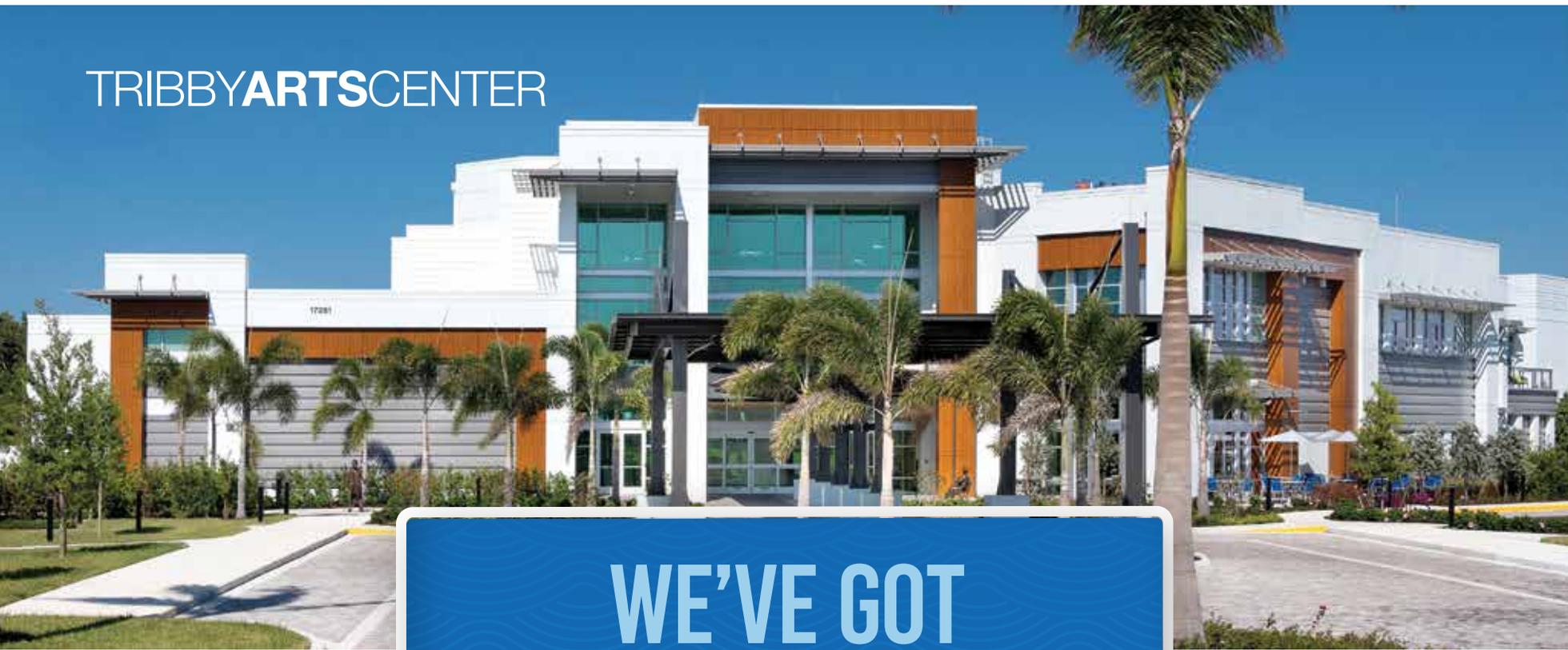
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Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

Now that Fall is here, school is underway and the Museum is ready to welcome students and teachers back for field trips, virtual lessons, installations of our "PopUp Museum" displays at school libraries and much more.

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the founding of our Museum, we hope you'll join with us in a year of special programming. We are so blessed to have had the many volunteers and donors who came together to turn a middle school project into a nonprofit organization that has served nearly half a million people since it began. Today, seasoned and new volunteers continue to fill me with gratitude for their dedication, resilience and generosity to



■ Susan Suarez

provide Holocaust education during a year filled with challenges. We have many interesting programs planned for the coming year, both in person and on Zoom. Here are just a few in which we hope you will participate:

October: "Movies That Matter" Zoom Discussion Series

For the last several years, the "Movies That Matter" series has provided an opportunity for the community to discuss national and international human rights issues that impact Southwest Florida. This year we will address the issues of genocide education, homelessness and farmworker rights. We'll provide you with information on viewing the three selected documentary films prior to each of the scheduled Zoom discussions. All discussions will include a Q&A with experts who will explain the broad issues and how local action can make a difference. Audience members are encouraged to submit comments and questions in the "Chat" section.

Please note: Reservations are required to receive the Zoom links, which are sent 24 hours prior to the start of the programs. You can RSVP for the whole series or for individual discussions on our website at HMCEC.org. The series is free of charge and donations are welcome. Sponsorships are also available. Please visit our website for more information.

Here is the program schedule. All Zoom discussions will take place from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (U.S. and Canada) on the dates noted below.

Quo Vadis, Aida

Date: Wednesday, October 13

Discussion Issue: Genocide

Food Chains - The Revolution in America's Fields

Date: Wednesday, October 20

Discussion: Farmworker Rights

The Florida Project

Date: Wednesday, October 27

Discussion Issue: Homelessness

November: New Special Exhibit and Kristallnacht Commemoration

We are excited to present a new special exhibit in the Estelle and Stuart Price Gallery. "Vedem Underground in Terezin" explores the little known but brave publication created and published by the teenage prisoners in the Terezin/Theresienstadt camp. It will be on display through February 28, 2022. The annual community commemoration of Kristallnacht, in partnership with the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue of Collier County, will take place on Sun-

day, November 7. We are also planning a Volunteer Appreciation/Welcome Back event in November. Additional details will be available in next month's column.

December: The Luncheon

Join with us on Thursday, December 2 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for the kickoff our 20th anniversary celebration, The Luncheon. It will take place at the Arthrex One Event Center and include the premiere of the new short play *Remember - The Story of Abe Price*. The play honors the late Holocaust survivor and Co-Founder of the Museum. It was created in partnership with Gulfshore Playhouse's Education Department for use in middle school Holocaust Education programs.

With the new year, we will have many more interesting programs, including two docent lecture series, a new special exhibit, "Letters from Westerbork," and a special 20th anniversary Triumph event. We hope you'll join us!

All of us at the Museum are saddened by the loss of Museum member Phyllis Maizlish, who was a strong supporter of our mission. Phyllis and her husband Irv were very active in the Naples community. After Irv passed away, Phyllis moved to Arizona to be closer to family. Our condolences to her daughters Leslie, Shelly and Jody, and son Scott and their families.

I hope to see you soon at the Museum (or on Zoom).▲

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Friendly Visitor Program

(virtual for now)



The Federation decided to postpone the Senior Lunch Program due to the Covid resurgence. However, we still want to stay in touch with our Jewish seniors!

We're inviting volunteers to **call or Zoom with one or two people on a regular basis**. Stories and connection are what make the world go 'round. Make a new friend and perform a mitzvah at the same time!



Interested in the Friendly Visitor Program?
Call or email Jodi Cohen: 239.481.4449, x2
jodicohen@jfedlcc.org

Estero Fine Art Show October 23 & 24

HotWorks.org's 26th Estero Fine Art Show on October 23 & 24 takes place outdoors at JetBlue Park in Fort Myers (located 1.9 miles east of I-75 off Daniels Parkway), an easy-to-find venue with plenty of easy parking, and winter home of the Boston Red Sox! The show features quality fine art and crafts created by award-winning artists and juried by art professionals. All artwork is original and personally handmade by the artist who is present at the show. There is \$1,500 in Professional Artist Awards with criteria based on originality, technique/execution and booth appearance. You will find something for everyone, in all price ranges.

To allow for Covid safety precautions, the show is held outdoors with plenty of room for social distancing.

If you attend the art show, be sure to visit Jewish artists Myra Burg and Liz Cummings. They each create art using very different media. Liz has mixed media paint on canvas, while Myra's is wrapped fiber over hollow core. Both women display a *Yiddishe neshama* (Jewish soul), in that each is first concerned with the other.

While some of Myra's members perished during the Holocaust, others survived. One, in particular, was among the founding members of the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. Myra's parents started the Flatbush Park Jewish Community Center and Synagogue in Brooklyn, New York, including finding the property and the rabbi, who, in his late 90s, is close to her family to this

day – since the early 1950s.

Some Hebrew language skills still reside in Myra's head from Hebrew school, she may have a small quiver of incomplete idiomatic Yiddish, and can



Myra Burg's media: wrapped fiber over hollow core imitate her grandfather's Yiddish accent flawlessly. She makes a darn good challah, relies on her cousin's brisket and will either tell a reasonably good joke or stand up against injustice as the situation dictates.

She is a licensed architect who has taken on her own form of art for decades. Collectors include the Warren Buffet Foundation, Bill Clinton, Steve Jobs, the City of Beverly Hills, Wells Fargo and the Bellevue Museum.

Liz's great grandfather was Philip Wattenburg, a financier who lived at Sutton Place in New York. He loved Israel and spent his time traveling back and forth from New York. He endowed the Einstein Institute of Mathematics

to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The building was erected in 1927-1928 with a gift from Wattenburg. It housed the Institute until the Hebrew University lost access to Mount Scopus in 1948. After the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, and the university's subsequent return to Mount Scopus, the building became part of the Estelle & Eugene Ferkauf Science Teaching Centre.

Please be sure to say hello to Myra and Liz at the show. They would love to tell you more!

HotWorks' associated 501(c)(3) nonprofit arm, Institute for the Arts & Education, focuses on visual arts, cultural diversity, community enrichment and

fostering art education among youth. IA&E integrates a Youth Art Competition within the show, a unique program that encourages students ages 5-13 or grades K-8 to enter their original art that is publicly displayed the entire weekend. On Sunday at 3:00 p.m., \$250 Youth Art Awards are presented as young artists are exposed to the rules and entrepreneurship of doing art shows for a living.

The Estero Fine Art Show at JetBlue Park in Fort Myers takes place on October 23 & 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. There is free admission; a \$5 parking fee supports IA&E and helps to pay the costs of producing the show. ▲



Liz Cummings and Myra Burg with their art

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Collier/Lee Hadassah announces The Symposium on Women's Health and Wellness

Collier/Lee Hadassah announces The Symposium on Women's Health and Wellness, "Body, Mind and Spirit." The virtual program will be presented as a webinar on Wednesday, December 1 from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

In this interactive, educational and fun program, participants will learn many aspects of self-care and the important inter-relationship of body, mind and spirit.

"This program is an outreach to follow Hadassah's commitment to women's health, and builds upon Hadassah's focus on healthcare and med-

ical research in Jerusalem," said Chapter President Joyce Toub. "Geared to the community as well as Hadassah members, participants will hear from experts in their fields about topical issues, and can join the conversations through Question & Answer opportunities."

The Symposium presents Keynote Speaker Dr. Marc Agronin, addressing "The End of Old Age, Living a Longer, More Purposeful Life." Dr. Agronin is Senior Vice President of Behavioral Health and Chief Medical Officer for Miami Jewish Health's MIND Institute, providing a wide range of services

for individuals with memory changes, Alzheimer's disease and all other neurocognitive disorders. He is a leading expert on Alzheimer's & Geriatric Mental Health, as well as a sought-after speaker and author of 10 books and numerous articles.

A panel discussion on "Body, Mind & Spirit" brings together local experts to discuss the importance of "Emotional Health, Care for the Caregivers, and Nutrition for Women's Heart Health." Join with Judith Belmont, psychotherapist, consultant, mental health author and moti-



Dr. Marc Agronin

ational speaker; Dr. Jaclynn Faffer, President/CEO of Naples Senior Center, who has been a consultant, professor at academic institutions and author; and Dee Harris, a Registered Dietitian-Nutritionist, Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist, Certified Diabetes Educator as well as owner of D-Signed Nutrition, offering personalized health consulting.

Other highlights include "Interludes" on The Importance of Movement, The Power of Laughter and The Joy of Music, all contributing to health and wellness.

To register for the event and receive the link, email Carol Weisberg at carolw@tetragonia.com. ▲

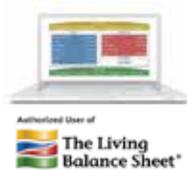
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Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old

The saga of the purple coat: Do resentments hold back your happiness?

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

When I was a little girl, one of my greatest adventures was shopping with my mother. We were a struggling immigrant family, but my mother found creative ways to distract from situations that emphasized how little we had. Her endeavors worked for a while, but as I got a little older it was no longer fun to go to Goodwill or the Salvation Army and “shop” for clothes.



Rabbi Barbara Aiello

What used to be a great adventure, riding with my Mama all over Pittsburgh on the streetcars, now became an ordeal of great embarrassment. I started making excuses about why I couldn't go, and after a while my mother stopped asking me. She'd just go alone.

I remember one winter when she came back from a “shopping trip.” She had found, she said, something brand new. “Look, a new winter coat!”

And what a coat it was. Deep purple wool with a leopard collar, leopard cuffs and six leopard covered buttons, big as 50-cent pieces. A coat fit for a queen, I thought. And putting aside all

of my uneasiness, I dressed myself up extra nice and wore my new coat to school.

That afternoon, on the playground, one of the “cool” girls came over to me. I was flabbergasted and I thought, “This coat must really say something. Look who's noticing me.” And notice she did. From halfway across the playground she shouted, “That's my coat.”

“Is not!” I responded with great indignation. My mother bought it for me yesterday. It's brand new and it's mine.”

“Well, it might be yours now but it's not brand new. Look inside on the label. My initials are right there.”

So sure was I that my mother had finally bought me something new, I undid the beautiful leopard buttons.

That's when the “cool” girl told me to look down along the hem. She shouted, “See that label? My Nana embroidered my initials right there. Go on, look.”

By now a group of about one hundred girls crowded around me. OK, it wasn't a hundred, it was more like six or seven, but it seemed like a hundred. I couldn't stand it. I looked down and there were the letters R.W. stitched into the label of my coat. I was humiliated and I can still hear them laughing.

For weeks I was furious, and I

blamed my mother. How could she do this to me? For several days I sulked, cried and gave her the silent treatment. My mother left me alone to blow off steam. Today I cringe when I think of how she took a lot of guff and ingratitude from me when she was doing the best she could.

Have we allowed these memories to stay stuck inside us, affecting our actions and eventually defining our personality?

I am now in my 70s and my purple coat story happened more than 60 years ago, yet I'm still talking about it. Isn't it time to just let it go? For if the New Year is anything at all, it is about new

Rabbi Barbara Aiello's most popular columns are now published in her new book, *Aging Jewishly*, available on Amazon. It makes a great gift!

But the New Year question of the day has less to do with my mother and more to do with me. Because if the story of the purple coat has any meaning at all, it is this:

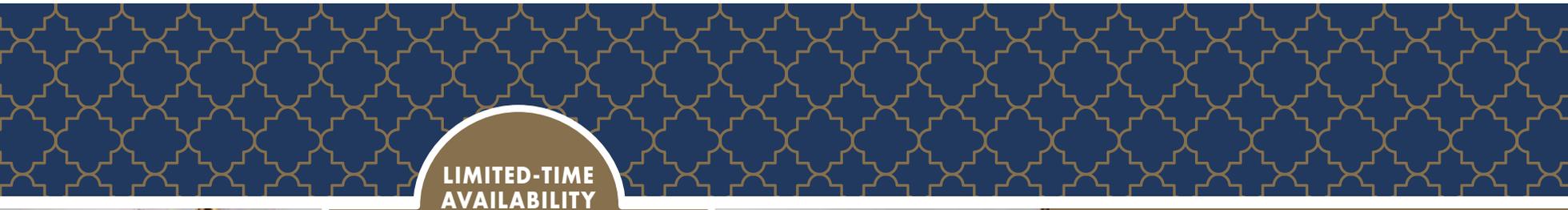
What do we do with those humiliations, slights, embarrassments and horrible moments that we carry with us for years? What do we do with the bad memories? Do we think about them, hang on to them and never let them go? Do we let our own purple coat stories fester into resentments that can last a lifetime?

Are there situations where someone hurt us that have become vivid memories of what someone did or didn't do?

beginnings, and new beginnings can only happen when we leave the old baggage behind.

Imagine our parents and grandparents trying to decide what to take with them to America. If any of them wanted to take every single thing they owned, they would have never left Krakow, Odessa, Prague, Vienna or Rome. My family members carried only two suitcases and a shopping bag, but because they were willing to leave the past behind, they had the emotional space necessary to start something new.

It's not easy but it can be done. The High Holy Days cycle has passed, but *continued on next page*



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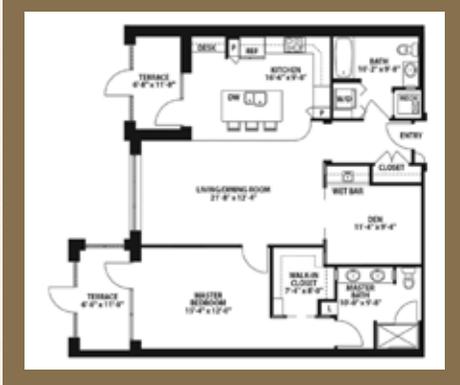
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What's the right wine temperature?

By The Wine Whisperer

It's an eternal and persistent question. There are dozens of factors that affect the way a wine tastes, such as where the grapes were grown, when they were harvested and much more. We can't control any of that, but we do have a choice about the shape of the wine glass (which very much affects the flavor perceptions) and the temperature.



■ Jerry Greenfield

It gets a bit more sticky if you keep the wine for months or years before opening. As you probably know, the idea of "cellar temperature" is important in wine storage. For long-term preservation, it's around 50-55 degrees, and 70% humidity, which keeps the corks moist and helps prevent leakage.

In my experience, most people seem to serve reds at room temperature and whites a bit chilled. But how chilled? And is room temperature the best way to get the most flavor out of that bottle of Cabernet or Sauvignon Blanc?

The fact is that temperature does matter. Many experts have sampled the same wine at a range of service temperatures, and the difference becomes clear. It's well known in the wine world that most people serve their whites too cold and their reds too warm. So let's clear this up right now. Whites should be around 55 degrees, and reds around 65 degrees. If you've put some leftover wine in the refrigerator, warm it up by letting it stand for a while. If you're in a hurry, put it in a glass, cup it with both hands and swirl it gently. I know of some very impatient people who subject their too-cold wine to a short zap in the microwave, and you can try that if you like, but don't tell me about it.

However, you can tell me – and I hope you do – how you enjoy our weekly discoveries, like these:

Villa San-Juliette Chorum Red Reserve 2016 (\$30) – The winemakers in Paso Robles are an unconventional lot, and this red blend proves it. There are six different grapes in the bottle, including Petite Sirah, Zinfandel, Grenache and even a bit of Alicante

Bouschet. The 18 months it spends in French and American oak give vanilla and coffee notes to the predominant blackberry and black cherry. WW 92

McIntyre Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands 2017 (\$38) – The wine region around Santa Barbara is a top area for Pinot Noir cultivation, and this is an excellent example of the style. There is characteristic strawberry on the nose and palate, backed up by notes of baked fruit. The tannins are nicely rounded on the persistent finish. WW 90

Mondavi Chardonnay Napa Valley 2017 (\$19) – The Mondavi label needs no introduction. This flavor profile is very traditional, because it's barrel fermented and aged on the lees. This production technique imparts a particular richness to the mouthfeel, and dense, juicy flavors of peach and pear, along with a bit of bright lemon acidity. WW 88

Le Calle di Catocci Poggio d'Oro Montecucco Sangiovese 2016 (\$30) – From central Tuscany, this wine is produced entirely from organic grapes and offers flavors and aromas that are bold, intense and concentrated. It delivers prominent flavors of black plum and black berries, along with notes of vanilla and spice from the 18 months of oak aging. A biggie. WW 89

Ask the Wine Whisperer

What is sediment in wine? What causes it? Is it harmful? – Pamela F., Punta Gorda

First of all, wine sediment is a normal result of the wine sitting in the bottle. In whites, you'll see little clear sparkling crystals composed of tartaric acid. They're the result of chilling the wine and they're harmless. In reds, the sediment is mainly leftover fruit solids from the grape skins, seeds and stems. You can get rid of them by pouring the wine through a fine strainer. Many funnels used for decanting also have a fine screen inside them for exactly this purpose.▲

Jerry Greenfield is the Wine Whisperer, a wine author, educator and consultant. He is Creative Director of Greenfield Media & Marketing, and an adjunct professor in the wine program at Florida Gulf Coast University. His book, Ask the Wine Whisperer, is available on his website. Read his blog at www.winewhisperer.com.

Rabbi Barbara Aiello...continued from previous page

there is still time to think about our own "purple coats" – those nasty upsets and resentments that we've been carrying around for years.

My mother hadn't planned to harm me. That girl with the R.W. initials didn't set out to hurt me and, even if she did, it happened more than a half century ago.

The recovery community defines resentment as the act of reliving all those unfortunate conflicts of yesterday. We allow them to weigh heavily on our hearts, taking up precious emotional space and keeping us from living in the

moment.

As the sound of the shofar fades and the taste of the honey cake recedes into memory, we can move forward into a new year if we become willing to leave those slights, hurts and negative memories behind.▲

Rabbi Barbara Aiello served Aviva Senior Living in Sarasota as resident rabbi for 10 years. She now lives and works in Italy where she is rabbi of Italy's first Reconstructionist synagogue. You may reach her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com.

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Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Contributing Columnist

Editor's note: Persons in BOLD CAPS are deemed by Nate Bloom to be Jewish for the purpose of the column. Persons identified as Jewish have at least one Jewish parent and were not raised in a faith other than Judaism – and don't identify with a faith other than Judaism as an adult. Converts to Judaism, of course, are also identified as Jewish.

Ghoul and Gangsters, A Royal Musical and More

The pandemic has long affected the production and/or release of films. Vaccines and safety protocols have eased the effect of the pandemic, and this month sees the largest release of films in over a year. However, the number of new "scripted" series (broadcast or streaming) is still way down compared to pre-pandemic Octobers.

The Addams Family 2, an animated film, opens in theaters on Friday, October 1. Because of the Delta variant upsurge, it is also available via streaming rental the same day. Of course, there is a long line of *Addams Family* projects since the 1960s. This film is a sequel to a hit 2019 animated film. The returning (voice) cast includes **NICK KROLL**, 43, as Uncle Fester, and **BETTE MIDLER**, 75, as Grandmama.

The Many Saints of Newark, a film, is a prequel to *The Sopranos*, the hit HBO series. It will be released to theaters on October 1, and will begin streaming that day on HBO Max for 30 days. The film, set in the late 1960s, was co-written by *Sopranos* creator David Chase (who is Italian-American) and **LAWRENCE KONNER**, 70 (who wrote many *Sopranos* scripts).

The late James Gandolfini played the series' star character, Mafia family head Tony Soprano. Michael Gandolfini, 22, James's son, plays Tony as a young man (about 18) in the film. **JON BERNTHAL**, 44, plays Tony's gangster father, "Johnny Boy" Soprano, and **COREY STOLL**, 45, plays "Junior" Soprano, Johnny's gangster brother and ally. The role of Silvio Dante, Tony's right-hand man in the HBO series, is played by **JOHN MAGARO**, 38. Magaro was raised in his mother's Jewish faith.

The Guilty had a limited theater opening on Friday, September 24 and will begin streaming on Netflix on October 1. It is a crime thriller. **JAKE GYLLENHAAL**, 40, stars as a troubled police detective demoted to 911 operator who scrambles to save a distressed caller.

Diana: The Musical will also begin streaming on Netflix on October 1. It's based on the life of Princess Diana. This film began as a stage production that premiered in San Diego in 2019. It began previews on Broadway in March 2020, but closed because of the pandemic. It's now set to open on Broadway this November. In the summer of 2020, a stage production of the show was filmed

without an audience (that's what Netflix will stream).

DAVID BRYAN, 59, co-wrote the show (lyrics and music). Born David Bryan Rashbaum, he's the keyboardist for the famous band Bon Jovi. He was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame with the rest of the band. The cast includes **JUDY KAYE**, 72, as Queen Elizabeth II, and as Barbara Cartland (a romance novelist critical of Diana). Kaye, a Tony winner, has an amazing voice and range, and often sings opera, too.

Opening on Friday, October 8 is *Mass*. The basic plot: the parents of victims of a mass school shooting meet the parents of the shooter. This film won't get a big theater opening. It co-stars busy British Jewish actor **JASON ISAACS**, 58 (Lucius Malfoy in *Harry Potter*). Opening on Friday, October 15 is *Halloween Kills*. You guessed it – it's another Michael "the monster" Myers movie and **JAMIE LEE CURTIS**, 62, again co-stars.

Dune and *French Dispatch* both open in theaters on Friday, October 22. *Dune* is the third attempt to make a good movie out of the famous 1965 sci-fi novel of the same name by Frank Herbert. **TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET**, 25, has a starring role as the overseer of a dry planet with a valuable product. *Dune* will also be released on HBO Max on October 22 and stream for 30 days.

French Dispatch is a comedy with three different plotlines, all connected to the closing of a French newspaper's Kansas office. Directed and written by the "quirky" Wes Anderson, the cast includes Timothée Chalamet (again), **ADRIEN BRODY**, 48, and French actor **MATTHIEU AMALRIC**, 55.

Finally, there is *Dopesick*, an eight-episode Hulu mini-series that begins streaming on Wednesday, October 13. It focuses on the victims of the OxyContin opiate addiction "plague" and, oy, the role of the (Jewish) Sackler family. The Sacklers are now notorious as the former owners of Purdue Pharma, the company that developed, marketed and "pushed" OxyContin.

MICHAEL STUHLBARG, 53, co-stars as **RICHARD SACKLER**, 76, the former head of Purdue Pharma. The series was created by **DANNY STRONG**, 48 (two Emmys for *Game Change*). Oscar-winner **BARRY LEVINSON**, 78, is the series principal director.▲

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The massacre at Lubny

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

The city of Lubny is located in the Poltava Oblast of central Ukraine. In October 1941 – 80 years ago this month – the Jewish population was destroyed in a one-day *Aktion* that followed up the Babi Yar massacre of the previous month. Today, very few people recall what happened at Lubny, a situation not helped by the fact that there were so few survivors left alive able to relate what had happened there.

Lubny is reputed to be one of the oldest cities in Ukraine, allegedly founded in 988 by Prince Vladimir the Great of Kiev. The first written record concerning Lubny dates from 1107. Jews settled there in the first half of the 17th century. On the eve of World War II, in 1939, the Jewish population numbered 2,833, about 10.5% of the total.

After the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa) on June 22, 1941, the residents of Lubny became immediately vulnerable to German attacks, but the city was not occupied until September 13, 1941. Lubny and its surrounds became a major center of partisan resistance, with Soviet partisan forces fighting the German invaders outside of the city. With the German takeover, however, all Jews were immediately registered

under the so-called Kommissar Order (*Kommissarbefehl*).

According to this order, which called for the mass murder of non-combatants by German combat troops, thousands of executions took place – not only of captured Soviet political commissars, but also of all Jews (regardless of whether they had anything to do with communism) and of huge numbers of Soviet prisoners of war, seen as racial enemies just as much as bearers of Bolshevik ideology.

In Lubny at the time of the German invasion, the Nazis counted around 1,500 Jewish residents of the city, though this did not consider those from outlying villages who had come in looking for refuge.

On October 10, 1941, the occupying authorities sent an order out to the Jews of Lubny that they were to gather in the nearby village of Zasule for resettlement, making sure to take with them warm clothes and valuables. The “resettlement” was to take place a few days later, on October 16.

On the appointed day, the Jews of Lubny gathered at the Kirov Square. Unknown to them was the fact that *Sonderkommando 4a*, one of the units of *Einsatzgruppen C* under the command of SS colonel Paul Blobel (and later, convicted war criminal), had also received orders to commence the liquidation of the entire Jewish population of Lubny.

Blobel was one of the SS officers who had organized the massacre of Jews at Babi Yar in late September 1941, where 33,771 Jews were murdered in the space of two days. Later, in November 1941, Blobel would also receive and put into operation the first gas vans in Ukraine.

As perpetrated by Blobel’s unit, all the Jews were then herded just outside of Lubny. They never made it to the village of Zasule, which was just a ruse to assemble the population, and they were murdered in small batches at the Zasylskiy ravine. As many members of the population as could be located were shot into the ravine: men, women, children, babies and the elderly. On the single day of October 16, 1,865 Jews were murdered; not just the Jews of Lubny, but also those from Stalag-328, a makeshift concentration camp that had been established earlier in Lvov (modern-day Lviv) and the areas around Babi Yar. The SS and Wehrmacht troops did not stop the killing there. In the second half of November 1941, they found and killed another 73 Jews who had been missed in the first sweep. Those who, despite all this, still managed to survive as skilled laborers in demand for the German military, were killed during April and May 1942.

Overall, therefore, across the period from October 1941 to May 1942, approximately 2,000 Jews were mur-

dered at Lubny. Their fate would have been largely forgotten were it not for the fact that several photographs were taken by the SS themselves during the killing process.

One photographer in particular, Johannes Hähle, took 29 color photos of Babi Yar and Lubny, though he could not bring himself to make them public or deliver them to his unit. At Lubny, he documented the concentration of the population, their waiting to be murdered, and then the killing itself. Although Hähle died during the Normandy landings in June 1944, his widow kept these photos safe and sold them to a journalist in Berlin after the war. The original color photos only surfaced in the year 2000, when they were acquired and placed in the archive of Hamburg’s *Institut für Sozialforschung* (Institute for Social Research).

The fate of the Jews of Lubny is just one of countless massacres that took place in the wake of the German invasion of the Soviet Union 80 years ago. Though overshadowed by much larger events, it was, for that small community, on October 16, 1941, the epicenter of the Holocaust. Today, we remember them.▲

Paul R. Bartrop is Professor Emeritus of History and the former Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Research at Florida Gulf Coast University.



Dr. Paul Bartrop



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Pepi Litman – Yiddish Drag King

By Arlene Stolnitz

Anyone who had ever heard Pepi Litman sing with her deep, hoarse, mannish voice could never forget it! Nowadays, we are used to seeing men as “drag queens,” but what about women as “drag kings?”



Arlene Stolnitz

Long before Barbra Streisand played the part of Yentl, we knew of men in drag in the days of Shakespeare. But is it so surprising that in

Judaism there is a rich tradition of women dressing in drag? Purim, as well as Yiddish theater, are just two examples of women dressing as men.

Case in point is Pepi Litman, singer, actor and Yiddish theater star, who during the early 1900s, performed as a drag king in the vaudeville circuit. Part of the famous troupe known as *Der Broderzingers*, the Broder Singers, Pepi traveled all over Eastern Europe performing songs, skits and plays, often poking



Pepi Litman

fun at Jewish life. Changing her given name from Pesha to Pepi, she was the ultimate star of the program.

In 1910, journalist M. J. Landa reviewed Litman’s performance in Lemberg, Poland, and wrote, “The moment she stepped on the stage, dressed as a

Galician youth, with skullcap and ringlets, the whole atmosphere of the room was different. It was dominated by a personality.... She is the incarnation of the joyous spirit of the Jew, with moments of pathos and sentiment. Listening to her singing... I forgot that I was in Galicia – forgot the horrible depressing poverty with which I had been surrounded...”

And as described in Zalmen Zylbercweig’s *Leksikon Fun Yidishn Teater* (1931-1969): “...wearing short pants, white socks and house slippers, with both hands under the sidelocks or on her hips, she used to pop out from behind the curtain with a song, and at that moment, the audience would light up as though struck by lightning.”

Pesha Kahane, later known as

Pepi, was born in Tarnapol, a city in Galicia (now Ukraine) around the year 1874 and lived until the early 1930s. She is known today as a proto-Drag King performer, paving the way for future drag performers. Pepi was known to speak several languages, was active in Yiddish circles and, while on the road, observed Jewish law

including keeping kosher and lighting Shabbat candles. She was known in her time as a “chansonette in Khosidic trousers.”

One of her most popular tunes, known by nearly everyone in the Hungarian/Slovak region she came from,

(largely forgotten after WWII), is “Hot a Yid a Vaybele” (A Jew Got a Wife), sung klezmer style with piano and violin (1913).

Fin mitvokh in der fri biz fraytik far nakht hot Surele mayn vayb deym kigl gemakht
From Wednesday in the morning Until Friday twilight, Surele my wife made a kugel
Hot a yid a vaybele hot er fin ir tsures.
Hot ir fin a vaybele Toyg zi af kapures
A man (Jew) has a wife, She gives him trouble, A man has a wife

And she is not good for anything.

Please note the sexist, misogynistic wording which would never be acceptable today. Still there are some elderly Jews who remember the song fondly. Listening to Pepi’s recordings, her voice does not seem mannish to me at all! You can easily find her recordings on YouTube.▲

Arlene Stolnitz, founder of the Sarasota Jewish Chorale, is a member of the Jewish Congregation of Venice. A retired educator from Rochester, New York, she has sung in choral groups for over 25 years and also sings in The Venice Chorale. Her interest in the preservation of Jewish music of all kinds has led to this series of articles on Jewish Folk Music in the Diaspora.



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BRIEFS



THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS – ONE YEAR ON

A little over a year ago, the UAE changed the course of Middle Eastern history and became the first Gulf Cooperation Council country to announce normalization of relations with Israel. A month later, on September 15, in a grand ceremony on the White House lawn, the UAE and Bahrain signed the Abraham Accords. Sudan and Morocco later followed and established diplomatic relations with Israel.

On November 26, 2020, I boarded the first passenger flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv. What awaited us was a warm

welcome that journalists on foreign soil do not usually expect. We were lucky to be on the receiving end of Israeli euphoria and optimism about the new peace deal. In the corridors of power as well as on the streets of Tel Aviv, people were thrilled that a UAE journalist was visiting them. The old Jewish couple who invited me for lunch, the young college students who took pictures with me, the taxi driver who promised to call when he comes to Dubai – I was touched by the warmth and humanity on display.

Since my visit, both countries have opened embassies. Thousands

of Israelis have visited Dubai. A flurry of business and investment deals and cooperation agreements were signed between research institutions, universities, sports clubs, and trade and cultural forums in the UAE and Israel. (Anjana Sankar, *Khaleej Times* - Dubai)

ISRAEL TIGHTENS COOPERATION WITH EGYPT

Egyptian intelligence director Maj.-Gen. Abbas Kamel, President Sisi's right-hand man, met with Israeli leaders in Jerusalem on August 18-19. Contrary to previous visits, Kamel did not insist on secrecy. "On the contrary," a senior Israeli diplomatic source said, "they want their photos taken and they want to be seen with us, just like the Jordanians. Relations with Israel have become an asset rather than being a burden." It was reported that Sisi had invited Israeli Prime Minister Bennett to visit Egypt.

At the same time, a senior Israeli officer was visiting Cairo for talks on ongoing efforts to establish a long-term ceasefire with Hamas, which would include returning the bodies of two Israeli soldiers and releasing two civilians held in Gaza.

The last time a Democratic president held power in Washington, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was forced to step down. To this day, the Egyptians claim Obama "threw Mubarak under the wheels of the bus." Sisi's human rights record is not much better than Mubarak's. The Egyptians are asking for Biden's understanding

of the importance of a stable regime in Cairo, and Israel is the main conduit of this argument. In return, Israel wants Egypt to redouble its efforts to block supplies to Hamas arsenals through the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Sinai. (Ben Caspit, *Al-Monitor*)

ISRAEL'S JEWISH POPULATION APPROACHES 7 MILLION

9,391,000 people live in Israel, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported Sunday, September 5, ahead of the Jewish New Year.

Israel's Jewish population is 6,943,000 (74%) and the Arab population is 1,982,000 (21%). (Ofer Aderet, *Ha'aretz*)

AL-QAEDA PLOTTED MULTIPLE TERROR ATTACKS IN ISRAEL AFTER 9/11, FBI AGENT SAYS

Al-Qaeda planned to carry out massive terrorist attacks simultaneously at several Israeli nightclubs in 2002 and was in the final stages of the plan, but was thwarted with the help of U.S. intelligence operatives, former FBI researcher Ali Soufan recently told *Yedioth Ahronot*.

The details of the plot had previously been blocked for publication by the CIA and have only now been cleared for publication.

The information was obtained during interrogations, at a secret CIA black site, of Zayn al-Abidin Muhammad Husayn, a Palestinian al-Qaeda

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BRIEFS

continued from previous page

operative who was captured by the U.S. in March 2002. The U.S. said he was a longtime ally of Osama bin Laden. (*Times of Israel*)

AMERICANS' SHIFTING VIEWS ON THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

The Palestinians are waging a sustained propaganda battle to win over Western hearts and minds, especially in the U.S. Turning Israel's struggle for survival upside down, the fake Palestinian narrative of unblemished victimhood has made inroads into American public opinion. Yet, examination of American attitudes toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict over the past two decades reveals stable and highly favorable feelings toward Israel, and unfavorable, if somewhat improving, attitudes toward the Palestinians.

Over the past two decades, Israel's favorability rating in surveys has risen from 62% in 2000 to 74% in 2020. By contrast, favorable opinions of the Palestinian Authority were 21% in 2000 and 23% in 2020. More than any other single factor, it is the intensity of Palestinian violence and intransigence that has determined the way Palestinians and the PA were seen by Americans. (Eytan Gilboa, *Middle East Quarterly*)

ISRAELI PARALYMPIANS COME HOME WITH NINE MEDALS, NEW RECORDS

Israel's Paralympic team earned six gold medals, two silvers and one bronze from the Tokyo Paralympics that ended September 5. Eight of those nine medals were won in swimming.

In the process, the Israelis set new records in this Olympic competition for people with physical disabilities.

Mark Malyar, 21, earned a gold medal in the men's 200-meter individual medley, a gold in the men's 400m freestyle and a bronze in the men's 100m backstroke. He set new records for his disability category in the 200m and 400m events.

Ami Dadaon, 20, won a gold medal in the 200m freestyle, a gold in the men's 50m freestyle and a silver in the 150m individual medley. He set records in the 200m and 50m events in his disability category.

Iyad Shalabi, 34, became the first Arab-Israeli to win a medal in the Olympics or Paralympics for Israel. He won a gold in the men's 50m backstroke and a gold in the men's 100m backstroke.

All three of these swimming medalists train at Ilan Rehabilitation and Sports Center in Haifa under coach

Yaacov Beininson.

The ninth medal for Team Israel was a silver earned by Moran Samuel, 39, in the women's single 2,000-meter event. She trains with coach Paula Grizzetti at the Daniel Rowing Center in Tel Aviv.

Israel's 33-member Paralympics team (15 men, 18 women) competed in 11 sports: athletics, badminton, boccie, goalball, paracanoeing, power lifting, rowing, shooting, swimming, table tennis and wheelchair tennis.

According to the International Paralympic Committee, 10 types of impairments make an athlete eligible: impaired muscle power, impaired passive range of movement, limb deficiency, leg length difference, short stature, hypertonia, ataxia, athetosis, vision impairment and intellectual impairment.

Classification systems differ by sport. Some Paralympic sports are designed for athletes with one eligible impairment type. Goalball, for example, is only for athletes with a vision impairment. Other sports, such as athletics and swimming, are open to athletes with any of the 10 eligible impairments.

Israel has participated in the Paralympic Games since the first competition in 1960. The first delegation won two silver medals and two bronze medals, in swimming, table tennis and wheelchair basketball.

Israeli Paralympic athletes have earned 129 gold, 125 silver and 130 bronze medals in the history of the Games, which traditionally are held two weeks after the Olympic Games at the same venue.

In the 2016 Rio Paralympics, the tally was three bronze medals, won by Moran Samuel in rowing, Doron Shaziri in shooting and Inbal Pezaro in swimming. (Abigail Klein Leichman, israel21c.org)

IDEOLOGICAL FATIGUE AMONG WEST BANK PALESTINIANS

Maj.-Gen. Tamir Yadai, completing his tenure as head of IDF Central Command, told *Israel Hayom* in an interview: "The Palestinian Authority is in a deep ideological crisis. Their core argument that any diplomatic agreement in the Middle East must pass through Ramallah has been eroded by the Abraham Accords. Its domestic legitimacy vis-a-vis the Palestinian public also no longer leans on ideology, but on daily functionality.... Fatah is divided and plagued by internal rivalries. Hamas, on the other hand, has built up a top-level organizational and political infrastructure, which it aims to use in the future as the basis for a military infrastructure."

"In Judea and Samaria, there is fatigue with ideological struggles. People want to live, especially the 1.2

million young people in the West Bank who are in no hurry to die a martyr's death for either Hamas or Fatah's ideologies."

The standard of living in Judea and Samaria is reasonable, he explains. "Go into any mall in Ramallah or Nabulus and you will see for yourself. In Jenin, you can't find a table at a cafe. In Rawabi, prices are like those in Kfar

Saba. People have a life. You can travel from Jenin to Hebron and not see one roadblock along the way.... When the average Palestinian sees what is happening in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, Libya, Gaza, they don't really want to be there." (Maj.-Gen. Tamir Yadai interviewed by Yoav Limor, *Israel Hayom*)

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BRIEFS

*continued from previous page***MOROCCO STRENGTHENS TIES WITH ISRAEL AS INTERNAL OPPOSITION GROWS**

Morocco's hosting of an Israeli delegation in August, led by Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, was the first high-level bilateral meeting between the two countries since 2003.

Moroccan authorities have endeavored to present the normalization as a reconciliation between two natural allies due to the "Moroccanness" of so many Israelis, with over 800,000 Jews of Moroccan origin in Israel.

Diplomatic normalization was

simply an opportunity for the Kingdom to recognize and strengthen cooperation that has always existed and meets essential needs – primarily in the areas of health, technology, tourism, defense and cybersecurity.

Israel intervened with Pfizer so that the Kingdom could receive a shipment of two million Covid-19 vaccination doses.

Even before the normalization, some 50,000-70,000 Israeli tourists of Moroccan origin visited the Kingdom every year.

Yet in an opinion poll by The Arab Barometer, 59% of Moroccans say they are hostile to normalization between Morocco and Israel.

Several political parties have accused the Moroccan state of betraying the Palestinian cause and collaborating

with the Zionists. (Sami Erchoff, *Inside Arabia*)

ISRAEL'S TRADE WITH ARAB STATES HAS SURGED SINCE 2020 PEACE DEALS

In the first seven months of 2021, trade between Israel and countries in the Middle East and North Africa grew by 234% compared to the same period in 2020, according to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics.

Trade with the UAE surged from \$50.8 million in January-July 2020 to \$613.9 million in the same period in 2021.

Trade with Jordan increased from \$136.2 to \$224.2 million, trade with Egypt went from \$92 to \$122.4 million, and Morocco trade rose from \$14.9 to \$20.8 million. (*Times of Israel*)

ISRAELI AND U.S. NAVY SHIPS CONDUCT JOINT SECURITY PATROL IN RED SEA

Four Israeli and U.S. Navy ships conducted a combined maritime security patrol in the Red Sea on August 30-31 as the U.S. Department of Defense shifted Israel from U.S. European Command to U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility.

"Our navies are ushering in a new era of expanded cooperation and capacity building," said U.S. Vice Adm. Brad Cooper. "We are partnering in new ways, which is essential for preserving security in today's dynamic

maritime environment."

The guided-missile cruiser USS Monterey sailed alongside the Israeli Navy corvette INS Eilat and two patrol boats as a U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft flew overhead. The units conducted air defense, unit defense, small boat operations and tactical maneuver training. (U.S. Naval Forces Central Command / U.S. 5th Fleet)

ISRAEL USES DRONES TO CATCH ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMINALS

Israel's Ministry of Environmental Protection is expanding its use of drones to fight environmental offenders, as high resolution video serves as substantial evidence in court.

Green Police inspectors focus on illegal dumping, hazardous materials and construction waste.

Trucks full of construction waste were dumping their loads at night, but did not take into account drones with night-vision cameras that captured the faces of environmental criminals and their license plates.

"Drones are a game-changer," said Nir Shorashi, an inspector in the Green Police. "We can sit kilometers away from the crime scene and produce incriminating evidence.... In the past, we needed to hide on the ground."

The drone unit, Squadron 11, began operations in 2017. In 2020, it dealt with 700 incidents in all parts of the country. (Nick Kolyohin, *Xinhua - China*)▲

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For further information please contact Alan Isaacs at (239) 481-4449 ext. 6 or alanisaacs@jfedlcc.org.

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Connecting the dots

Are you ready for today's question, boychicks and girlchicks? Good, here we go! What ancient kabbalistic prayer has something in common with KFC fried chicken? I'll give you a moment to consider this and for the jingle to play through.

Just as KFC is made with the Colonel's secret recipe of 11 herbs and spices, so does the recipe for incense in the Temple have 11 spices!

Unlike the Colonel's recipe, the biblical recipe is not secret. Actually, the biblical recipe goes back to the book of Exodus 30:34-36. Here's what the text says (in translation, of course):

"The Lord said to Moses: take to yourself spices - balsam, onycha, galbanum (as well as other specified) spices and pure frankincense - equal amounts of each. Grind each spice separately and then blend them together as a ketoret compound, the work of a master perfumer, well blended, free of all impurity and holy. Pulverize a small

portion of the ketoret daily and place it on the Golden Altar before the Ark of testimony in the Communion Tent where I commune with you. It shall have the highest degree of holiness for you."

And a few verses later, it says: "Aaron must burn the ketoret spices on it (the Golden Altar) early each morning when he cleans the Menorah lamps. He must also burn the ketoret when he lights the lamps towards evening. It is a daily ketoret offering before the Lord throughout all your generations." (Exod.30:7-8)

Please know I am not suggesting this is Col. Sander's secret recipe. And I would certainly not use this mixture on your fried chicken. So why am I spending a column on this prayer?

This prayer of "Pitum ha-Ketoret" is found early in the Shaharit Service of any traditional prayer book. Quite frankly, I have not been used to reciting this prayer. But in kabbalistic tradition, reciting this prayer with *kavanah*, or intention, will remove evil, protect from the plague and reward the reciter with good fortune. Since Covid continues to afflict us locally, nationally and

internationally, this might be a good time for all of us to begin reciting it.

What seems to be clear is that some of these spices were not...aromatic. And yet, when all were compounded together, the smell was heavenly. Not only did these spices ameliorate the smell of the animal sacrifices during Temple times, but they were spiritually conducive to the pilgrims coming through. The Zohar says that "if only people knew how great it is to recite this section of 'Pitum ha-Ketoret,' they

would take each and every word of the section and place it on their heads like a golden crown!"

While this recipe may not make your fried chicken "finger lickin' good," it sounds like a wise way to reconnect with our Tradition and to fight the effects of Covid.▲

Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Schorin, MAPC, BCC is a Chaplain in Lee Health's Department of Spiritual Services, and ministers at the Gulf Coast Medical Center.



Rabbi Michael J. Schorin

What do you think?

L'CHAYIM wants to know!

Send your letters and comments to Ted Epstein, L'CHAYIM Editor, at LChayim36@gmail.com.

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The collage features several pages from the L'CHAYIM newspaper. At the top, there's a 'JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL' announcement for 'Celebrate Jewish Life Through Film' from February 7-28, 2021, with a '100% Online - NO CHARGE' and '48 Hour Access' offer. Below that, there are articles under 'OUR COMMUNITY' including 'Bat Yam Temple of the Islands to host Nefesh Mountain Bluegrass Band Concert' and 'Sunday in New York with Temple Beth El'. A 'JFNA statement' is also visible. At the bottom, there's a 'VIRTUAL EVENTS CALENDAR' for April, May, and June, and a small advertisement for 'BUYING INSTANT CASH'.

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The Hebrew month of Cheshvan

This is the time to take the inspiration and all that we gained in the month of Tishrei and integrate it into our lives.

MarCheshvan (sometimes called Cheshvan) is the second month of the Jewish calendar counting from Rosh Hashanah (the eighth if counting from Nisan). Cheshvan is the only month that does not have any holidays or special mitzvot. We are taught that it is "reserved" for the time of Moshiach, who will inaugurate the Third Temple in the month of Cheshvan.

The great flood in the days of Noah began in this month, and it was a year later, also in the month of Cheshvan, that Noah left the ark.

In the month of Cheshvan, we



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

commemorate the *yahrtzeit* (anniversary of passing) of our matriarch Rachel. She is buried on the road to Beit Lechem, where throughout the ages, and still today, Jews of all walks of life go to pray and beseech that she intercede on their behalf as a mother does for her child.

This month is the anticlimax of the previous month of Tishrei. With so many holidays and spiritual experiences, it was a feast for the soul – a vacation of sorts. Now, as we enter the month of Cheshvan, real life begins, back to the daily "mundane" grind. This is the time to take the inspiration and all that we gained in the month of Tishrei, and integrate it into our lives, learning how to balance the spiritual and the physical elements of our lives in unison and harmony.▲

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.

The constant renewal of Jewish life

The Bevis Marks Synagogue of London, a Sephardic congregation, was in the news recently as it seeks to prevent more skyscrapers being built around it and blocking its



■ Rabbi Marc Sack

access to direct sunlight. The synagogue was built around 1700, but another building preceded the current structure. In 1664, the leaders of the Sephardic Jewish community wrote that members were not allowed to bring non-Jewish guests to the synagogue. The announcement seems particularly concerned about "English ladies [who] came to see the ceremonies of our religion." This notice, of course, informs us that this was exactly what was happening, that Jews were bringing their neighbors to the synagogue. Later, in 1711, this led to the cancellation of dancing with Torah scrolls on Simchat Torah because this causes "more of a scandal than any benefit." Similarly, it was prohibited to "pound with hammers" on Purim, which was considered to be "barbaric behavior."

Such restrictions were also established in other Sephardic communities of Western Europe in the late 17th century. In Amsterdam and Hamburg, the Jews wished to be seen as "people of good breeding," i.e., well-bred and courteous. All these congregations had regular non-Jewish guests. The Esnoga in Amsterdam had special ushers whose assignment was to escort non-Jewish guests to their seats.

These Jews were "new Jews," of sorts. They were conversos from Spain and Portugal who had migrated north and, in cities more hospitable to Jews, reaffirmed their Jewishness. While

most were poor, some were educated at the finest universities of the Iberian Peninsula and were wealthy. They were accustomed to moving comfortably in the non-Jewish world and wished to maintain those ties. They also, in their desire for acceptance, were anxious to show Jewish culture as equal in value and refinement as the Christian culture that surrounded them.

What I find most impressive was that these "new Jews," after decades, perhaps generations, of living as non-Jews, reaffirmed their Jewishness, and did so without ever living in a "traditional" Jewish community. For sure, they had assistance. The Jewish community of Venice, which was the most prominent Sephardic community of Europe after the Expulsion, supported the new Jewish communities in getting established.

Not all the former conversos came back. Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza and Juan de Prado were excommunicated by the rabbis of Amsterdam in 1656. But, here too, this shows the new community establishing boundaries of what was acceptable expression in their new Jewish life.

In one of my holiday sermons, I spoke about the ability of our people to radically reinvent itself. I gave as examples the explosion of kabbalism on the one hand, and rationality – led by Spinoza – on the other. Another example would be the rebirth of Judaism among the conversos who built synagogues and communal structures that helped them hold their heads high as Jews, while maintaining their ties with the non-Jewish world. Their Jewish allegiance, after decades of being hidden, with their desire to live in their greater society, is a strong model for us all.▲

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.

Doing the best thing

Experience, if allowed, can be a great teacher for those willing to change and adapt. I've had a problem with that since I'm generally change adverse. I usually can get away with this in my line of work, since it is widely expected that others around me change and adapt to my ways. It mostly takes out of the ordinary, intense experiences for me to actually learn and adjust.



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

This plague certainly qualifies as an "out of the ordinary, intense experience," and I'm going to share with you two big things that I've learned from it and how it changed me.

The first: You can really tie yourself into a pretzel trying to rationalize doing what you want to do when you know it's really not the right thing you should be doing. This is especially the case if you're the kind of person who has been exposed to a lifetime of complicated reasoning or you need the money.

The second: Keep an open mind, listen to others and be ready to change your mind no matter how dug in you've been on your point of view and how much planning you've done in that direction. It's never the wrong time to do the right thing.

Case in point: I was in the "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead" mode when it came to reopening my synagogue to in-person worship for this year's Days of Awe. Last year was enough, and I don't want this virtual stuff to become the new normal. And truth be told, in-person worship does so much more for me than talking into

a camera, and all this computer stuff is a monumental pain.

I knew that our local hospitalization numbers indicate that large indoor gatherings in Florida were still inherently unsafe, and perhaps even more so than this time last year. I also realized that while immunizations generally offer some protection against death from this plague, you can still get very sick and spread it to others. If you have to go into a crowded indoor setting, a good mask might protect others from you, but will offer you little or no protection from them. Even so, I wanted what I wanted, and engaged in all sorts of mental gymnastics trying to avoid the obvious.

This is the obvious: Do we really need to do this? Large indoor, in-person worship and synagogue gatherings are not an absolute necessity and are halakhically forbidden if they endanger human life, even if it is in the performance of a mitzvah. But having studied Talmud since the age of 12, I was not a stranger to looking for loopholes in normative Jewish law and practice.

Then, while discussing this on a Friday evening during worship in early August, one participant quietly and clearly expressed her point of view. She said, "It would be irresponsible."

Succinct, penetrating, unvarnished truth. She flipped the switch and turned on the light! There and then I decided that we would only Zoom the Days of Awe worship, no matter how complicated this nearly last-minute change might be (and it sort of was)!

But it felt so good to stop the pretzeling and do the simplest, best thing!▲ *Rabbi Bruce Diamond serves at The Community Free Synagogue in Fort Myers.*

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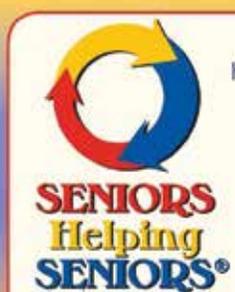
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12 Heshvan: A sad reminder of what might have been

The month of Heshvan, the second month of the Hebrew year, is known as Marheshvan, "bitter Heshvan," because it alone among the Hebrew months has no holy day or festival.



■ Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

Modern Jewish history offers another reason why this is a bitter month.

The 12th of Heshvan, October 18 this year, will mark the 26th anniversary of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin at

the hands of the Jewish terrorist Yigal Amir.

I use the word "terrorist" purposefully. He ranks with the worst of the Palestinian terrorists who have attacked Israel over the years.

Amir's savage act of barbarism

scuttled the hope for peace that burned so brightly in 1995. Rabin's assassination takes on additional poignance this year because his successor as Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, finally met defeat at the polls.

Make no mistake, Netanyahu did wonders for Israel's economy. He opened markets around the world, normalized relations with several Arab nations, cut taxes drastically and made Israel into a far more prosperous nation than it was before. He held the office of Prime Minister longer than anyone in Israel's history.

He is also under investigation on serious charges of corruption, and in the opinions of many, has hurled Israel from the brink of cooperation with the Palestinians – who also lay claim to our land – to the shoals of terror, mistrust and confrontation. Thus, many charge him with staining the conscience of the

only democracy in the Middle East, and costing Israel much support around the world.

Sadly, many young Jews are resonating to the anti-Israel voices that echo so loudly on college campuses and in the public square.

To those Jews who demonize Israel, I say: We need Israel. We support her because we believe there should be a tiny Jewish state in a vast sea of Arab/Islamic hegemony. We have known what it is like to live or die for 2,000 years at the "by-your-leave" of rulers. These rulers, with every turn of the economy, transformed their Jews into pariahs who faced persecution, isolation, forced conversion, expulsion or extermination. Our connection to the Land of Israel goes back 4,000 years, and we will never willingly give up sovereignty over the one tiny sliver of real estate where Jews control their own destiny.

The greatness of Yitzhak Rabin is that he recognized, after years as a hardliner, that living in peace was better than living under a state of siege.

Many have forgotten that as the assassin's bullet took his life, Rabin's political future was in dire jeopardy largely because Benjamin Netanyahu railed against the concessions for

peace Rabin's government had agreed to make. Netanyahu exploited the distrust of many Israelis who – from bitter experience – were unwilling to trust that our enemies could become allies.

Indeed, Rabin's widow, Leah Rabin, explicitly pointed the finger at Netanyahu for encouraging the atmosphere of anger that led to Yigal Amir's barbarous act, an act for which he will, deservedly, spend the rest of his life in prison.

As the sorrowful Yahrzeit approaches, I cry for what might have been.

I will never abandon the hope that peace will come, and I pray that leaders on both sides will soon realize as Yitzhak Rabin realized: It is our destiny as Jews and Palestinians to share this land and to proclaim as Rabin did, "Enough of war... Enough of bloodshed, enough."

And I pray that one day Israel's leaders and those of her enemies create two independent states that live in peace, harmony and cooperation with one another.▲

Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs serves at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel Island.

Kindness

We will soon read one of the best stories in the Torah.

God decides that the crimes in Sodom and Gomorrah are so great that God will destroy the cities. Yet Abraham objects, asserting that for God to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty would be unjust. He rages at God, saying, "Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" (Gen. 18:25)

So he and God go back and forth, negotiating if there are 50 people God will forgive, until finally Abraham gets God to agree that if there are 10 innocent people, God will forgive the entire place.

There is so much to unpack in this story. But one question that comes up throughout the centuries is why does Abraham stop at 10? He goes from 50, 45, 30, 20 to 10. But is not one individual righteous person worth saving? Why does there need to be 10?

Rashi, the ultimate Torah commentator from the 11th century, looks back to the story of Noah and explains that God, Noah, his sons and their wives numbered nine, but they could not prevent a flood from destroying the rest. So Abraham already knows nine would not be enough.

But Elie Wiesel suggests that Abraham was not the first person to try and save the cities. He tells a story that long before Abraham, another man used to stand outside the gates of Sodom and demand people change their ways. When confronted with the harsh truth that his words were not having an impact, he insists on staying and protesting, lest the sinful residents change him.

One person was not enough to change the entire group's behavior. One person was not enough to encourage the others to improve. Rashi reminds us that not even nine was

enough to stop the flood.

To move a society from crime to virtue, from hostility to compassion, from indecency to civility, a core group must emerge. Jamil Zaki, the director of the Stanford Social Neuroscience Lab, studies what he calls "kindness contagion." We copy other people's behavior, but we can also catch the values the behavior represents – ideally the values of cooperation, generosity and helping others.

In one experiment, after witnessing others donate generously, the subjects not only donated more themselves, but then in a seemingly unrelated pen-pal writing exercise, they also wrote more empathetic and supportive letters. When there is a cultural norm of generosity, of civility, of kindness, then it becomes easier to compromise, to understand others' points of view, to work together. One person cannot shift behavior, but one person can join with others and together they can spread their spirit. Ten righteous people can save a society.

As individuals it can feel disheartening to live in a society full of conflict and hostility. What difference can one individual make? From the time of Abraham, Judaism has valued the power of coming together. We require two witnesses for the *ketubah*, the marriage certificate, we convene a group of three as a *beit din* for conversions, and we pray in a group of 10 for our most important prayers.

The story of Abraham is powerful not just because of one man negotiating with God, arguing for justice. It is powerful because it teaches that when a group of individuals comes together, they can begin a contagion of kindness, a wave of hope and, ultimately, we pray, a culture of peace.▲

Sources:
scientificamerican.com/article/kindness-contagion/
Elie Wiesel story: "We Plant Seeds" by Adam Greenwald
Rabbi Nicole Luna serves at Temple Beth El in Fort Myers.



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

Mishpacha

The High Holy Days came early this year and each of us welcomed the coming of the New Year in our own special and unique ways. For some of us who don't regularly attend services, attending High Holy Days services was an annual tradition. For others, practicing *teshuvah*, making amends, was meaningful and healing. For many, celebrating Jewish traditions and gathering for Rosh Hashana dinner or breaking the fast was the ultimate way to celebrate the arrival of 5782. Regardless of how you observed the High Holy Days, whether extremely observant, slightly observant or simply secular, all of us have one significant commonality. We are family!



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

Why is it that before the Torah gives us any laws and commandments it describes the challenges of being part of a family? Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca – their lives, like ours, were not simple or straightforward. Children fought, breakups happened, there was lying, deceit and jealousy. The full range of emotions existed, yet through those familial challenges the Jewish people were born.

From our earliest years, our family relationships teach us how to relate to others, to be comfortable with ourselves and others. Most importantly, family is where we first experience loss and sadness while learning about joy and happiness.

Family is the foundation upon which our Torah rests and is at the core of who we are as a Jewish people. G-d made a promise to Abraham: "Your children shall be as numerous as stars in the sky." This promise was not in vain, and despite tremendous odds, the power of love and togetherness prevailed, and the first families of Judaism birthed the 12 tribes of Israel. The Jewish people as a whole are described as "B'nei Yisrael - The Children of Israel," not descendants of the land, but of our patriarch Jacob, the grandson of Abraham – part of one connected extended family.

In Hebrew we say "mishpacha," which means a Jewish family or social unit that includes both close and distant relatives. Simply put, we are all mishpacha – we are all family! A sense of family values is so important to us as Jews, and family is the value upon which Shalom Life Center was built.

From Creation in the book of Genesis up to the present, a family, for better or for worse, is forever. Families were bound by something much deeper, and even though they sometimes disagreed, they stayed together. Like the 12 tribes that are all connected to Abraham, we're all one big extended family.

Though our backgrounds may differ, we are all part of our Eitz Chayim, our Tree of Life. May we all continue to grow tall and strong in both body and spirit, and may 5782 be a great, happy, healthy and successful year for us all!▲

Rabbi Lawrence Dermer serves at Shalom Life Center in Fort Myers.

Chabad at FGCU: Driving forward into a new year!

By Rabbi Mendel Gordon

Chabad has been super busy since the new school year started, starting off with a welcome barbecue and a mini-golf trip. It was amazing to see so many new faces, and many old ones too, some returning after being online last year.

Mezuzas have been popping up on dorm rooms all over campus as students are making sure to give their room a proud Jewish stamp.

"My grandparents are Jewish," Drake from Arcadia commented to a group of us sitting in a food court for a lunch and learn. And before you knew it, Drake was welcomed into the FGCU Jewish family and had a "drive through

Bar Mitzvah," putting on tefillin for the first time.

A large Jewish leadership team has also been formed of fellow students to help grow Jewish activity on campus.

Community service is back in full

swing as well, with our Jewish friends at American House enjoying the students' visits.

Pre Rosh Hashana, the main library lawn on campus turned into a workshop where we made our own shofars getting into the Rosh Hashana spirit.

During the month of October, we will start our Sinai Scholars course and two JewishU courses. We will study Judaism decoded, giving an overview of the development of Torah from Mt. Sinai

until today; and Jewish perspectives on modern polices, discussing the Torah's view on some of today's controversial topics.

Chabad at FGCU caters to all Jewish students in Southwest Florida, providing them a Jewish home away from home. Join us to learn, celebrate or just meet Jewish students your age.

For more information, or to get involved, contact me at chabadfgcu@gmail.com or 347.452.0489, or visit chabadfgcu.com.



Becca and Juli are proud of their mezuzas



Matt, Sasha and Brett at the mini-golf outing



Everyone had fun at the mini-golf outing



Keith trying out the shofar he made

Stay connected all month long at www.JewishFederationLCC.org



Students brainstorming how to grow Jewish life on campus

Friendly Visitor Program

(virtual for now)



The Federation decided to postpone the Senior Lunch Program due to the Covid resurgence. However, we still want to stay in touch with our Jewish seniors!

We're inviting volunteers to **call or Zoom with one or two people on a regular basis**. Stories and connection are what make the world go 'round. Make a new friend and perform a mitzvah at the same time!

Interested in the Friendly Visitor Program?
Call or email Jodi Cohen: 239.481.4449, x2
jodicohen@jfedlcc.org



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Jewish Educational Loan Fund

TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS Fort Myers

Temple Judea Religious School

*Tab Scribner,
Director of Congregational Learning*
The High Holidays have come and gone, and we can breathe again. It's been a time of excitement at Temple Judea Religious School. We've had many activities to keep us connected.

We started our year welcoming new teachers and new students, and as soon as we found a routine, we were interrupted by the holidays. We were not able to meet in person for the holidays, so we held interactive sessions with storytelling, singing and, of course, plenty of shofar blowing. We honored heroes for 9/11 through art and education. Concluding the month,



Presenting a framed print of the 9/11 Memorial in Jerusalem to Fire Station 74. The 9/11 Children's programming and framed memorial are sponsored by Jewish National Fund USA

we held two in-person celebrations for Sukkot and Simchat Torah. The Pizza in the Hut and candied apple stations were big hits, while the adults searched the unrolled Torah scroll to find their Bar/Bat mitzvah Torah portions. I'm pretty sure some of the adults sneaked into the candied apple station too. Who doesn't like candied apples?

October shapes up to be a quieter month of getting back into our routine. We will honor the anniversary of the Pittsburgh Tree of Life shooting with a mitzvah day, and later hold our first

Religious School Shabbat on November 5. Before we know it, the year will be half over.

Temple Judea Preschool

*Joann Goldman,
Temple Judea Preschool Director*
Autumn will be exploding in our classroom during the month of October. We will also discover the colors of autumn through themes such as leaves and pumpkins.

October is also Fire Safety Month. Along with learning about firefighters and safety, we are eagerly anticipating a visit from the local fire station.

We all need to remind our children, grandchildren and others visiting our home about safety rules. It is a time to remember the importance of learning and teaching fire safety.

Young children are particularly vulnerable to the threat of fire, with children under five suffering a fire death rate of more than twice the national average. We can help change these frightening statistics by teaching children about fire safety. Make an escape plan with your whole family and choose a meeting place outside.

Another favorite theme is learning about shapes. Everything we see in the world around us has a shape. We can find different basic shapes such as the two-dimensional square, rectangle and oval, or the three-dimensional rectangular prism, cylinder and sphere in the objects we see around us. Pointing out the shapes of everyday objects is a great way to familiarize children with the individual characteristics of each shape.

At the end of the month our classes will be filled with pumpkins. This year, we will have small pumpkins for each child to paint while our teacher carves the larger pumpkin.

Our Pre-K class will head to the TJP library each week. Students will take a book home to read, and return it the following week. This is a great way to teach the children about borrowing items from school and being responsible for them.

TEMPLE BETH EL SCHOOLS Fort Myers

Temple Beth El Religious School

Alyssa Raab
Last month we were grateful to welcome back our students. We learned about Hakarat Hatov (recognizing the good). This is timely, as recognizing the good is a helpful coping strategy for kids and adults alike during these Covid times. While we needed to be flexible, we have at times broken free from routine and been forced to live in the moment. A good way to practice Hakarat Hatov with your kids is to tell them one thing that you are thankful for from the day, and to ask them to think of something they are thankful for from that day. Too often it is easy to take the good things in our lives for granted, focusing only on the negative. By thinking about and naming things

we are thankful for, we can shift our mindset away from negativity.

I am thankful for all

the families, educators and volunteers, who, despite the challenges of 2021, have undertaken to continue educating our children about Jewish values and continue to participate in our community. This is truly a blessing.

On our first day of religious school, we enjoyed bagels outdoors and created a beautiful, colorful wall hanging with our handprints as 'leaves' of a tree. We practiced Hakarat Hatov by writing down what we are thankful for, 'feeding' the 'roots' of our tree. This mural represents how we are all part of a larger whole, a community and the good/sweet things that 'feed' our souls! Things the students were thankful for included: Mom, Dad, animals, volleyball, football, doughnuts and ice cream!



Colorful wall hanging with students' handprints representing leaves of a tree

Candle lighting times:

October 1: 6:56

October 8: 6:48

October 15: 6:41

October 22: 6:35

October 29: 6:29



Earn CAS Credits

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties is interested in hearing from teenagers in high school who might like to earn CAS credits through various work in the Jewish community.

If you are interested, please send the following information to debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org:

- Name
- Address
- Phone #
- Age
- Grade
- School
- Preferred volunteer hours (e.g. 2 - 5P.M. Sundays)



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of Lee and Charlotte Counties.

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OUR HOPE is that these programs will enhance Jewish knowledge and identity in preparation for participation in American Jewish life.

THIS GRANT is for Jewish residents of either county who are 25 years old or younger and can demonstrate a financial need. Academic standing and community involvement may also be considered.

For more information
visit jewishfederationlcc.org



TOP Jewish Foundation

is proud to offer the **Stevan & Marilyn Simon Family Scholarship**.

This scholarship is open to those at least high school age who demonstrate leadership qualities and will be participating in a 2-week or longer program in Israel.

A short essay is required.

For more information, and to access the application, visit the TOP Jewish Foundation website at topjewishfoundation.org

Michael Shapiro

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**BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS
REFORM**

Meets at Sanibel Congregational Church
2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel Island
Rabbi Stephen L. Fuchs
President: Alan Lessack
Phone: 773-251-8862
Email: batyamsanibel@gmail.com
Cantor: Murray Simon
Web site: www.batyam.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday (Oct-Apr)
7:00 p.m. Friday (May-Sept)
Adult Education:
Saturday, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. (Nov-Apr)
Jewish Current Events: Saturday, 11:30 a.m.
to 12:15 p.m. (Nov-Apr)
Write: P.O. Box 84, Sanibel, FL 33957
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**CHABAD
OF BONITA SPRINGS/ESTERO
ORTHODOX**

24850 Old 41 Road, Suite 20
(in the Bernwood Centre)
Bonita Springs, FL 34135-7024
Rabbi Mendy Greenberg
Phone: 239-949-6900
Web site: www.JewishBonita.com
Services: Saturday at 10:00 a.m.
followed by a Kiddush

**CHABAD JEWISH CENTER
OF CAPE CORAL
ORTHODOX**

1716 Cape Coral Pkwy. W.
Cape Coral, FL 33914
Rabbi Yossi Labkowski
Phone: 239-963-4770
E-mail: info@chabadcape.com
Web site: www.chabadcape.com
Services: Friday Evening 7:30 p.m.
Saturday morning 9:30 a.m. followed by
Kiddush luncheon
Sunday morning 8:00 a.m.
Monday-Friday morning 7:00 a.m.
JLI Courses: Monday evening at 7:00 p.m.
Weekly Torah Study:
Tuesday evening 7:30 p.m.
Hebrew School:
Sunday 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Jgirls: Tuesday 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

**CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY
ORTHODOX**

204 E McKenzie St Unit B,
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
Rabbi Simon Jacobson
Phone: 941-833-3381
E-mail: chabadpg@yahoo.com
Web site:
www.chabadofcharlottecounty.com
Services: Saturday at 10:00 a.m. followed
by a kiddush
Torah study: Wednesday at 8:00 p.m.

**CHABAD LUBAVITCH
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
ORTHODOX**

5620 Winkler Road
Fort Myers, FL 33919
Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz
Phone: 239-433-7708 • Fax: 481-9109
E-mail: rabbi@chabadswf.org
Web site: www.chabadswf.org
Services: Friday 5:15 p.m.;
Saturday Kabbalah
class 9:00 a.m.; Shacharit 10:00 a.m.;
Kiddush at noon
Minyan: Monday & Thursday 7:00 a.m.

**SYNAGOGUES &
JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS
IN LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES**

www.Jewishfederationlcc.org

**COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE
REFORM**

10868 Metro Parkway, South Fort Myers
(The Southwest Florida Masonic Center)
P.O. Box 07144, Fort Myers, FL 33919
Rabbi Bruce Diamond
(bdiamond5@comcast.net)
Coordinator: Natalie Fulton
Phone: 239-466-6671
E-mail: synfree@comcast.net
Web site: www.fortmyerssynagogue.com
Community Sabbath eve dinner
each Friday at 6:30 p.m.
Sabbath eve worship every Friday at 7:30 p.m.
Light breakfast and Torah study with
the rabbi every Saturday morning
from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

SHALOM LIFE CENTER

TRANS DENOMINATIONAL
19691 Cypress View Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33967
Rabbi Lawrence Dermer
Phone: 239-218-3433
E-mail: info@shalomlifecenter.org
Web site: www.shalomlifecenter.org
Shabbat Evening Services
7:30 p.m. (Oct-Apr)
7:00 p.m. (May-Sept)
Saturday Torah & Kabbalah Study
10:00 a.m.

**TEMPLE BETH EL
REFORM**

16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Nicole Luna
E-mail: info@templebethel.com
Learning Tree Preschool Director:
Jesyca Virnig
Email: LearningTree15@yahoo.com
President: Hank Betchen
Email: HankTBE@gmail.com
Phone: 239-433-0018 • Fax: 239-433-3235
Web site: www.templebethel.com
Shabbat services: 7:30 p.m. Friday;
Torah study 9:00 a.m. Saturday; B'nai
Mitzvah 10:30 a.m. Saturday Religious &
Hebrew School: 9:00 a.m.-12:30 Sunday
Judaica Gift Gallery
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**TEMPLE BETH SHALOM
REFORM**

702 S.E. 24th Ave., Cape Coral, FL 33990
Rabbi Devora Buchen
President: Peter Simenauer
Phone: 239-772-4555 • Fax: 239-772-4625
E-mail: office@templebethshalomcc.org
Web site: www.templebethshalomcc.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Religious School: Wednesday
4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Torah study with Rabbi Buchen:
Shabbat 10:30 a.m.
Organizations:
Brotherhood, Sisterhood, Family Service
(1st Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m.)

**CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SWFL
CHAVURA**

P.O. Box 722, Sanibel, FL 33957
Chavuratshalom@gmail.com
www.chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org
Leonard E. Minsky, President
Shabbat services - 7:30 p.m. Friday
Jewish current events - 11:00 a.m. Saturday

**TEMPLE JUDEA
CONSERVATIVE**

14486 A&W Bulb Road
Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Marc Sack
E-mail: rabbi@tjswfl.org
President: Dan Fox
Director of Congregational Learning:
Tab Scribner
Preschool Director: Joann Goldman
templejudeapreschool@gmail.com
Phone: 239-433-0201 • Fax: 239-433-3371
E-mail: tjswfl@gmail.com
Web site: www.tjswfl.org
Services: 6:15 p.m. Friday and 9:30 a.m.
Saturday Minyan: 9:00 a.m. Monday
Religious School: Sun. 9:30 a.m. - noon;
Wed. 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Early childhood education: Preschool, M-F,
ages 18 months-5 years;
"Mommy & Me," 12 months-2 years
*Affiliated: United Synagogue of
Conservative Judaism*

**TEMPLE SHALOM CHARLOTTE
HARBOR AND THE GULF ISLANDS
REFORM**

23190 Utica Ave., P.O. Box 494675
Port Charlotte, FL 33949-4675
Rabbi Solomon Agin
President: Judith Migdol
Phone: 941-625-2116
E-mail: shalom06@netzero.com
Web site: templeshalomfl
Beginning Hebrew:
Tuesday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.
Advanced Hebrew:
Thursday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.
Organizations: Sisterhood

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- AIPAC
(American Israel Public Affairs Committee):
Jacki Waksman - 954-653-9053
- AJC (American Jewish Committee):
Brian Lipton - 941-365-4955
- Anti-Defamation League: 561-988-2900
- B'Nai B'rith International: 941-302-4500
- Chabad Jewish Student Life at FGCU
Rabbi Mendel Gordon - 347-452-0489
mendelgordon@gmail.com
- Chevra Kadisha: Gene Sipe - 239-841-4615
- Generations of the Shoah SWFL: 263-9200
- Hadassah - Collier/Lee Chapter:
Joyce Toub - 518-330-1559
- Hadassah-Sharon Chapter (Charlotte County):
Odette Port - 941-505-1409
- Hazak 55+ Chapter:
Joyce Rosinger - 239-437-1566
- Israel Bonds: Regional Headquarters:
800-622-8017
- Jewish Community Services:
239-481-4449
- Jewish National Fund:
Joshua Mellits, Director, Western Florida
941-462-1330 ext. 865
Memorial Tree Planting in Israel
1-800-542-8733
- Jewish War Veterans:
Post 400: Commander
Harvey Charter - 239-246-3151
- Mikvah Bashka of Southwest Florida:
Nechamie Minkowicz - 239-822-2784

**CHAVURAT SHALOM
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

chavuratshalom@gmail.com

*Cheryl Fulmer, Ellen Feingold
and Marcia Rudin*

Chavurat Shalom participants were engaged all of September celebrating the continuation of Judaism, reflecting on its importance in our modern lives and remembering those who were lost. October means that the resolutions for the Jewish New Year are known and ready to be implemented. Perhaps you may want to take a more personal approach to Judaism. Perhaps you'd like to participate in the Shabbat service by chanting the Kiddush or lighting the Shabbat candles for the chavurah. You may want to recite a poem you've written especially for the group. There are so many opportunities for you learn and grow.

Chavurat Shalom participants continue to enjoy fellowship via Zoom through the weekly lay-led Friday evening Shabbat Eve services at 7:30 p.m. Services are a blend of English read-

ings and poems, and Hebrew prayers and comforting songs. To join with the chavurah and receive the Zoom link for services and programs, please send an email request to chavuratshalom@gmail.com.

The October schedule for the 11:00 a.m. Thursday lecture series begins with Debra Mailman, who will speak on October 7 about how IsraAid, an international NGO, assists communities around the world devastated by natural disasters.

On October 14, Rabbi Robert Barr, from the Humanistic Judaism Congregation Beth Adam in the Cincinnati area, will focus his remarks on the evolution of ritual, belief and practice.

Rabbi Myra Soifer's Text of the Month talk on October 21 is titled "The Surprising Talmudic Tale of Shmuel's Daughters." (Ketubot 23a) Rabbi Soifer broadcasts from Reno, Nevada. She selects the text from the Hebrew Bible, Haftorah, Talmud or other Jewish sources, emailing the study text in advance to class participants.

Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish, who teaches at the Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, will talk on October 28 about "The Other Peace Process: Interreligious Dialogue in Israel and Palestine."

To join the classes and receive the Zoom link, send an email request to the above email address.

Leonard Minsky, president of Chavurat Shalom, begins anew, on Saturday, October 2 at 11:00 a.m., the weekly Jewish current events lively discussions on timely topics concerning the U.S., Israel and Jews anywhere in the world. This is the perfect way to keep up to date in a quickly changing world and to express your views. Request the Zoom link from the email address above.

There are always people in need of support due to the loss of a loved one. The next grief session is scheduled for Wednesday, October 27 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Anyone who may benefit from a supportive group focused on grief is welcome to participate. Send an email request to chavuratshalom@gmail.com.

Chavurat Shalom (Fellowship of Peace) is an informal group from every Jewish religious tradition and meets to worship and learn together. People of all faiths and localities are welcome, including visitors and guests. Chavurat Shalom is not affiliated with any organized movement. The group is community-led.

Join with us now and lend your voice and thoughts for a Shabbat service, help plan a Thursday program or Saturday Jewish current events session, or just come to be with your friends. It is a refreshing opportunity to participate. Visit the up-to-date website at chavuratshalomofswflorida.org for the current schedule, or send an email to the address noted above for information and Zoom links to programs.

Chavurat Shalom of Southwest Florida extends its wishes to everyone for a healthy and happy year. May the Hebrew year 5782 be a time of peace in our hearts, in the land of Israel, in the USA and throughout the world.

**HADASSAH
Collier/Lee Chapter**

(732) 539-4011

Joyce Toub

In the most recent *Hadassah* magazine, there was an article about how philanthropy creates a lasting impact during our own lifetimes. I know that some of you immediately think that when you hear "Hadassah," your reaction is that we are always asking for money. Well, of course we are! We are the ones raising the funds that run the hospital! We are the ones behind the administration that chooses the doctors, purchases the equipment, does the research and outreach, educates and advises, and on and on.

I am by no means a mega philanthropist, but what I can donate and contribute makes me feel that I have a stake in the outcome – a voice in how we can provide a better future for all. Investing your time, experience and vision allows you to grow and make personal connections you otherwise would not have made. You set an example for your children and grandchildren, to care about a community, a country, the world.

There are many giving opportunities, so please don't overlook them. Our upcoming programs will engage, entertain and educate you for only a modest contribution.

On Thursday, October 7, Collier/

Lee Hadassah will present a Blue Box Event that commemorates a practice that began in 1901: small tin boxes were distributed to Jewish communities across the globe, eventually numbering over 1,000,000 by World War II. These JNF (Jewish National Fund) boxes have helped to develop and cultivate the land of Israel and continue to do so. JNF is responsible for the greening of the desert, building parks, creating new communities, bolstering the water supply, helping develop innovative area agricultural techniques, and educating both young and old about the importance of Israel and Zionism.

On Monday, October 25, we will present a joint program with the Jewish Federation of Greater Naples. Dina Kraft, based in Tel Aviv, will high-

light two episodes of her podcast, The Branch, sponsored by Hadassah. She has been a longtime foreign correspondent, reporting for the Associated Press and writing for *The New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*. In 2020, she received the B'nai B'rith World Center, Jerusalem award for Journalism. Dina gives voice to Palestinian/Israeli friendships. Her podcasts tell the story of different pairs who work together, from peace activists on the Gaza-Israeli border to a soccer captain and coach in the Galilee.

Please watch for our eblasts and join us! Help us kick off the New Year with a greater involvement to benefit others!

**JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

(239) 566-1771

**The sandy beaches and floors
of Jewish history**

Marina Berkovich

It is now trending to have a service on the beach. Open air is a good alternative in the Covid-conscious era. A few local synagogues are offering that. But have you ever been to a sand floor synagogue? There are only five of them in the entire world.

- ◆ Sha'are Shalom Synagogue in Kingston, Jamaica: Built in 1885, after the merger of Sephardi and Ashkenazi synagogues, originally consecrated in 1704 and 1796, respectively, it united Jews from such familiar cities as Port Royal, Spanish Town and Montego Bay.
- ◆ Hebrew Congregation of St. Thom-

as in Charlotte Amalie: Built in 1833, home to a congregation that dates to 1796, it is the second oldest U.S. synagogue after Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, built in 1763.

- ◆ The third Caribbean basin sand floor synagogue is Mikve Israel-Emanuel in Curacao, built in the 1650s. This island has always been Dutch, so there is a lot of tradition carried forward from there.
- ◆ The Neveh Shalom Synagogue in Suriname, South America, is also of Dutch origin, although currently home to the Ashkenazi community, and is affiliated with Orthodox Judaism. It was built from 1716-1723 by the Sephardi Jews.
- ◆ The Portuguese Synagogue of Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, known as Esnoga: Constructed from 1671-1675, it is the home

for Ladino-speaking Jews. Esnoga means synagogue. In the post-Alhambra Decree of 1492 to choose conversion to Christianity or exile, many Iberian Peninsula Jews fled to the north. With them came the need to hide the details of their religious practices from their neighbors. Sandy floors did not give away the sounds of the wooden shoes as the wood floors did.

The experience of a sandy floor, in my humble opinion, is to remind us that no matter how high and mighty we may think of ourselves at times, we are still nothing but the individual grains of sand, and for some inexplicable reason, always the hunted.

There are times when the sand is on dry land and times when the same sand is deep underwater, but in the end, it is the fate of each grain's journey and its destination. One may stop on the beach in St. Thomas and take a hand-

ful of sand to add to its synagogue's floor and ponder on the meaning of our interconnectivity to Jews of all times. The more we uncover about the Jewish sand grains of Southwest Florida, the more fascinating our story becomes.

Help us fulfill our mission of historical preservation and education: Family Membership is \$54; Individual Membership is \$36; Student Membership is \$18. Please join us online by entering the appropriate amount or mail your check to:
The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida
8805 Tamiami Trail North,
Suite # 255, Naples FL 34108
833.547.7935 (833.JHS.SWFL)
www.jhsswf.org ~ office@jhsswf.org
Virtual Museum of SWFL
Jewish History <http://jewishhistorysouthwestflorida.org/>

TEMPLE BETH EL
Fort Myers**(239) 433-0018****www.templebethel.com**

How splendid it was to welcome the High Holy Days in person at Temple Beth El. In this New Year, we will be sharing services, holidays, celebrations, activities and programs with our community of friends and family.

Did you know that The Learning Tree at Temple Beth El was the first five-star-rated preschool in our four-county area? We are so pleased to welcome children back to in-person classes. As in past years, our students can look forward to a stimulating year of social and academic development. Schedule a tour or find out more about our stellar school and its vibrant curriculum. Contact Director Jesyca Virnig at learningtree15@yahoo.com.

We welcome everyone to visit Temple Beth El and participate in all we have to offer. Here are just a few of the many exciting programs and activities in October.

What is a "lone soldier?" The lone soldiers of the IDF are young men and women who make Aliyah from many different countries, leaving their family and friends, proud to volunteer in the IDF. The Lone Soldier program in

Israel gives these soldiers a kibbutz residence and adoptive family for the duration of their service. To show our support of these brave and dedicated soldiers, the Temple

Beth El Israel Committee is promoting an initiative to make a lone soldier's kibbutz life more like a home. Find out more and participate in this important and heartwarming initiative at templebethel.com/israel-lone-soldier.

Book Club will begin another stimulating season on Wednesday, October 6 at 2:45 p.m. The October selection is the award-winning novel *All the Rivers* by Israeli writer Dorit Rabinyan. Everyone is invited to join the virtual Book Club, so mark your calendar to help select the books to be read this year.

Congratulations to the Sisterhood for completing a successful Backpack Drive. Over 60 backpacks stuffed with school supplies were distributed to underserved children in Lee County. Upcoming Sisterhood programs will include a Zoom introduction to Dress for Success in Lee County, movies with Jewish themes and speakers, and our Sisterhood Rummage Sale. Check out our website for more details on these and many upcoming programs and events.

The Mitzvah Committee contin-

ues with its initiatives to directly assist those in need. Hundreds of pounds of donations have been collected at the monthly Drive In Drop Off food and feminine products collections. Donations are accepted at Temple Beth El on the first Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. The recent program of writing cards to children in the hospital, seniors in assisted living, Florida veterans and Israeli soldiers continues. Thank you to everyone for your generosity. Join in the giving! The "Pass it Forward" program collects and shares wonderful stories of mitzvahs done and mitzvahs received. Many heartwarming emails have been received at TBECares613@gmail.com. Send yours today.

On the lighter side, the very popular Men's Club-sponsored virtual Bingo is back starting Sunday, October 31

at 7:00 p.m.

The next virtual Israel Tour will be announced sometime this fall.

Finally, looking to the future, Temple Beth El is proud to announce that Lincoln Must will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, November 20. Mazel Tov! We send our best wishes to Lincoln and his family on reaching this milestone.

To learn more about Temple Beth El and our programs, visit our website at templebethel.com. Don't forget to check out our recurring programming at templebethel.com/zoom-page. Follow us on Facebook @TempleBethElFortMyers and on Instagram @templebethelfortmyers for updates, information and more details about our online, and now in-person, community experiences.

SHALOM LIFE CENTER
Fort Myers**(239) 218-3433****www.shalomlifecenter.org**

Shalom Life Center is Southwest Florida's warm and welcoming home for contemporary Jewish life with a passionate commitment to community and spiritual growth where everyone is always welcome.

Every Friday night at 7:30 p.m., we experience an uplifting, musical and meaningful Livestream Shabbat service. To join with us, visit www.shalomlifecenter.org and click on SLC TV.

Every Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m., SLC offers an interactive and participatory Torah and Kabbalah study led by Rabbi Lawrence Dermer with a focus on the relevance of our timeless traditions and bringing the ancient wisdom of Torah and Kabbalah into

our daily lives.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation, Women's Circle Ladies Night, What's Up Wednesday, Book Club, Torah study, Green Team, Yiddish Culture Club,

Monthly Healing Services and our Virtual Oneg Shabbat are taking place in our SLC Zoom room for the time being. If you'd like to learn more, please send us an email or give us a call.

SLC also offers many other opportunities to enhance your Jewish life and learning, and further your involvement in community service while making friends in a warm and welcoming community.

Let your spirit soar at Shalom Life Center, where community is family, and prayer is always inspirational, meaningful and musical. For more information, visit www.shalomlifecenter.org.


*Women's Giving Circle**What is a Women's Giving Circle?*

The Women's Giving Circle empowers women as funders, decision makers and agents of change. Members contribute \$360 and have an equal vote where funds are distributed.

- * A chance to make an impact on the lives of women and children in Israel & Overseas
- * Decide collectively where funds will be dispersed
 - * Achieve greater impact as a circle
- * Meet new people & enjoy the company of other like-minded women of all ages in our community

To join and for more information call Debbie Sanford

239.481.4449 x4 or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

The Jewish Federation Seeks Volunteers with Foreign Language Skills.

The Jewish Family Services division of the Jewish Federation has found that clients with limited English language skills encounter difficulty accessing social services otherwise available in our community. We would like to help break this language barrier.

If you speak languages besides English, we invite you to serve as an occasional interpreter, by phone or in person, for our clients, when they communicate with various social service agencies.

Do you speak

Spanish, Russian, French, Creole, Haitian, Mandarin, etc.?
Please share your gift of language with the needy in our area.



Send your response to Federation Board member Robert Thomas ritritrit@hotmail.com. We will contact you as needed. Thank you.

TEMPLE JUDEA
Fort Myers
(239) 433-0201
www.tjswfl.org

The new year has gotten off to a great start at Temple Judea with beautiful and meaningful services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur led by Rabbi Sack and Hazzan Austerklein. They were followed by a festive Sushi in the Sukkah and Pizza in the Hut evening during Sukkot.

Temple Judea will continue to hold a combination of in-person and online services and events until it is determined that it is safe to do otherwise. Any indoor events will require the wearing of masks.

Adult Education classes will begin on Monday evening, October 18. If you are not a member, but are interested in the classes, call the synagogue office

for more information. Members should check the weekly newsletter for more information.

It is not too late to join Rabbi Sack's "Introduction to Judaism"

class which began on August 16. Learn about belief and prayer, Shabbat, holidays and dietary laws, ethics and values, history, and modern communities. The course is a prerequisite for people considering conversion.

Rabbi Sack will resume his monthly lunchtime Torah study on Thursday, October 7. The class is held the first Thursday of each month, at noon, at the offices of Myers & Brettholz. There is no cost to attend, and all levels of Jewish background are welcome.

Chaverot has several activities planned for the next few months. The next book club discussion is on Tuesday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m. The book is *All the Rivers* by Dorit Rabinyan.

While the goal is to eventually have book club meetings in person, at this time the October 19 discussion will continue to be online. Check with the synagogue office for Zoom information.

Join Chaverot members for a monthly "Let's Walk, Let's Talk" stroll starting on Thursday, October 21 at 9:00 a.m. The first walk will be around Lakes Park. Morning weather should be just right for a nice walk. Afterwards, those interested can go for a cup of coffee and "a nosh." Contact Leni Sack or call the synagogue office if you are interested.

A new monthly Lunch and Learn program will begin at Temple Judea starting in November. Bring a dairy lunch. We'll provide the drinks. Learn about current topics of interest in the Jewish world. Lunch and Learn will begin on Wednesday, November 10 at 11:30 a.m.

Temple Judea continues to ac-

cept food donations for the Jewish Federation food pantry, and menstrual products for CYCLE FORWARD, a program that distributes menstrual products to women in need. There is a barrel by the front door of the shul for cans and boxes of food, and a basket in the lobby for the donations to CYCLE FORWARD. Other social action projects are being planned for the coming year.

Regularly scheduled events:

- Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m. Friday evening services are preceded with a wine and cheese reception at 6:15 p.m.
- Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. (no Kiddush lunches at this time)
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m.
- Rabbi Sack's monthly lunchtime Torah study sessions the first Thursday of each month at noon at the offices of Myers & Brettholz

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS
Sanibel
(773) 251-8862
www.batyam.org

We hope everyone had a sweet Rosh Hashanah and a meaningful Yom Kippur.

High Holiday Services for 5782

Services were held mostly via Zoom as in many congregations. Rabbi Stephen Fuchs, Cantor Murray Simon and accompanist Abbey Allison were in Fellowship Hall, and cellist Susannah Kelly joined them for Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur. As always, their beautiful afternoon musical interlude provided a welcome opportunity for us to reflect on the day. We are grateful for all of the readers who participated by reciting prayers. A few of them were youngsters, and we were delighted by their participation. A special thank you goes to Harrison Snowden, who ably blew the shofar all the way from Princeton.

Bat Yam's Dave Waks and Michael Samet have been working with a consultant to upgrade our audiovisual capabilities. With strategically placed microphones and cameras, services were improved. However, this is an ongoing project, and we expect future enhancements in the months to come.

Many thanks to Dave and Michael for sharing their technical expertise and their time.

Congregants' Hour

Each year, right after the morning service on Yom

Kippur, the Day of Atonement, three congregants spend 10 minutes speaking about their spiritual paths. When Rabbi Stephen Fuchs asks members to do this, he encourages them to talk about anything they wish and to include their favorite memories. He suggests topics such as what Yom Kippur means to them, why being Jewish is important, what their thoughts are about God, and how they see the Jewish future.

Rabbi Fuchs says the Congregants' Hour on Yom Kippur is as successful a program as he ever initiated. He implemented the idea at his first pulpit at Temple Isaiah in Columbia, Maryland. Based on its success there, he executed it at Congregation Ohabai Sholom in Nashville, Tennessee, and repeated it yet again when he became the rabbi of Beth Israel in West Hartford, Connecticut. It is still going strong at his former congregations as it is here at Bat Yam, where we are implementing it for the fifth consecutive year.

The main reason Rabbi Fuchs wanted to bring Congregants' Hour to his former congregations and to Bat Yam is that although communities

may be close, everyone has experiences in their lives of which others may be unaware. Yom Kippur provides the opportunity to reflect on those experiences,

To paraphrase Rabbi Fuchs, on Yom Kippur we allow ourselves to be more vulnerable to our struggles and shortcomings than on other days. As a result, both the volunteer speakers and the congregation experience a deep self-examination, leading to repentance and change.

People take their assignments very seriously. They prepare their talks diligently and add meaning to their spiritual quest and that of others who worship with them on the holiest day of the year.

I once asked Stephen about his feedback from previous Congregants' Hours and whether he noticed any positive changes in his congregants as a result of the program. He said feedback from all three communities and Bat Yam had been very positive. He added, "When speakers open themselves up and share sometimes traumatic or difficult times, others are genuinely very

appreciative."

This year's speakers were Alan Fisher, Dr. Sheila Sklar and Riv Schwartz.

Alan talked about his journey as a Jewish boy growing up in New Orleans and the Jewish influences that affected him from then to now. He also shared two life-changing experiences that led him to a profound spiritual awakening.

Sheila talked about being raised in a secular Jewish family with no practice of religion, and how her life's journey led her to embrace the Torah.

Riv reached deep inside to determine what she should talk about. She finally decided to blend her dad's stringent sense of tradition with her mom's unconditional sense of love, and she was grateful to have this opportunity for personal growth.

Bat Yam Temple of the Islands welcomes members, visitors and guests. If you have any questions, please email them to batyamsanibel@gmail.com. You may also contact President Alan Lessack directly by calling 773.251.8862.

COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE
Fort Myers
(239) 466-6671
www.fortmyerssynagogue.com

Heartfelt condolences to Steve Starr and his family on the death of his mother Sara on September 13.

Weekly Sabbath Eve in-person worship is each Friday at 7:00 p.m. followed by a social hour. It is also offered on Zoom. Regular Sabbath eve dinners will resume when medical conditions improve.

Torah Study on Zoom begins every Sabbath at 9:30 a.m. Weekly adult

education on Zoom takes place every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. Email syn-free@comcast.net for the weekly reading assignment.

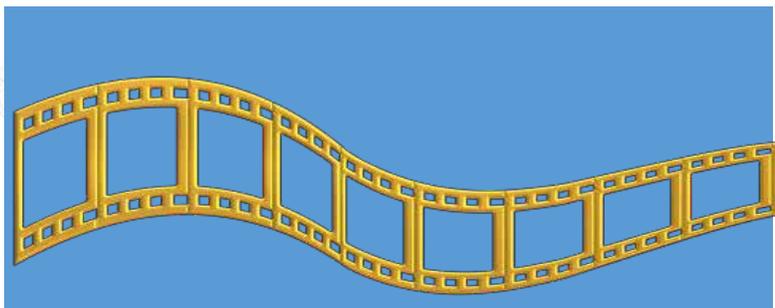
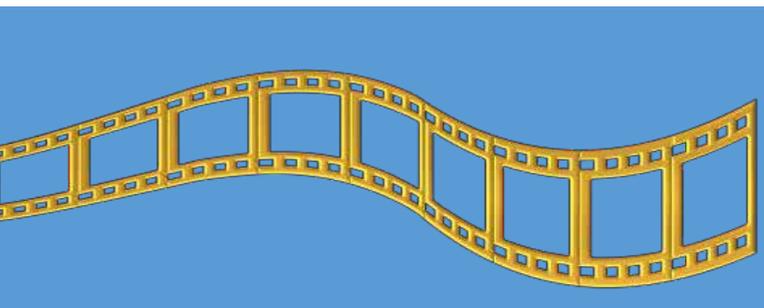
The C.F.S. "Zoom Room" can be easily accessed through its website at fortmyerssynagogue.com.

The synagogue's home is at The S.W. Florida Masonic Center, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers. Now in its 17th year under Rabbi Bruce Diamond's leadership, it is a nationally recognized Jewish "open resource" whose events and programs are open to all at no charge.

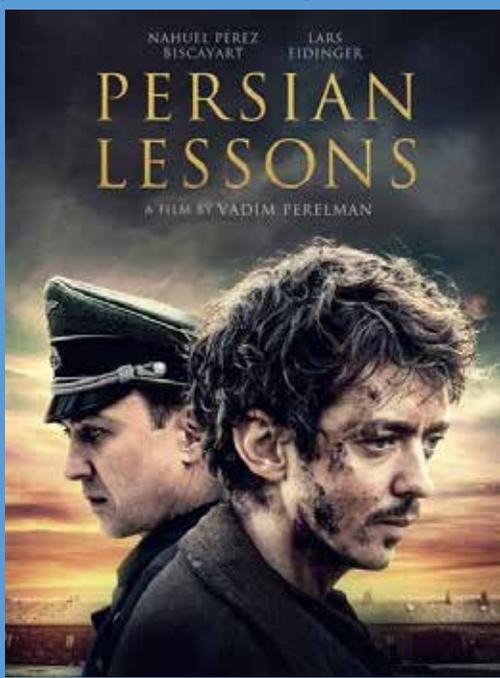
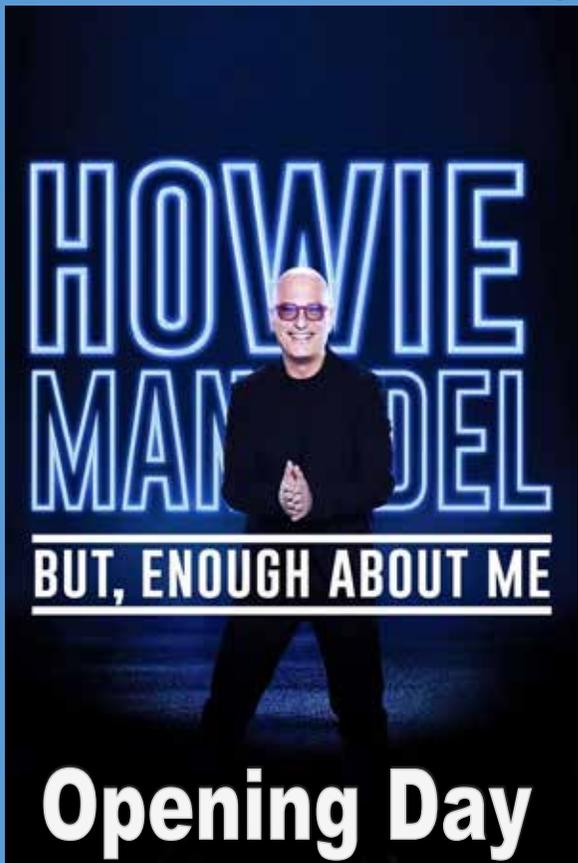
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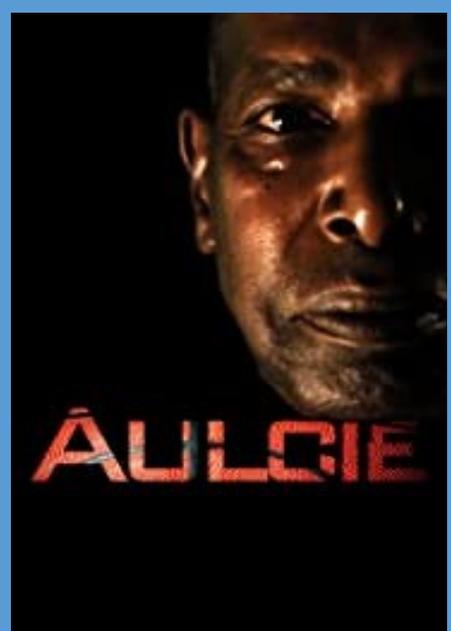
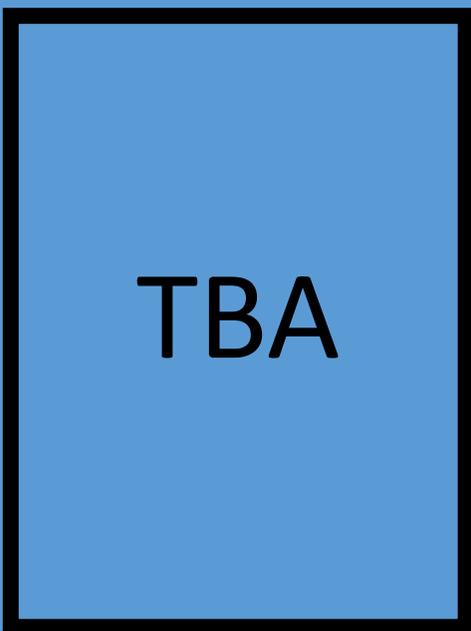
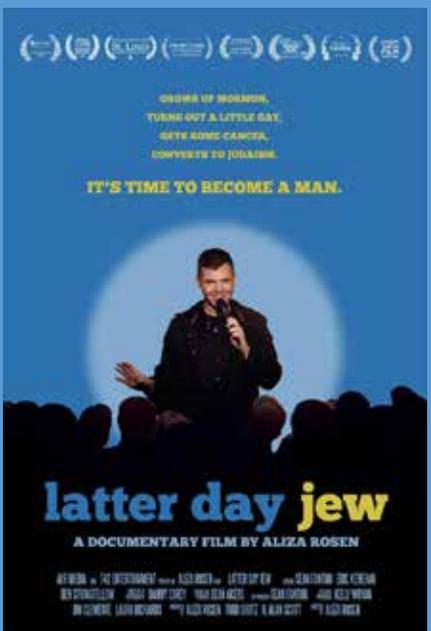
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