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Published by the Jewish Federation
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Vol. 43, No. 8 ■ April 2021 / 5781

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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 Partisan political opinions will not be published, but opinions on subjects affecting the Jewish community are welcome.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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**APRIL ISSUE
EDITORIAL DEADLINE:
Wednesday, April 7**

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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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Thank you, volunteers!

By Sherri Zucker, Federation Co-President

Where would the Jewish Federation be without our volunteers? It's something I don't like to think about. We are able to do so much more and stretch our resources much further because of our active and dedicated volunteers.

National Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 18-24, 2021. This special week was started in 1974 to highlight our country's need for volunteers and to show gratitude for their service. President Richard Nixon urged all Americans to observe the week by seeking out a volunteer opportunity. He also called upon all communities to "recognize volunteers by observing the week with special ceremonies to honor those who have given countless hours for the betterment of our communities and the American way of life."

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people,



■ Sherri Zucker

Program notes

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

Happy Spring! I feel like it's time to turn the corner and look toward the future, without Covid. Hopefully, many of you have received the vaccine by now. You might be getting the itch to get out with friends, visit with family and travel again. I feel the same way. Because it's not yet time to board a plane with our passports, I wanted to bring some fun and educational travel experiences to you. In April, May and June we will take you on a Virtual Tour Series with visits to Argentina, Paris and Majorca, Spain.



■ Debbie Sanford

In April, Claudia Hercman in Argentina will take us on a two-day tour. We will not only visit famous Jewish sites, but learn about the immigration of Jews to Argentina, the history of Argentina's role during WWII, and what Jewish life and culture is like there today. Join us on April 26 and 27 at 7:00 p.m.

learn new skills and stay engaged with your community. According to the website Statista, there are approximately 64 million volunteers in the United States. As the chair of the Jewish Federation's Senior Lunch Bunch program, I realized that we were absolutely dependent on our volunteers.

The Jewish Federation has volunteers in many different areas. In programming, volunteers help with the Jewish Film Festival, Israel Independence Day and author events. In Jewish Family Services, volunteers work in the food pantry, put on the Senior Lunch and visit the elderly to deliver holiday bags. We also have volunteers who work in the Federation office.

An unknown author said, "Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties, I want to express my gratitude to all of our volunteers for the many hours of service that they contribute! ▲

In May, Karen Rudel from Sight Seeker's Delight in Paris, which offers 14 different in-person tours if you are visiting Paris, takes us on the Jewish Tour of the beautiful city. Karen is originally from New Jersey. She is personable and funny, and works with many Federations and synagogues visiting Paris, but since the pandemic she can offer only virtual tours. Join us for a 90-minute tour on Sunday, May 23 at 11:30 a.m. It would be fun to get together online and have a Sunday brunch during the tour.

Our last tour is with Dani Rotstein with Limud Mallorca in Spain. The tour, "The Secret Jews of Mallorca Island," will be on Thursday, June 3 at 11:00 a.m. The Spanish Island of Majorca is known for its beach resorts, limestone mountains and being home to tennis celebrity Rafael Nadal. But Majorca holds a secret, which is never discussed in most travel guides.

Registration for all three tours is open on our website. Please visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org/virtual-events to sign up. See you soon. ▲

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TRIBUTES

The Board of Directors and staff of the Jewish Federation
wish Leni Sack a speedy recovery.

In memory of Rachel Kushner MacCormack
from Toby & Sandi Sauls
from Ronny & Marie Taschner

In memory of Gorman Jaffe
from Lynn Jaffe

In celebration of Charles Edwards
from Harriet Edwards

In memory of Natalie Levitt
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In memory of Michael Westerman
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In memory of Cynthia Boyer
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In honor of Jack Cohen's 90th birthday
from Julie & Sandy Rochman
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**Please send your Tributes to Lori Ramos
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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 Celebration, Jewish genealogy, Israeli folk dancing, social groups, etc.
- ✧ **L'CHAYIM** published monthly to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues.
- ✧ 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 Services

- ✧ Support families of children with special needs.
- ✧ Addressing pressing community needs related to volunteerism, institutional cooperation 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

I started my article about a food pantry client by writing that she is someone I have come to know and love. I then heard my father's voice saying, "Oh Jodi, you love everyone right away, you think everyone is wonderful!"



■ Jodi Cohen

Although I want to change a thousand things about myself immediately, if not sooner, being able to discern a person's goodness is not one of them. What's true is that I've become close to many of the people who visit The Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry month after month. A client with a household of six didn't show up for a while and almost fell off his chair when I called him to check in. I do a short medical check-in every month with someone

since his heart attack. I know who has children with special needs, who bakes, who is one of nine siblings. I will never forget the phone message I received from a black client after the Charlottesville riots in 2017 that said, "Miss Jodi, we love you and we're thinking of you. We are so sorry for what happened." All of these people have become my people.

I'll refer to my client as Batya for this story. I asked Batya how she was doing during her February food pantry visit and she replied, "Well, our hot water heater broke recently, and I just sat in the middle of the floor and cried." There are several people living in her mobile home.

When I asked Batya how much a new water heater costs, she waved her hand dismissively, and said it was a lot of money and that she couldn't afford it. I pressed her about the cost and learned it was roughly \$300-\$400.

"Batya, darling, this is something the Federation can help you with."

Buh buh buh, soon after our conversation, Batya had a new hot water heater and was giddy with gratitude, saying over and over again, "You are all my angels – you, Alan and everyone who made this possible." To be clear: *You* are the angels to whom Batya was referring.

Due to your generosity, the Federation has recently helped clients with car insurance, rent, mold removal, childcare and utility bills. A woman who got an apartment through the Salvation Army's Rapid Re-housing program called me one day at 3:45 p.m. asking if we could help her buy a bed. By 4:00 p.m. I had made arrangements for a mattress set to be delivered to her. Moments like this are exhilarating. I thought of everyone who supports the Marcia Can Help Fund as I wiggled around in my chair, chanting, "We bought a bed! We bought a bed!"

Lives aren't quite returning to normal, although more people are returning to work or finding jobs. However, being able to make ends meet on a monthly basis still remains a challenge for so many people in our community. Asking for help does not come easily for some of us due to pride, stubbornness or the false belief that we *should* be able to do everything on our own. I don't know about you, but I have teeny-tinsy control issues, and asking for help can easily put me over the edge. Imagine how the people who call the Federation must feel when they are in crisis, in trouble or 'in between trapezes' as a friend of mine once said.

Your support of the Federation allows Jewish Family Services to be a viable, dependable resource for those who need help. Your contribution makes a big difference in the lives of



those we serve, whether you drop off groceries, give gift cards or donate to the Marcia Can Help Fund. We are grateful for your ongoing thoughtfulness and generosity, especially this past year.

Speaking of serving others, I read a Talmud quote that reminds me, literally, of the Federation's food pantry: "Where love is, no room is too small." While the physical pantry is small, the heart and spirit of the splendid volunteers are huge. There is such marvelous hustling and bustling by everyone to make sure our clients have grocery and toiletry bags that are full of good things. A big thank you to Barbara Gribin, Barbara Henry, Carolyn Gora, Debbie Feinberg, Doreen Kostel, Elise Sewall, Harriet Lipschutz, Karen Whitman, Laurie McConville, Laurie Morris, Linda Silver, Mary Beth & Rachel Mandelkorn, Randi & Payton Wolf, Robert Thomas, Samantha Guterman, Suzanne Orkin, Tracey Seigel and Valerie Franklin.

If you wonder what the pantry needs, please read Debbie Sanford's weekly e-newsletter. (To sign up for the e-newsletter, drop Debbie a line at debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org.) If you'd like to drop off food or gift cards, take the quiz next to this article to find out how it all works. Thank you for being an essential part of the Federation family. Hopefully, we are getting closer and closer to a time when we will be able to hug each other. My disclaimer: I cannot guarantee if or when I'll let you go.▲



Three easy ways to donate:

Drop off food in the BIG BLUE BIN on the Federation porch Monday - Thursday.

Buy gift cards online or at the store. Drop off or mail to Federation.

Go online to donate at: www.jewishfederationlcc.org or call 239-481-4449, x2.

FEDERATION FOOD PANTRY POP QUIZ

- Who is eligible to receive food from the pantry?
 - Only Jewish people
 - People living in Lee and Charlotte Counties
 - Those who know the password
- Does the food that I donate have to be kosher?
 - Yes
 - No
 - That is a secret
- Which item is NOT included in each bag of food?
 - cereal (b) peanut butter (c) tuna (d) vegetables (e) beans (f) pasta (g) tomato sauce (h) fruit (i) rice (j) mac & cheese (k) dessert
- How will I know what food the pantry needs?
 - Read the e-blast every Wednesday
 - Guess
 - See Question 3
- Do I have to call first if I'm dropping off food?
 - No
 - Yes, call every 15 minutes
 - Only if it's a large delivery
- When can I donate food?
 - After sundown
 - Only on Shabbat
 - Mon-Thurs, 8:30am - 3:30 pm
- I want to volunteer for the pantry:
 - Call Jodi Cohen at 239.481.4449, x2
 - Email: jodicohen@jfedlcc.org
 - Look for audition notices
- Who is Binny?
 - Jodi's assistant
 - The big blue bin on the Federation porch for all pantry donations

ANSWER KEY
1-b; 2-b; 3-Trick question! Everything is included; 4-a,c; 5-a,c; 6-c; 7-a,b; 8-b

The first Zoom Passover

By Brian Simon, Federation Past-President

And it came to pass that a great illness spread throughout Egypt, necessitating social distancing requirements. Pharaoh took no meetings in person, but he did check email. And he saw a Zoom invitation from moishe1593bce@mum-me.com. And he clicked the link to see Moses in



■ Brian Simon

front of a burning bush background. “Moses! It’s been a long time! What happened to you? It’s like you just disappeared. But Moses could not hear the words coming from Pharaoh’s mouth. And Moses said unto Pharaoh: You’re still on mute.

And Pharaoh apologized and clicked on the microphone icon at the bottom of his tablet. And Pharaoh said unto Moses: Can you hear me now?

And Moses said unto Pharaoh: Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Let my people go that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness.

And Pharaoh said: Why would the people hold a feast for you, Moses?

And Moses said: No, not for me. It was The Lord who saith “Me,” with a capital M. The feast is for Him, with a capital H.

And Pharaoh said: Who is the Lord, that I should hearken unto His voice? I am dealing with a deadly virus

that is a plague on the people of Egypt! And Moses said: You call this a plague? You ain’t seen nothing yet, boychik!

And Moses’s brother Aaron joined the call: Sorry, I’m late. I couldn’t find the passcode.

And Pharaoh said: This virus has interrupted our supply chain. So you Israelites can gather your own straw to make bricks. And I’ll still expect the same level of production!

And the people, hearing the news, complained to Moses: Dude, what the heck?!

And Moses said unto the Lord: Dude, what the heck?!

And the Lord said unto Moses: Let’s try this again, this time with signs and wonders. Have Aaron throw down his staff, and I will turn it into a serpent.

And Moses sent another Zoom invitation.

And Pharaoh responded: What now?

And Aaron cast down his staff, and the Lord turned it into a serpent.

Then, Pharaoh called for his sorcerers and magicians, and they told Pharaoh: We believe this is just a filter. And Pharaoh’s technology minister showed him how to make his face appear to be a cat.

And the Lord said to Moses: Pharaoh’s heart is stubborn. I will teach him what a plague looks like. Actually, 10 of them.

And He turned the water of the

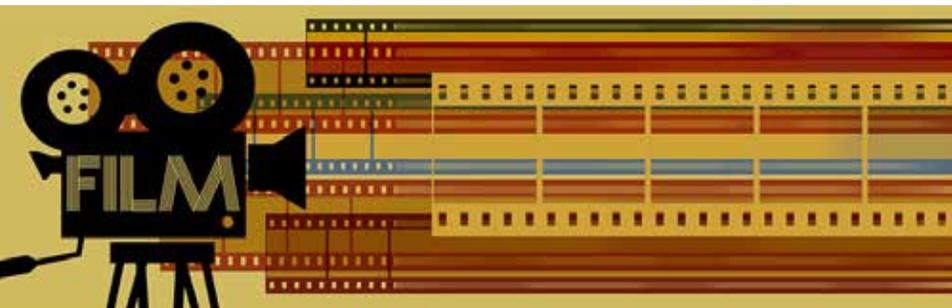
Nile into blood, and smote the borders with frogs, and caused insect infestations and boy did it stink! And then He sent murrain. And most people didn’t even know what murrain was, so they had to look it up, and they saw it was a pestilence on livestock. And then the Lord sent boils and hail and locusts and darkness, and He thought about sending political posts on Facebook, but he decided to save that plague for later.

And finally, the Lord said to Moses: One more plague I will bring upon Pharaoh, and this time he finally will let you go. Overnight, I will go out into the midst of Egypt, and I will smite every firstborn of the Egyptians, and there shall be a great cry throughout the land. But I will pass over the houses of the Israelites, so you might want to remember this day as “Passover.” And with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, the Lord made air quotes when

He said the word “Passover.”

And the Lord continued: And this holiday shall be a feast of unleavened bread, and I know that a “feast” (air quotes again) should have better bread than “matzah” (more air quotes), but stay with me here. And you shall gather together each year except for 5780 and 5781 when you shall use Zoom technology, and invite so many guests that you must use tables and chairs that fold and you will sing songs and drink four cups of wine from a vineyard called Manischewitz and open your doors for Elijah and buy powdered food in boxes and something called “jelly rings.”

And Moses said unto the Lord, “Oy. You got any of those signs and wonders for when I tell Zippora?”  Brian Simon is former president of the Federation. His views are not necessarily those of the Federation or its board.



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JNF-USA Breakfast for Israel: *Fauda* Style

Stars of the binge-worthy Israeli Netflix hit series *Fauda* will be joining Jewish National Fund-USA (JNF-USA), the Southwest Florida community and thousands of supporters across the country for the organization's annual Breakfast for Israel on Sunday, April 18 at 10:30 a.m. While participants may have to BTOB (Bring Their Own Bagel) to the virtual "breakfast" this year, JNF-USA promises to deliver the same high-quality, star-studded event that community members have been accustomed to since the first annual Breakfast for Israel dazzled eventgoers in 2003.

"Jewish National Fund-USA's Breakfast for Israel is sure to be a much-looked-forward-to event on the communal calendar," said Toby Siegel, JNF-USA Century Council member. "This year, we're hosting a vibrant celebration in honor of Yom Ha'Atzmaut as we bring our community together to ensure a bright, prosperous future for the land and people of Israel and Jewish people everywhere. We're thrilled

According to The Wrap News Inc., "Despite the language barrier, *Fauda* (chaos in Arabic), somehow managed to break out of the dark corners of Netflix's foreign-language section and get noticed by both Hollywood heavy-hitters and *New York Times* TV critics." Guests who attend JNF-USA's 2021 Breakfast for Israel will hear from *Fauda* celebs Tsahi Halevi, who plays

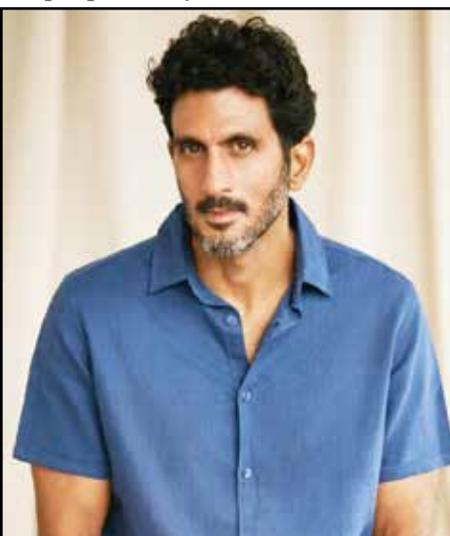


Fauda star Rona-Lee Shimon (photo credit: Eyal Nevo)

Naor, and Rona-Lee Shimon, who plays Nurit, live in studio. Yoav Limor, a veteran military correspondent who has been covering the Middle East conflict for the last 33 years, will moderate the interview and Q&A session. Today, Limor is the host of a morning show on Israel's Channel 2 Keshet, a defense commentator for *Israel Hayom* and a contributor on i24 News.

"Whether in person or virtually, JNF-USA has seen attendance at Breakfast for Israel events across the country skyrocket year after year, as hundreds of supporters from coast to coast come together to support the land and people of Israel," said Edie Chaietz, JNF-USA's Century Council and Sarasota Board of Directors. "This year, we're expecting record high participation in Florida and beyond. After all, who doesn't love *Fauda*!?"

To register for this free event, go to jnf.org/bfinaples. For more information, contact Joshua Mellits, Director, Western Florida, at 941.462.1330 x865 or jmellits@jnf.org. ▲



Fauda star Tsahi Halevi (photo credit: Dudi Hason)

to be able to host this event in the Southwest Florida community for the first time and look forward to hosting it in person in the coming years when life returns to normal after the pandemic."

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Event Chairperson **STACEY BRILL**, MSCCC-SLP Speech Pathologist

RUN/WALK SCHEDULE	ENTRY FEE THRU APRIL 11	ENTRY FEE AFTER APRIL 11
7:00 am: Check-in	Adult (18+): \$25.00	Adult (18+): \$30.00
8:00 am: 5K run or 2-mile walk	Youth (5-17): \$15.00	Youth (5-17): \$20.00
	Child (Under 5): No Charge	Child (Under 5): No Charge

Our Grande Dame, Naomi Bloom

On March 11, the 2021 class of Grande Dames shared their life stories with the Pace Girls. Among this year's class was our Grande Dame, Naomi Bloom.

The Pace Center for Girls provides girls and young women an opportunity for a better future through education, counseling, training and advocacy. Pace's annual Grande Dames Tea honors women who exemplify the organization's guiding principles and have made an impact through their roles in business, community and philanthropy. This inspirational event recognizes the unique perspectives and powerful insights that these women have gained in life. Honorees share their wisdom during a Q&A session led by the young women of Pace.

Naomi earned a degree in English literature from the University of Pennsylvania, minoring in natural sciences, followed by a Master of Business Ad-

ministration from Boston University. She spent the first two decades of her career going from software design and development of large-scale custom software to consulting with major organizations on their business and technology strategies. In 1987, she established her own consultancy firm, Bloom & Wallace, with the goal of changing the software foundations upon which HR management was conducted. Honored many times for her intellectual contributions and thought leadership, Naomi's revolutionary work remains the basis of global HR technology.

But Naomi's greatest honor was to have spent a truly wonderful half century with her beloved husband Ron Wallace. Together they pursued their

careers – Ron, a multi-degreed electrical engineer, retired in 1995 as NASA's Mission Manager for Search and Rescue – their love of boating and travel, and their commitment to philanthropy in their adopted hometown of Fort Myers.

As Naomi's long-standing health issues progressed, Ron's increased support made it possible for her to continue pursuing her ambitious career goals and to keep on traveling. At the top of her field, Naomi retired in 2018 when her beloved husband received his second cancer diagnosis. Naomi and Ron's half century together ended when, after they had both battled Ron's complex cancer with their collective skills and determination, Ron passed away in 2020.



Naomi Bloom

Her advice to the Pace Girls included four keys to success: lifelong learning, being comfortable in your own skin, knowing you have choices and making them carefully, and being able to think, read and listen critically. "Anyone who can do those four things will be just fine," she says.

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties has been the fortunate recipient of Naomi and Ron's generous philanthropy as they supported the needs of the indigent of our community. Additionally, she has dedicated 14 years to the board of the Florida Repertory Theatre and has been a major supporter of WFCU and the Southwest Florida Community Foundation.

We, at the Federation, are extremely proud of the contributions and accomplishments of our Ruby Lion of Judah, our Grande Dame, Naomi Bloom. ▲

New children's book by Rozzi Osterman

Rozzi Osterman, past president of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties, has written and just released a children's book that is available on Amazon. *I'm Not Ready To Go To Bed!* is a fun and shared bedtime experience, for children ages 2-6 and their readers.

You may remember that Rozzi wrote and directed the documentary, *Talia*, which was featured at our film festival with a Q&A after the screening. Talia Anderson is a charming young lady with high-functioning autism, and the film showed her aspirations to become a successful actress. She is definitely accomplishing her dreams. She

is currently a cast member on Netflix's *Atypical*.

Talia's mother Vickie Anderson is a graphic artist and created our Federation logo as well as other beautiful art for us. Talia and Vickie are now living bicoastal in L.A. and Cape Coral. Rozzi and Vickie became friends while working on the Federation marketing committee.

The idea of writing a bedtime book for children has been on Rozzi's wish list for many years. While living in Israel, Rozzi and her husband John would travel to the U.S. to visit family. It was always difficult to put their young son Elan to bed in different homes and set-

tings. She wanted to create a nighttime ritual that would start with playful verse, transition to fantasy, then flow to relaxation and meditation.

Fast forward 30 years, Rozzi constructs the content and her talented friend Vickie draws delightful illustrations to mirror her words. Rozzi says that she is thrilled with the final product. "We realized that not only do the poems engage and then calm the child, but the shared bedtime experience relaxes the reader too." The book



Rozzi Osterman with the front and back covers of her new book

is gender and race neutral, so any child can see themselves in the pages.

All proceeds from book sales are being donated to non-profit organizations that support children's needs. ▲

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

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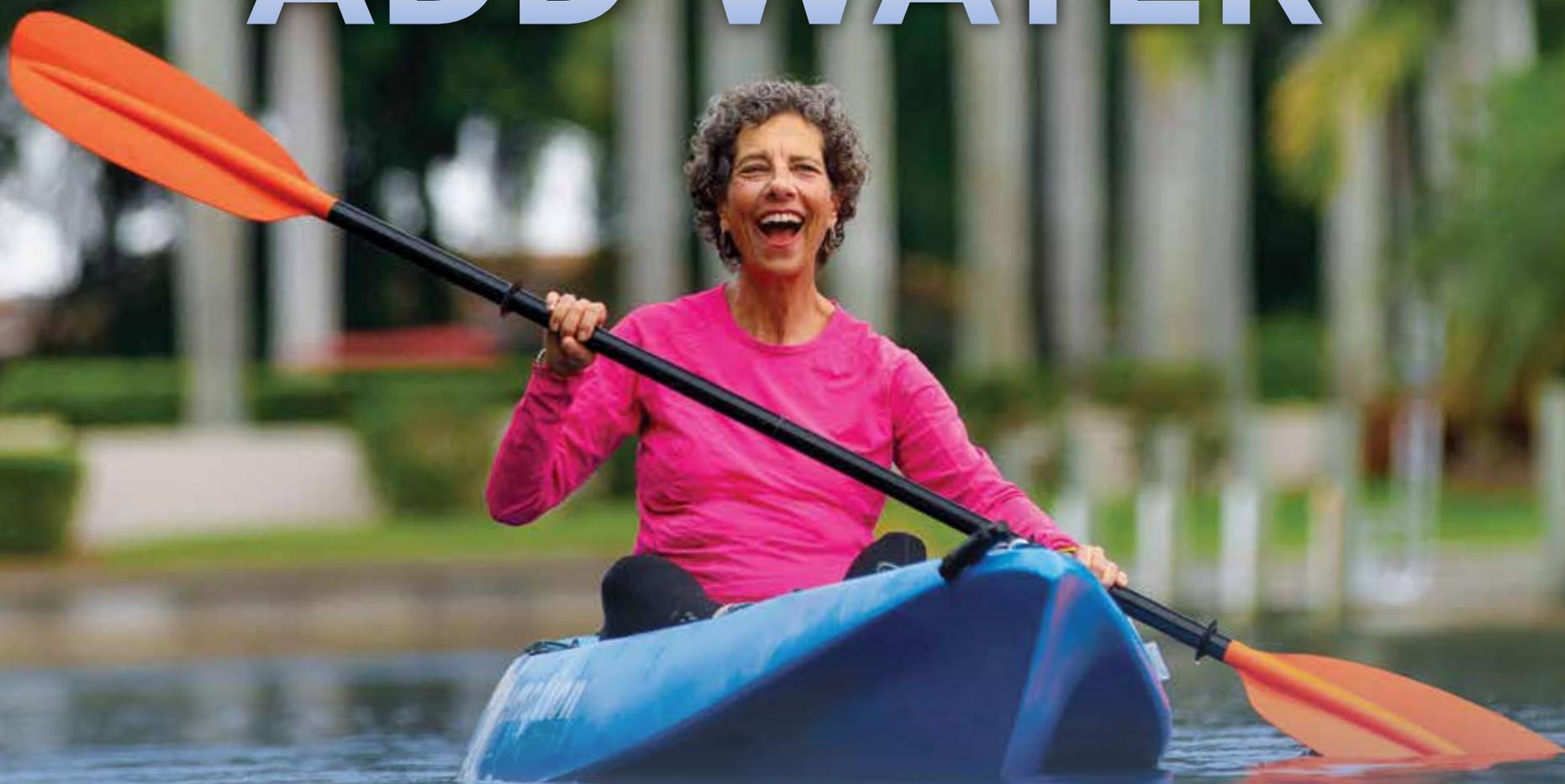
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"Judith Leiber's Legacy"

If you love glitz and glamor, fashion and handbags, then you probably know the name Judith Leiber. Her handbags created out of Swarovski crystals are famous around the world. Her life story and success story are legendary.

On Sunday, April 25 at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom, Temple Beth El will sponsor an event called "Judith Leiber's Legacy." For \$18 per household, you will have the opportunity to view an exhibit from the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU that "tells the story of a fearless woman ahead of her time.

This exhibition honors the Holocaust survivor-turned-mega-designer's life, work and legacy, and will feature photographs of Leiber alongside a comprehensive selection of her bags, belts, pillboxes and glasses from collectors in Florida, as well as from the Leiber Collection."

The Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU is the only museum dedicated to telling the story of more than 250 years of Florida Jewish History. It is located in South Beach and housed in two restored historic buildings that were once synagogues for Miami Beach's first Jewish congregation.

If you could visit, you would see the original synagogue built in 1929, and the second built in 1936, designed by Art Deco architect Henry Hohaus, featuring 80 stained-glass windows, a copper dome and a marble bimah. The two buildings are joined together by the Bess Myerson Gallery, named after the former Miss America, Bess Myerson.

Even though the museum is currently closed, they are offering this special Zoom tour of the Judith Leiber exhibition that was to take place March 2020. *FIU News* reported that Executive Director Susan Gladstone and Curator Jacqueline Goldstein worked with the Leiber Collection to curate the show, borrowing bags from collections of some of South Florida's most fashionable and philanthropic women.

"Leiber's work transcends fashion. Her bags are true works of art and

we are pleased to tell her remarkable story," Gladstone said.

Born in 1921, Leiber was the first female apprentice and master in the Hungarian Handbag Guild. She survived the Holocaust by initially staying with her family and 25 others in a one-bedroom apartment, and then lived in a cramped cellar in a ghetto with 60 other people.



Judith Leiber

Her innovative bags, called minaudières, continue to inspire designers the world over to think out of the box – in the case of the metal bag – and to stay strong and achieve their dreams, even in the case of extreme adversity," Gladstone said.

Madonna, Beyoncé, Katy Perry, Sarah Jessica Parker, Jennifer Lopez and Blake Lively are just a handful of the A-list fans of Judith Leiber evening bags. The great, late designer (Leiber passed away in 2018) made handbags go viral – on the red carpet and off – long before social media even existed. Leiber's innovative style is immortalized by her beloved animal- and food-themed minaudières. Bold, bright crystal-covered animals, desserts and produce are among the quirky designs that have graced the arms of royals, first ladies, socialites and fashionistas for decades.

All who register for this event will be in a drawing for a first edition, signed hardback copy of *The Artful Handbag* by Judith Leiber.

Information for the event can be found at www.templebethel.com. ▲

BAT MITZVAH



Allison Emily Manekin, daughter of Jennifer and Lawrence Manekin, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, April 24 at Temple Judea. Allison is a seventh-grader at Cypress Lake Middle School. She enjoys acting and dancing and is a frequent member of Creative Theater Workshop. She is interested in the environment and studying nature as well as becoming interested in political science. Allison is looking forward to an amazing summer at Camp Ramah Darom to add to her Jewish experiences. She is thankful to Rabbi Marc Sack, Diane Seidenstein, Tab Scribner and her religious school teachers in helping her prepare for this milestone. Although Allison's service will be virtual, she looks forward to being able to share it with her family and friends near and far.

Each month, L'CHAYIM will list your Life Cycle events – births, B'nai Mitzvah, engagements, etc. Submit your events to LChayim36@gmail.com.

Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

Thank you to all who took part in our annual Triumph fundraiser to benefit Museum Education programs. Triumph of Memory and Hope for the Future – the first virtual Triumph – had our largest Zoom audience to date. Considering that a year ago that the phrase “to zoom” primarily meant “to go faster,” this was quite an accomplishment for all of us! We are grateful for the support of all this year’s Triumph Sponsors.

We were so pleased to have Dr. Stephen D. Smith of the USC Shoah Foundation with us. He spoke of the Foundation’s work to preserve the testimonies and legacies of Holocaust Survivors. Dr. Smith is also a well-known lecturer on issues relating to the history and collective response to the Holocaust, genocide and crimes against humanity. A highlight of his presentation was a demonstration of the Foundation’s unique “Dimensions in Testimony” series developed using advanced technology. This amazing interactive program allows an audience to ask

questions of the holographic image of a Holocaust Survivor projected in front of them. The Survivor answers the questions in real-time, and can change facial expressions, move and even appear to take time to ponder the question. This digital experience was created by interviewing individual Survivors in a TV studio, where they were surrounded by many lights and cameras. They responded to hundreds of questions asked by an off-camera interviewer

about their lives during and after the Holocaust. The careful editing of these interviews and high-tech image projection makes it appear as though the Survivor is in the room with you. I was fortunate enough to be able to see this in person. If you ever have the chance to do so, I highly recommend it. This is just one of the Foundation’s projects created by using state-of-the-art technology.

The program also included a special “Curated Experience” featuring our Southwest Florida Holocaust Survivors. In interviews, they spoke of their involvement with our Museum and the importance to them of continuing to carry out our mission – to teach the lessons of the Holocaust to inspire action against bigotry, hatred and violence.

The preservation of Survivor memories, testimonies and stories from the Holocaust and other genocides are why the work of museums like ours and organizations like the USC Shoah Foundation is so important. Every day we are losing more of these eyewitnesses to the Holocaust and World War II. We must continue to share the lessons of the Holocaust so that students and the public will learn from the past and apply those lessons to their lives today.

We look forward to your participation in this month’s annual community commemoration of Yom HaShoah. With Covid-19 mandates still in effect, the ceremony will be hosted on Zoom by the Jewish Federation of Greater Naples. For more information and to RSVP for the Zoom link, please visit HMCEC.org.

Last month, several anonymous Benefactors generously issued a Challenge Grant to benefit our Education

programs. The Grant will run through June 30, 2021. Your donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to a total of \$35,000.

April is Genocide Awareness Month. In recognition of this, we will have a special Zoom program on Thursday, April 22 at 3:00 p.m. “Discussion with a Survivor of the Bosnian Genocide” will feature a conversation with Dr. Amra Sabic-El-Rayess. She is a Survivor of the Bosnian Genocide. She grew up in Bihac, Bosnia and Herzegovina. After surviving ethnic cleansing and more than 1,100 days under the Serbs’ military siege, she emigrated to the United States in

1996. By December 1999, she earned a BA in Economics from Brown University. Later, she obtained two master’s degrees and a Doctorate from Columbia University. She is the author with Laura Sullivan of *The Cat I Never Named: A True Story of Love, War, and Survival*. There is no charge to attend, but reservations will be required to receive the Zoom link. Email info@HMCEC.org for more information.

We also hope to present a Zoom program about the children’s book, *Hana’s Suitcase*, with a very special guest joining us. More information will be available shortly on our website at HMCEC.org.



Susan Suarez



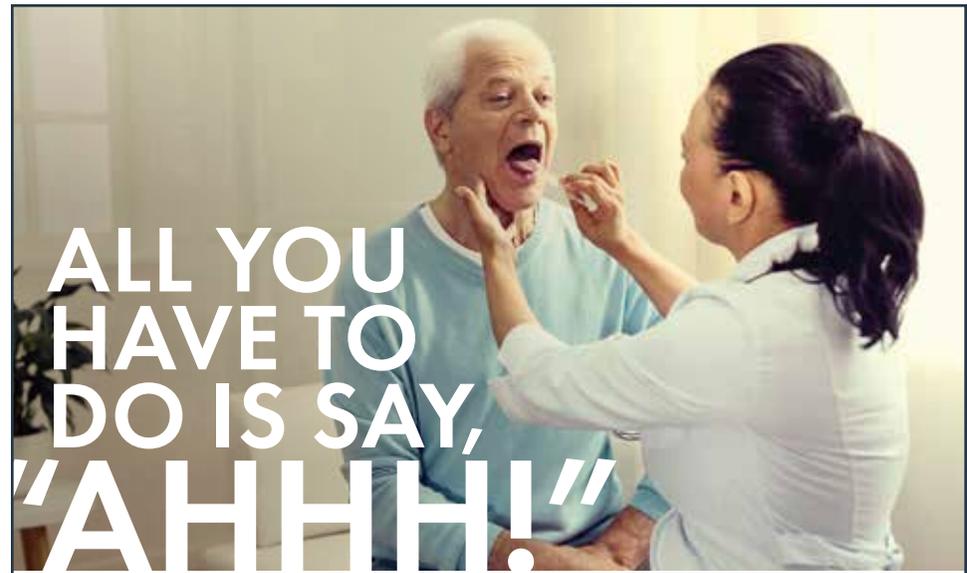
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Holographic photo from “Dimensions in Testimony”



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Hero Andre Trocme

By Ida Margolis

A few years ago, while reading Malcolm Gladwell's book *David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*, I read the story about a village in France called Le Chambon-sur-Lignon and what the entire town did for Jews during WWII. I know that Gladwell's book is non-fiction, so I wondered why, if this is a true story, I had never heard about it. I proceeded to research this village and discovered that indeed this was a true story. I learned about the amazing spiritual leader of the Protestant congregation in the village, Andre Trocme.

During WW II, this village became a haven for Jews fleeing the Nazis and their French collaborators. When the deportations began in France in 1942, Pastor Trocme urged his congregation to give shelter to "the people of the Bible." Soon hundreds of Jews were in the village and its outlying areas. Some found permanent shelter in Le Chambon; others were given temporary asylum until they were able to escape across the border. Jews were housed in numerous places, including with local townspeople and farmers even though they understood the danger. Some Jews were escorted on the dangerous treks to the Swiss border. It was amazing to read that an "entire community banded together to rescue Jews, viewing it as their Christian obligation."

An article about Pastor Trocme at yadvashem.org noted that, "The peo-

ple of Le Chambon acted upon their conviction that it was their duty to help their neighbors in need." The article continued, "Many factors joined together to create this generous spirit: the history of Protestant persecution as a religious minority in Catholic



France; empathy for Jews as the people of the Old Testament and a shared biblical heritage; and, last but not least, the powerful leadership and example of the pastor and his wife, Andre and Magda Trocme."

Obviously, it was not possible to keep these rescue activities secret for long. The Vichy authorities suspected what was taking place, and authorities demanded that the pastor cease his activities. When told to abandon the Jews, Pastor Trocme responded, "These people came here for help and for shelter. I am their shepherd. A shepherd does not forsake his flock... I do not know what a Jew is. I know only human beings." I was so moved when reading that, and thought about the risk and courage of someone who would make that response, rather than take the easy route of turning over the Jews

to the authorities.

Yad Vashem reported, "Neither pressure from the authorities nor searches by security agents diminished the resolve of the Trocmes and their team. On 15 August 1942, Trocme vehemently articulated his opinion to Georges Lamirand, a minister in the Vichy government, on an official visit to the small town. Several days later, gendarmes moved into Le Chambon to purge the town of its 'illegal' residents. Two weeks later, on 30 August, the suspense climaxed with rumors of an arrest warrant issued against the minister. In his overflowing church, Trocme urged his congregants to 'do the will of God, not of men.'" The gendarmes were ultimately withdrawn.

However, in February 1943, Trocme and two colleagues were arrested. Trocme was held for five weeks, pressured to sign a commitment to obey

all government orders. The minister refused to sign as ordered. He was released but forced to go underground, yet his positive influence on the residents of Le Chambon continued. They continued Pastor Trocme's legacy by welcoming persecuted Jews into their homes, enabling many of them to live until the end of the war.

On January 5, 1971, Yad Vashem recognized Andre Trocme, and on May 14, 1984, his wife Magda, as Righteous Among the Nations. A 1987 documentary, *Weapons of the Spirit*, was made about this village, but is not easily available. It was said that the documentary exposes a "conspiracy of good."

I am glad I learned about Andre Trocme, and hope his story is widely known. With conspiracies currently in the news, a "conspiracy of good" is welcome. Pass it on.▲

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Virtual Community Holocaust Program



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To register for the zoom link: www.JewishFederationlcc.org/Virtual-Events

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.

CNN Changes

On Thursday, April 1, **JAKE TAPPER** will assume the title of CNN's "lead political anchor." This title has long been held by **WOLF BLITZER**, 74. Also on April 1, Blitzer's daily CNN program, *The Situation Room*, will be reduced from two hours to one. *The Lead with Jake Tapper* will expand to two hours. Meanwhile, Tapper has already begun to share his Sunday program, *State of the Union*, with correspondent **DANA BASH**, 49. They host on alternate weeks.

All three have strong Jewish backgrounds. Blitzer is the son of Auschwitz survivors and became fluent in Hebrew while working for *The Jerusalem Post*. Tapper is a Jewish Day School grad. His mother, like his wife, are Jews-by-choice and he was married by his brother's wife, a Conservative rabbi.

Bash was formerly married to **JEREMY BASH**, 49, the son of a Conservative rabbi, and CNN correspondent **JOHN KING**, 59, who converted to Judaism before marrying Bash. Her mother has a master's degree in Jewish studies.

It occurred to me that if *Saturday Night Live* ever revives "Hanukkah Harry" (see YouTube), a fantasy character who brings presents to Jewish kids, Harry could name his reindeers "Bash, Blitzer and Tapper." Just sounds right somehow.

Punky Fest

After years of relative obscurity, **SOLEIL MOON FRYE**, 44, is back. A 10-episode reboot of *Punky Brewster*, the popular '80s sit-com, is now streaming on the Peacock channel. In the original, Punky (Frye) was a warm and funny seven-year-old who was abandoned by her parents. Luckily, she met a kind old man who eventually became her legal foster parent. In the new version, Izzy, a young girl who is suffering in the foster system, is taken in by (the adult) Punky (Frye).

In 1998, Frye wed TV producer **JASON GOLDBERG**, now 48, in a traditional Jewish ceremony and they have had four children. Sadly, they separated last year. But Goldberg is the producer of Frye's new documentary, *Kid 90* (now streaming on Hulu). Back in the '90s, a teenage Frye always carried a video camera and amassed tons of footage (many shots of famous teens). Those videos provide a focus for (director) Frye and about a dozen actors, about her age, to talk about fame, sex, drugs, aging and the unique

problems of young female actors.

Shatner Flick

If Frye is an "oldie" star, then **WILLIAM SHATNER**, 89, is an ancient one. But his star still burns bright and his trek goes on. His latest film, *Senior Moment*, opened in theaters and on-demand on March 26. Shatner stars as Victor, a retired NASA test pilot whose license gets taken away after he's found speeding in his vintage Porsche convertible with his best friend (Christopher Lloyd of *Back to the Future* fame).

Victor's life changes as he finds himself trying to get around by riding the bus, spurring his meeting with the beautiful free-spirit Caroline (played by Jean Smart, 69, a star of *Designing Women*). Victor and Caroline have very different lifestyles and, Smart says, they have to "negotiate their romance." But, she added, they [end up] filling each other's gaps."

Two Docs

On Friday, April 2, Hulu will begin streaming a new documentary, *WeWork: Or the Making and Breaking of a \$47 Billion Unicorn*. WeWork is an office-sharing company that attracted massive investment and then nearly financially collapsed in 2019. The company is currently valued less than the money that investors poured into it.

The co-founder and former CEO of WeWork is **ADAM NEUMANN**, 41. For a time, he seemed like a Jewish role model: born in Israel, and a veteran of the Israeli navy, he permanently settled in the U.S. around 2000. This handsome and charismatic guy is a religious Jew, has a smart Jewish wife (who is a first cousin of **GWYNETH PALTROW**) and together they have five kids.

WeWork wasn't quite a scam, but it was way "oversold". Fortunately, for Neumann, most of its debt was held by a Japanese bank that felt they had too much invested to let WeWork fail. They "forced" Neumann out in 2019, but he walked away with a \$1.7 billion severance package. The documentary was directed by Oscar-nominated filmmaker **JED ROTHSTEIN**, 47.

Apple TV+ has separately "green-lighted" a dramatic limited TV series about the WeWork crash. Anne Hathaway will play Rebekah, Adam's wife, and Jared Leto will play Adam.

Do check out the PBS documentary *Hemingway* (about Ernest, of course). The first of three parts airs on Monday, April 5. The filmmakers are Ken Burns and **LYNN NOVICK**, 58.▲



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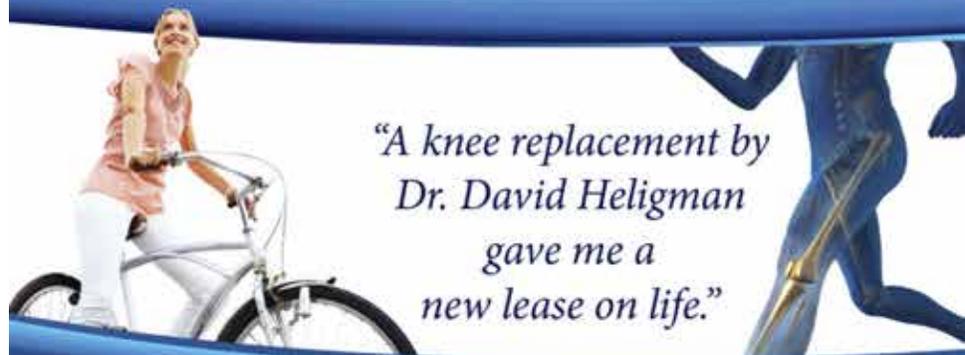


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Mimouna celebration – recipe by Chef Dalia

The week-long Passover holiday can often come to end with a good sandwich or pizza, but for Moroccan Jews and more Israelis, it's not complete without a Mimouna fest.

Moroccan Jews have made the end of Passover into a true extravaganza of sweet pastries with music, drums and sequins, lots of marzipan sweets, friends and family,

Of course, that's Mimouna, the "open door" holiday that I dream about throughout the year, and my family and friends love to attend. This year it falls on Sunday night, April 4.

As many of you know, the tradition of Mimouna has already taken root in Israel. The tradition has changed from magical nights among neighbors to loud daytime barbecues in public parks. Last year, after hundreds of years of being celebrated, Mimouna parties around the world came to a stop, conquered by a tiny virus. For the first time ever, I was alone on the last night of Passover.

For me, Passover isn't Passover without a Mimouna celebration. I love the traditions. I love the food. I love the whole family-reunion aspect of Friday-night dinners, holidays and Seders, but the Mimouna is the highlight of all and it means a lot to me. So, I tried to organize a virtual Mimouna celebration. Sure, our beautiful traditional Mimouna table of Moroccan sweets and spread was made, with

a whole fish, a bowl of flour topped with gold coins, dairy products, honey, dates, a colorful arrangement of marzipan sweets and pastries, tea with mint and tasty fried dough pancakes dipped in honey called mufleta. These foods and decorations are symbols of fertility, wealth success and sweetness. The "Tirbach u'tissad" (May you prosper and succeed) Mimouna greeting was given, but everyone knew there was something missing. You could serve the world's greatest mufleta, and there would still be something missing.

I know there is livestreaming and all those digital tools that help us approximate reality. But not for Mimouna! Not for a celebration where the aroma of mufleta is central to the experience unless Zoom has a new smell feature.

As I went through the process of buying and making the sweet, fragrant dishes that I dream about throughout the year, I felt connected to my roots and my grandmother in a way that was truly unexpected. On that one magical night of the year, when the mufletas were hot, the doors were open and everything was possible, I hoped that the blessing of sweetness and good fortune would become a reality for the Mimouna of 2021.

For the past 18 years, my husband and I have hosted a beautiful Mimouna. After one year of a Covid break, I am glad to announce we are going to

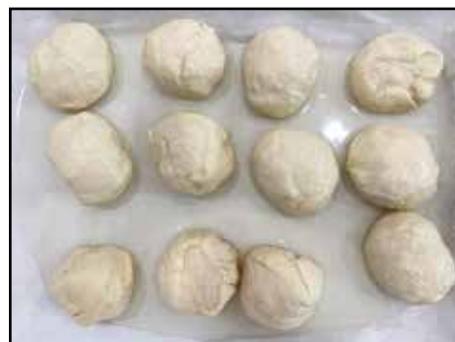
host a Mimouna celebration this year. I'm proud to have successfully recaptured the aura of the Mimouna I grew up with in Israel. The best part of the sweet magic of Mimouna: there are no formal invitations. We hope you will celebrate with us.

I miss the Mimouna festival at safta Dalia house in Jaffa. The tables were laden with delicacies, but the star of the show was a thin, mouth-watering Moroccan crepe called the mufleta, which you would roll up with soft butter and honey. Please trust me when I tell you that to this day, few things in life are as perfect as a couple of hot, sweet, tender mufletas – right after you've come off a stern eight days of dry matzah.

Even if you can't get to a Mimouna party, you can still get in the Mimouna celebration. Try your hand at mufleta. They are so delicious that they disappear before they have a chance to get cold. "Tirbach u'tissad."

Mufleta Ingredients:

- 2 lb bread or pizza flour
- 1 tbsp dry yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp salt
- 3 cups lukewarm water
- 1 cup oil for dipping (doesn't go into the dough)
- Slightly softened butter or butter substitute
- honey for drizzling
- lots of napkins
- ▶ Process the ingredients (without the oil) into slightly sticky dough. Grease a work surface and place the dough on it. Cover and let rest for 5 minutes.
- ▶ Cut the dough into 30 ping pong size pieces, grease a work surface and place the pieces of dough on it.



Personal Chef Dalia Hemed can be reached at daliahemed@msn.com.

- ▶ Roll each one into a flat ball and when they are all ready, start smearing each ball with the oil using the pads of your fingertips. You want the dough to be thin. The mufleta needs to be the size of whatever pan you're using.
- ▶ Place the mufleta on a hot pan, wait a minute, even less, until it goes golden and then flip. This is the only mufleta you fry on both sides. While the mufleta is in the pan, start preparing the next one. As soon as you flip the mufleta, place the next one on top, wait a minute, peek and see that the underside is ready and then flip the entire stack, meaning that the mufleta that was on top is now on the bottom, then place another new mufleta on top, wait a minute, and flip the whole stack.
- ▶ You can make a few mufletas in succession and then remove the stack once 6-7 are ready – whatever works for you. Once you remove the stack, start all over again, frying the first one on both sides and so forth.
- ▶ Prepare a lot of napkins. Spread the softened butter on the Mufleta and drizzle with honey. Roll or fold the Mufleta so you can hold it without getting too messy and enjoy!▲

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The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella

By Arlene Stolnitz

Many of us with an Ashkenazi heritage can trace our roots back to ancestors who came from the area known as the Pale of Settlement which stretched to the most western borders of Imperial Russia. In those days, known as the Russian Empire, it became part of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1917.

Perhaps it is because my maternal grandmother came from Odessa (which was part of the Pale), the music of The Moscow Male Jewish Capella spoke to me. A little research revealed that even though life was deplorably hard at the time for many Jews, Odessa was known as a singularly musical place with music, theater and opera playing a significant role in the lives of its residents. Russian and Yiddish folklore were popular, and songs of the era dealt with varied aspects of the Jewish experience. The repertoire of Russian and Yiddish songs reveals the carefree but dangerous life of the time. In a future article, I hope to write about the life of the underworld employing the stylistic music known as blatnaya pesnya.

In my reading I came upon a group called the Odessa Jewish Cultural

Society, which was a launching pad for the world of the arts. Renowned poet Hayim Nahman Bialik came from this period as did countless actors, writers, novelists, journalists and musicians. The Jewish Song Workshop, known as De Yiddish Leed, listed scores of musicians and included well-known names like violinists David Oistrakh and Nathan Milstein.

All of this has greatly influenced the music of The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella, which was established in 1989 under the Male Choir of the Cantor Art Academy with support from Mikhail Gorbachev who was then president of the USSR. Together with the Russian Jewish community and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (a Jewish relief organization based in New York City), the choir was renamed the Hassidic Cappella, and later became known as The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella.

The choir's singers are professional musicians from Moscow's leading musical institutes and conservatories. They are mainly students and teachers who are committed to performing Jewish liturgical and cantorial music which has been largely forgotten. The music they sing today originally appeared in the early- and mid-19th century in the countries of Eastern Europe and Western Russia but virtually disappeared after the 1917 revolution.

In addition to Jewish liturgical music, the choir's repertoire includes compositions in Yiddish and Hebrew and Russian folk songs. The music's original harmonies and beauty, along with its rich Russian sound, make it especially appealing to audiences the world over.

The choir's founder and artistic director, Alexander Tsaliuk, has directed more than 800 concerts and has participated in countless international music festivals. The choir also has recorded five CDs and two films. The choir consists of 18 singers, two soloists, a conductor and the music director. With only 22 members, the choir

is very compact and mobile, and has a reputation for learning and performing difficult works in a short time period.

YouTube has several videos of The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella. I recommend listening to "Avinu Malkey-nu" for a thrilling experience! ▲

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.



Arlene Stolnitz

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Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old

Judge Judy’s advice to seniors

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

The timer on the kitchen stove began its ding-ding-ding, reminding Iris to switch on the television and call to her husband. “Come on, Larry. It’s five minutes to Judge Judy!”

That was enough for Larry to stop his cleaning binge, and in minutes both



Rabbi Barbara Aiello

Iris and Larry had tuned into their favorite program. Watched by more than 10 million viewers daily, Judge Judith Susan Blum Sheindlin has dispensed advice for nearly 25 years, but for Iris and Larry one admonishment really hit home. Larry recalls, “I heard her say it on a documentary about her life. Judge Judy was talking about becoming a senior citizen. And she said something that struck me. ‘To live a long life, don’t fall!’”

At 78 years old, Judge Judy knows what she’s talking about. The

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that “falls are the number one cause of injuries in seniors, often resulting in hip fractures, cuts and even serious head and brain injuries that can be fatal.” Many seniors who have tripped or tumbled have seen their independence evaporate and their longevity compromised as the result of a fall. So Judge Judy, television’s Queen of Blunt, doesn’t mince words: “To live a long life, don’t fall!”

For seniors who are 65 years and older, one person in three will have had a fall, so it is no wonder that a quick Google search of “fall prevention for seniors” nets more than a half million articles, websites and long lists of do’s and don’ts – information that prompted Larry to do some research of his own.

A statistician by trade, Larry studied a number of fall-prevention recommendations that included common sense items such as installing bathtub handrails, eliminating throw rugs, cleaning up clutter and adding night

lights in the hall. But it was the information that Larry gleaned from his anecdotal survey that opened his eyes and swayed his opinion about seniors and falling.

“I live in senior housing,” Larry explained. “On our campus we have what they call the continuum of care. That means that we can live independently or in assisted living or even on the nursing floor. Whatever you need. So I talked to my friends whose falls had caused them to move out of independent living and this is what I found.”

Larry explained that for many seniors, a fall happened when they were doing two things at once – what Larry calls the Seven Steps to a Fall or the “I was walking and...” syndrome.

I was walking... and fishing for my keys.

I was walking... and answering my cell phone.

I was walking... and putting on my coat.

I was walking... and checking my watch.

I was walking... and switching to my sunglasses.

I was walking... and scratching an itch.

I was walking... and blowing my nose.

In Proverbs we read, “A righteous person falls seven times and rises up again.” Rabbi Andrea Steinberger (*Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle*) expands on those words when she writes, “Seven is life giving. It is a number full of strength and health and hope for the future.”

Larry’s Seven Steps to a Fall remind us that there are things we can do – simple, powerful, life-affirming tools – that offer hope for us as we age. Like the Judge says, “To live a long life, don’t fall!” ▲

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. Contact her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com.

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

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Building your collection

By The Wine Whisperer

I was looking through a high-end lifestyle magazine recently, and I started thinking about how my wife and I wound up with 800 bottles of wine in our house. Compared to some of my friends, that's a modest collection. But you don't need even that many. You can build a decent little portfolio of about 50-60 bottles and have a nice selection on hand for any occasion and any type of cuisine. Here's how.

First, remember that we call it the world of wine because it's a very big place. And the number of wines and regions is overwhelming. But your collection doesn't have to deplete your savings, and if you choose wisely, you'll have a savvy cellar in no time with wines to share with friends, and wines to treasure for years.

First, don't restrict your choices to the same old wines that everybody knows. Sure, you'll want some examples from famous places like Bordeaux and Burgundy, but try a bottle or two of Riesling or Blaufrankisch from Austria, and even Grüner Veltliner. Try Semillon from Australia, light-bodied Albariño from Spain and Colombard from the south of France.

Also, look at some other not-so-

famous regions for classic varietals like Cabernet. Instead of heading right for Napa (though there's certainly nothing wrong with that), look at Paso Robles, Petaluma and Mendocino. Check out very rewarding wines coming from Maremma in Italy, Washington State and especially South Africa. Also consider the more concentrated red wines from Beaujolais, like Morgon and Moulin-a-Vent, which are sensational values.

Then there's the issue of price. I'm always asked if expensive wines are better than cheaper ones, and the answer is no. It just depends on what you like, which is why it's so important to sample widely. There are hundreds (maybe thousands) of wines priced in the \$12-\$50 range that can age well and offer immediate satisfaction. Think about what's important to you in a wine, whether it's fruit flavors or more earthy tones, freshness or aging potential and, of course, how much you want to spend. Example: a \$25 bottle of Prosecco or Cremant d'Alsace can provide as much festive delight as a more costly bottle of Champagne. Again, if you see an interesting bottle on the shelf, buy it and try it. You can always go back and get a case. Or two.

And speaking of Champagne...the thing I like most about dry sparkling wines is that they go with virtually every type of food. That's why we always have a few bottles open for Thanksgiving dinner. Versatile.

Now, about those famous names. Sure, everybody wants a few cases of Lafite Rothschild and Petrus to show off in the cellar, but again, a bit of broad sampling will help you build a decent collection of everyday and special occasion wines. In fact, most of the extensive cellars I've been in are stocked with a wide range of varietals and producers, some well-known, some not. These represent new (and often unexpected) varietals, emerging producers and regions, and new discoveries. For example, Prosecco from Italy has become enormously popular in a short time, and regions like Italy's Maremma and Yecla in Spain are attracting attention and deserve at least a little space in your closet or wine refrigerator. I can't say this too many times: sample widely. You can start with our latest selections.

Badia a Coltibuono Chianti Classico Riserva 2016 (\$36) – A traditional blend, mostly Sangiovee with touches of Colorino and Canaiolo. Traditional Old World aromas of oak, tobacco and leather, with mixed red fruit, vanilla and strawberry. Great with any traditional Italian dish. WW 92

Gary Farrell Pinot Noir Russian River Selection 2017 (\$45) – From the heart of Russian River Valley, this classic California Pinot Noir opens with aromas of raspberry and cherry, then the flavors of cherry, cola and clove flood the palate. Excellent as a sipper or as a complement to salmon, duck or

roast chicken. WW 92

Clos Pegase Chardonnay Mitsu-ko's Vineyard 2018 (\$30) – This single-vineyard offering from the Carneros region was 100% barrel fermented and aged, which surrenders expected aromas of toast, oak, pear and spice. Creamy flavors of peach and melon, plush custard and coconut. If you like yours full-bodied and oaky, this one's for you. WW 92

Ask the Wine Whisperer

Please settle an argument. What is really the best temperature for serving wines? – Susan K., Bonita Springs

Okay...once and for all. The best serving temperature for white wines is 55 degrees, and 65 degrees for reds. Everybody says so.▲

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.

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Virtual-Events

New museum to showcase the women who helped build Israel

By Abigail Klein Leichman, israel21c.org, March 7, 2021

How many “she-roes” of Israel can you name?

Maybe you’d start with Golda Meir, Israel’s first and only female prime minister. Or the tragic and courageous spy Sarah Aaronsohn and paratrooper Hannah Senesh.

The list would include physician Vera Weizmann, the first First Lady of Israel, who helped establish Chaim Sheba Medical Center, now the largest hospital in the Middle East; and second First Lady Rachel Yanait Ben-Zvi, who taught Jerusalem women how to grow vegetables, milk cows and make cheese so their husbands could go out and build the state.

These and many other women who played – and continue to play — important roles in the history and culture of Israel will be immortalized later this year when the Israeli Women Museum opens in Haifa.

The museum will showcase at least 100 noteworthy but not necessarily well-known women, from architects to lawyers to choreographers, says founder Yael Nitzan.

A curator, art historian and TV producer, Nitzan has overcome many roadblocks and setbacks in realizing her dream of opening Israel’s first museum dedicated to women.

“It was a struggle,” she admits. “Now with corona, the world has everyone sitting and listening, and in three months I accomplished what I

could not accomplish in the past six or seven years.”

Nitzan gained help of the Haifa Foundation in raising funds for the project, and she was given the rights to a former private-school building in which the collections will be housed.

Brig. Gen. Gila Kalifi-Amir, former Women’s Affairs Advisor to the IDF Chief of Staff, agreed to chair the museum. The board was joined by fellow Haifa residents Nadim Sheiban, director of the Museum of Islamic Art; and Prof. Aliza Shenhar, formerly a deputy mayor, ambassador to Russia and first female rector of an Israeli university.

“There are currently about 45 women’s museums in the world, the most famous of which are the Women’s Rights Park in Seneca Falls, New York, and the Women’s Art Museum in Washington,” she says.

“The fundamental challenge in establishing a museum is not only in raising resources, but in creating a diverse and significant human and ideological infrastructure. The Israeli Women Museum must be a magnet of significance to the whole, or at least to large sections of, the population in Israel.”

Though Israel reportedly has the world’s highest ratio of museums per person, this will be the first one dedicated to the mostly unsung females responsible for weaving together its social, agricultural and business fabric.

History and art

“Our museum will be on women in history and women in the arts,” Nitzan explains.

“The section on history commemorates the role of important women who have not been properly acknowledged.” Women like Hannah Maisel, who emigrated to Palestine in 1909 with a doctorate in agriculture and founded the region’s first agricultural training institute for women. And women like Rachel Roos Hertz (Harel), a Dutch Resistance fighter who moved to Israel in 1950 after winning the U.S. Medal of Freedom and UK King’s Medal for Courage in the Cause of Freedom, and became active in the Women’s International Zionist Organization (WIZO) – itself founded by Rebecca Sieff (Ziv) from the Marks family of Marks & Spencer, and whose name graces Ziv Medical Center in Safed.

Some of the inspiration for this section comes from Prof. Margalit Shilo’s *Women Building a Nation*, a book published this year in Israel.

“In the art section, we will spotlight women whose work was not considered important, as well as very important female artists of today whose work is rarely shown in museums,” says Nitzan.

Artists to be included run the gamut from Ziona (Siona) Tagger, one of the most important female Israeli artists of the early 20th century, to contem-

porary painter Haya Graetz Ran.

“Women in Israel contributed greatly to the establishment of the state, contributed to the construction of the infrastructure of settlement, education, defense, law, government, society, culture, cinema and theater,” she says.

“But although they left their mark, they did not receive proper recognition and respect in building society,” Nitzan says.

“The purpose of the museum is to raise their profile and to reshape the narrative of the critical role of women as full partners in leadership and public space design over the past century.”

Nitzan invites anyone to contribute stories or items relating to Israeli Jewish, Arab Druze or Christian women, and even artists, poets and leaders from the Holocaust era who did not manage to get to Israel. She can be reached through the museum’s Facebook page or by email.

Donations for the project are being funneled through the Haifa Foundation. ▲

Abigail Klein Leichman is a writer and associate editor at ISRAEL21c. Prior to moving to Israel in 2007, she was a specialty writer and copy editor at a major daily newspaper in New Jersey and has freelanced for a variety of newspapers and periodicals since 1984.

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BRIEFS

THE AXIS OF RESISTANCE TO ISRAEL IS BREAKING UP

Iran's axis of resistance to Israel once comprised Hizbullah, Hamas and Bashar al-Assad's regime. As Hamas backed the anti-Assad rebels in the Syrian conflict, the resistance broke apart. Hamas is the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Back in 2012, Hamas was inspired by the success of the Muslim Brotherhood in placing their man, Mohamed Morsi, as president of Egypt, and hoped to cash in on the triumph of its parent organization by siding with them on the Syrian battlefield. But Hamas lost the gamble. Morsi was ousted in a coup in July 2013, and in Syria, too, they were eventually defeated by Assad and his Russian allies.

Hamas' rejection of Assad cost the community dearly. Assad's intelligence services imprisoned thousands of Palestinians it suspected of sympathizing with the Syrian rebels or who advocated political Islam. "Bashar al-Assad considered Hamas' refusal to support him as a stab in the back and perceived the whole community as unwanted guests in Syria," said one activist who subsequently moved to the UK. "They chased Palestinians everywhere."

Analysts say Assad's strong relationship with Russia and growing ties with the UAE, both of which want Syria to come to terms with Israel, has impacted the regime's thinking. Rami al-Sayed, a former human rights activist from the Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus, said, "It's not impossible we will see a formal normalization between the regime and Israel very soon." (Anchal Vohra, *Foreign Policy*)

IDF COMPLETING UNDERGROUND WALL BETWEEN ISRAEL AND GAZA TO BLOCK TUNNEL THREAT

Senior IDF sources say an underground concrete wall between Israel and Gaza to prevent terrorists from crossing into Israel via tunnels is 95% complete and will be operational in the near future.

The 60 km. barrier includes a fence above ground, advanced sensors and cutting-edge technologies to stop infiltrations. (Udi Shaham, *Jerusalem Post*)

IN FIRST, IRANIAN JUDOKA LANDS IN TEL AVIV AND WINS SILVER

Iranian judoka Saeid Mollaei won a silver medal at the International Judo Federation's Grand Slam in Israel, becoming not only the first Iranian to achieve victory in the country but also the first to compete in it.

Mollaei represented Mongolia in the under-81 kilograms category, where he came in second place after losing to Sharofiddin Boltaboev from Uzbekistan.

Mollaei became a Mongolian citizen after failing to return to Iran following the Tokyo 2019 World Championships in which he was reportedly ordered to lose a match in order not to face an Israeli opponent, Sagi Muki.

Muki welcomed Mollaei to Israel with a tweet that read, "Welcome brother." Israel's official Twitter account also welcomed Mollaei, saying, "We'd like to give a warm welcome to Iranian Judoka Saeid Mollaei who arrived in Israel to train with the Israeli team ahead of the Tel Aviv Grand Slam Competition!"

The International Judo Federation quoted Mollaei as saying that he was appreciative of the Israeli welcome.

"Ten years ago, even four, if you had asked me about the possibility of competing in Israel, you already know the answer. I would have told you that it would not be possible," he was quoted as saying. "They have been very good to me since I arrived. Today I have trained with the Israeli team and they have been very kind. That is something I will never forget."

Muki, meanwhile, did not get the chance to face off against his Iranian-Mongolian opponent in the Tel Aviv contest, having lost in his first round. (Naama Barak, *israel21c.org*)

AMAZING DETECTIVE WORK REUNITES BEST FRIENDS THOUGHT MURDERED IN THE HOLOCAUST

In 1939, two nine-year-old Jewish girls from Berlin promised to keep in touch. One family fled to Chile, while the other made its way to the U.S. via Shanghai. For the first time after 82 years, Ana Maria Wahrenberg and Betty Grebenschikoff connected with each other again on Zoom, facilitated by Holocaust testimony indexer Ita Gordon, whose sharp memory linked the women.

"In her [USC Shoah Foundation] testimony, Betty said she had been actively searching for her long-lost friend for her entire life. She even specifically mentions Ana Maria's name," said Rachael Cerrotti, a creative producer at the foundation. After hearing Wahrenberg speak at a virtual Kristallnacht event, Gordon made the connection between Grebenschikoff's testimony –

given to the foundation 24 years ago – and Wahrenberg.

After more than 80 years of believing the other had perished in the Holocaust, the women connected virtually in November. Lucas Kirschman, one of Grebenschikoff's grandchildren, said, "It was so natural for them. They picked back up...like no big deal.... I've never heard my grandmother speak German before, ever."

Founded by Steven Spielberg, the foundation's archive has 55,000 video testimonies from survivors and witnesses of genocide. (Matt Lebovic, *Times of Israel*)

ISRAEL'S GAS ROYALTIES UP 30 PERCENT IN 2020

Royalties to the state from Israel's natural gas, oil and minerals totaled \$330 million in 2020, up 30% from 2019, the Ministry of Energy reported.

There was a 48% increase in natural gas production in 2020, and exports to Egypt and Jordan increased significantly. During the same period there was a fall of 13% in the price of natural gas. (Shani Ashkenazi, *Globes*)

STUDY FINDS INCREASE IN ANTI-ZIONISM AT U.S. UNIVERSITIES

Most U.S. campuses are not awash in antisemitism, nor are they hotbeds of antisemitic forms of anti-Zionism. Yet on hundreds of campuses, a new set of realities has emerged for Jewish students.

Far-left antisemitism that expresses a view of Israel that traffics in anti-Jewish conspiracies has increasingly become normalized on U.S. campuses, where Jewish students are being de-

continued on next page

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- 5/6 Out & About Films
- 5/23 Virtual Tour of Jewish Paris

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BRIEFS

continued from previous page

moralized as imperialists, racists and even Nazis and white supremacists.

Students have increasingly reported that they are afraid to express their Jewish identity, including their support for Israel, lest they be excluded from campus life and the causes that they care deeply about.

Hillel International reported that antisemitic incidents reached an all-time high during the 2019-2020 academic year. (Prof. Miriam F. Elman, Institute for National Security Studies - Tel Aviv University)

IDF IS USING MORE DRONES

On its Golan Heights frontier with Syria, field intelligence battalions of the Israel Defense Forces are using an increasing number of drones.

Battalion commander Yotam Gilon said, "We use them every day, sometimes even twice or three times a day, to collect intelligence." Similar units are focused on Gaza and Lebanon.

Troops carry small drones that they can quickly launch for scanning their immediate surroundings, which significantly increases their ability to identify potential threats.

Gillon anticipates that his troops will soon get small loitering munitions to use for neutralizing enemy combatants in close-quarters fighting. (Paul Iddon, *Forbes*)

BASEBALL TOURNEY TO BRING TOGETHER ISRAELI, EMIRATI KIDS

The Israel Association of Baseball (IAB) and Dubai Little League are jointly planning a Field of Peace Tournament featuring the 12-and-under national teams of Israel and the United Arab Emirates.

[As of press time] The first series of games will take place, Covid permitting, on March 21-25 at the Dubai Little League Park. The teams are to meet again next fall in Tel Aviv.

Invitations have also been extended to teams from other Gulf countries to participate in the tourney, in which teams will play for the Unity Cup.

"We strive together to develop the game of baseball in Israel and Dubai as a basis for peace and cooperation between our countries," said IAB President Jordy Alter and Dubai Little League President Roger Duthie in a joint statement. "We see this as a major step forward.... We hope these games lead to further regional cooperation."

Saeed Mohammad Hareb, Secre-

tary General of the Dubai Sports Council, said, "I cannot think of anything better than to have children represent the bright future that we look forward to growing together. The Dubai Sports Council is proud to support this initiative, which is a testament to the wonderful volunteers of the Dubai Little League and the Israel Association of Baseball."

Dubai Little League has over 400 players, ages four to 18, playing baseball and softball in Dubai. The IAB runs teams for ages six to adult, as well as the Israel Baseball Academy for 14- to 21-year-old standout players, and the Baseball Le'Kulam program bringing together Jewish Israeli and Arab Israeli sixth-graders. (Abigail Klein Leichman, israel21c.org)

UAE ANNOUNCES \$10 BILLION INVESTMENT FUND WITH ISRAEL

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have announced the establishment of a \$10 billion fund aimed at boosting strategic sectors in Israel.

Alongside Israel, the UAE will invest in energy, manufacturing, water, space, health care and agri-tech. (Soraya Ebrahimi, *The National* - Abu Dhabi)

UAE \$10 BILLION ISRAEL FUND WILL STRESS PORTS AND RAILWAYS

Eilat port is one of the principal projects which will receive investment from the new \$10 billion UAE strategic investment fund.

The plan is to create a deepwater port in the Gulf of Eilat/Aqaba, which will create a new shipping and railway trade route between the Persian Gulf and Europe.

Sources tell *Globes* that most of the project will be financed by the Abu Dhabi Sovereign Fund.

Another project for investment is a railway via Saudi Arabia and Jordan to Haifa Port.

Israel's National Economic Council head Prof. Avi Simhon told *Globes* that the railway requires the completion of 300 km. - mainly in Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Simhon said these two projects have immense geopolitical and economic significance, and vast potential for Israel's economy. (Danny Zaken, *Globes*)

VIETNAMESE LAUNCH ORGANIC FARM AFTER STUDYING IN ISRAEL

Four young men have started The Moshav Farm, an organic farm in

continued on page 23

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Expanded and reimagined ANU - Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv opens to the public

Tel Aviv, Israel, March 10, 2021 – The newly expanded and reimagined ANU - Museum of the Jewish People opened today, becoming the world's only museum dedicated to celebrating and exploring the diverse experiences, collective accomplishments and boundless spirit of the Jewish people, told from all perspectives, from biblical times to today. Capping a transformational, decade-long, \$100 million expansion that triples its gallery space to 72,000 square feet, the renewed museum features four wings spanning three floors. Formerly known as Beit Hatfutsot, the museum embarks on this next chapter with a new name and brand identity by adding "ANU"

– Hebrew for "we" or "us" – which embraces and reflects the diversity, nuances, collective spirit and celebration of the entirety of Jewish peoplehood.

ANU - Museum of the Jewish People will guide visitors of all faiths, backgrounds and ages on an inspiring and enlightening journey of discovery to recognize and embrace their unique part in the Jewish story. The museum's centerpiece is a comprehensive new core exhibition featuring historic and modern artifacts, images, specially produced films, multimedia displays, state-of-the-art multi-sensory stations and immersive spaces, as well as original and newly commissioned artworks to illuminate the 4,000-plus-year his-

tory of the Jewish people in a fresh, contemporary context. The redesigned museum is open with enhanced health and safety protocols in place.

"Every nation deserves a place that tells its story and makes people proud of who they are and their heritage and roots," said Irina Nevzlin, Museum Board Chair and President of Nadav Foundation. "It is a privilege to realize the transformation of this institution, which now becomes the largest and most comprehensive Jewish museum in the world. The museum will serve as a beacon of Jewish identity and culture, celebrating our unique history and future. We're grateful for the incredible support that has helped make this museum rebirth possible."

"It's never been more important to underscore what binds us together as a people: our history, culture, values and a sense of belonging," said Dan Tadmor, CEO of the Museum. "Our reinvigorated museum represents what can be achieved through patience, perseverance and passion. From rich history illuminated through unique artifacts, to engaging interactive and immersive experiences, ANU is a mosaic of today's diverse Jewish identity. We are excited to open our doors for all to visit, discover and be inspired."

A re-imagined and enhanced museum experience

The new museum's cornerstone experience is conceived as a journey from the top floor (reflection of Jewish identity and culture today) and working your way down to the first floor (the foundations of Judaism).

◆ **The Mosaic – Modern Jewish Identity and Culture Wing (third floor):** The largest of the three floors, this vast, open wing is dedicated to the vibrant and rich life of the Jewish people today, the diverse forms of Jewish culture in modern times, and the myriad contribution Jews have made to global civilization and culture. Featuring a Jewish Hall of Fame, the gallery showcases Jewish achievement and impact in areas such as dance, theater, film, TV, music, humor, literature, languages and modern art.

◆ **The Journey – The Jewish Story Through Time Wing (second floor):** This floor is devoted to the full narrative of global Jewry, tracing the roots and history of the Jewish people from all corners of

the world and from biblical times through the establishment of the State of Israel to the present; a central, interactive map of Jewish migrations and journeys across the world; the evolution of Jewish faith, thought and creativity.

◆ The Foundations – A Common Core, A Universal Message Wing (first floor):

This wing explores the conceptual foundations of Jewish existence, whether uniquely Jewish or commonly universal. This includes Jewish practice, beliefs and traditions, and the Bible and its influence on world culture, especially as it relates to concepts of justice and liberty.

On view throughout the exhibition is an exciting and diverse collection of new, meaningful and historically significant artifacts and dynamic artwork, ranging from ancient to modern times.

They include a Shaddai amulet recovered from inside the wall of an Italian home after World War II, a 15th century Sephardic "Book of Esther" scroll, and Joseph Bentolila's letter of rights issued by Napoleon III. More contemporary new artifacts include Leonard Cohen's guitar that he played during his final Israel concert in 2009, pro baseball catcher-turned World War II spy Moe Berg's game-worn chest protector, and Nobel Prize-winning Yiddish writer Isaac Bashevis Singer's personal typewriter. Among the featured artwork is Kabbalah art and contemporary Judaica jewelry as well as select pieces from the Nevzlin family collection.

The exhibition also features a suite of engaging, fun and immersive experiences and displays, delivering the Jewish story at your fingertips. Digital interactives invite visitors to "cook" and discover traditions and innovations in Jewish cuisine from famed chefs, collaborate in creating an original work of art, explore the wisdom and lessons from the Talmud, or simply navigate the endless universe of prominent Jews and their significant contributions to humankind. Users can also create their very own songs mixing tracks by Jewish musicians across all genres, and use VR headsets to journey to hear lullabies from various Jewish cultures across the centuries.

Continuing the institution's longstanding commitment to experiential

continued on next page



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BRIEFS

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Khanh Hoa province, Vietnam, after training in Israel, the world's leading country in agricultural technology.

The Moshav Farm grows coconuts, pomelos, guavas, grapes, jackfruits, mangos and plants for herbal medicine, as well as raising chickens and sheep.

The farm's products have been distributed to more than 100 retail and wholesale channels nationwide, and it has attracted hundreds of trainees. The farm uses automatic drip irrigation, mist spraying and automatic organic fertilizing.

Nguyen Ta Dong, the team's leader, said his "studying time in Israel helped me absorb effective professional working methods. These practical experiences have given me the mindset about high-quality organic agriculture."

Another founder, Nguyen Manh Tien, said his time in Israel "helped me learn from the mindset and working spirit of the Jewish people. Israeli people working on the farm do not have the mindset of farmers but the mindset of businessmen in the agricultural sector." (*Viet Nam News*)

ARAB ISRAELI LIFE HAS GOTTEN BETTER

There have been dramatic improvements in the lives of Israel's Arab citizens over the last 15 years.

ANU - Museum of the Jewish People...continued from previous page

storytelling and innovation, ANU - Museum of the Jewish People utilizes radio frequency identification (RFID) technology to allow visitors to tag favorite experiences or areas they'd like to further discover that will be included in an email sent following their visit. Additionally, the museum - in partnership with Geni.com - has developed a customized app, MJP & Me, that enables users to see if and how they're related to famous Jews across the ages; and if these icons are part of the exhibition where visitors can find their location in the galleries to learn more about them. Patrons can even discover if they're related to any other visitors in the museum at that moment, creating immediate personal connection.

"We've been looking forward to this day for 10 years," said Dr. Orit Shaham-Gover, the museum's chief curator. "It's been an intellectual and emotional journey, and we are so thrilled to illustrate the story of the Jewish people in its entirety, from past and present to the future."

The museum's new expansion - designed by Gallagher & Associates - also houses the Andrew H. and Ann R. Tisch Center for Jewish Dialogue, established as both a physical space and virtual platform that encourages respectful, ongoing discourse about critical issues at the core of Jewish life today. Additional expansion highlights include a spectacular open-air rooftop terrace that offers stunning views of the city of Tel Aviv and the Mediterranean Sea.

Beginning in 2006, the government funded training programs, improved educational support, subsidized employment, expanded transportation networks and built industrial parks near Arab towns.

Funding to rectify imbalances between Jewish and Arab communities has meant that 85% of homes in Arab towns are now connected to modern sewer networks, up from less than 40% in 2015.

The employment rate among Arab Israeli women ages 25-54 rose from 21% in the early 2000s to 35% in 2016.

In the 2017-2018 academic year, Arab Israelis made up 16% of college students in Israel compared to 8.3% in 1999-2000. The Technion - Israel's MIT - reports that its proportion of Arab students increased by 200% since 2004.

Arab Israelis now comprise 17% of the country's doctors, 24% of nurses and 47% of pharmacists. (Prof. Robert Cherry, *Forward*)

ISRAELI TECH TURNS AIR INTO WATER FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Israeli technology is set to convert air into clean drinking water for Native American communities in the United States as part of a collaboration between Israeli and American enterprises.

A crowdfunding campaign is underway to supply four Watergen GEN-M water generating machines to Native American communities in need.

The GEN-M atmospheric water

generator requires no special infrastructure except for electricity and collects water by cooling collected air at its dewpoint. The water then goes through physical, chemical and biological treatment followed by a mineralization process to ensure cleanliness and pleasant taste.

The campaign was launched by Israeli water-from-air tech company Watergen, Native American nonprofit Bright Path Strong and Native American-owned distribution company 4D Products & Services.

Each dollar donated will be matched by Watergen and 4D until the goal of \$400,000 is reached. Israel education NGO StandWithUs, meanwhile, will promote the campaign on multiple platforms.

"Access to clean drinking water has been a challenge for Native Com-

munities for decades," says Bright Path Strong Co-Director Chris Taylor. "This has amplified the effects of the ongoing pandemic in our communities, leaving them amongst the most hard hit and vulnerable. Thanks to Watergen, StandWithUs and 4D Products & Services we are not only spotlighting these issues but creating real and practical solutions that will sustain our communities into the future."

Watergen President Michael Mirilashvili said this project is a critical part of the company's vision.

"When I took control of Watergen, I did so with a clear vision: to guarantee the best quality drinking water to every human being on the planet through the deployment of the company's revolutionary drinking water from air technology," he said. (Naama Barak, israel21c.org) ▲

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Combating antisemitism: We need swivel-headed Jews

By David Harris, CEO of American Jewish Committee (AJC), February 3, 2021

For the last two decades, American Jewish Committee (AJC) has been blowing the whistle on the rising tide of antisemitism worldwide.

When asked the source, our answer has always been the same, depending on the specific circumstances: Look in one of three basic directions – far left, far right and jihadists. Too many in our hyper-partisan world, however, would prefer to shy away from this trifocal analysis. For them, it doesn't necessarily sit well politically, the facts be damned.

But, true to AJC's mission, we don't have a particular ax to grind or, if you will, a "preferred" enemy to confront. We're a Jewish front-line, non-partisan agency that doesn't get to pick and choose our threats because they might suit a partisan outlook.

Whether it's the march in Charlottesville and the chants of "Blood and soil" and "Jews will not replace us," or the 11 victims of the shooting at the Tree of Life in Pittsburgh, or the fatality at the synagogue in Poway, or the "Camp Auschwitz" neo-Nazis at the Capitol on January 6 or, most recently, the crazed Republican Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene, who's an embarrassment to her party and the nation, or the dark web that supports the radical right, we know the threat from the far right is real, deadly and urgent.

And as dangerous as it is here in America, in recent years the far right has also flexed its muscles, particularly in some strongholds in Western and Eastern Europe (and created international networks with like-minded individuals and groups). Think groups and parties like AFD in Germany, Jobbik

in Hungary, National Rally in France, Nordic Resistance in Scandinavia, Golden Dawn in Greece, etc. In some cases, they have even vied for (and won) seats in regional and national parliaments.

Grave as these challenges are, the dangers for Jews, alas, don't end here. Nor, therefore, can our concern and focus.

For one thing, the far left also poses daunting challenges, especially in the academic, cultural and intellectual spheres, not to mention the political world, including now in the U.S. Congress.

Many in this arena seem to have a problem with one country on earth (and its supporters) and it just happens to be the only Jewish-majority nation around, with a Jewish population of nearly seven million people.

No other nation awakens the far left's misguided passion in the way that Israel does. Only democratic Israel is constantly in their crosshairs. They celebrate self-determination for the Palestinians, but would deny Jews the right to live and defend themselves in their own ancestral homeland.

Is this obsessive, relentless attempt to challenge the Jewish people's national aspirations not a dangerous form of antisemitism? Of course it is, and has been acknowledged as such by the UN Secretary-General, French President and other astute leaders.

And when was the last time, for example, that anyone saw a protest by these self-professed human rights campaigners of the far left about mass murder in Syria; the Venezuelan government's wholesale destruction of a country; North Korean concentration camps; or Iran's serial violations of the rights of women, gays and religious minorities?

Their blatant selectivity speaks volumes, even as they shout that to ask such questions is only an attempted distraction – "whataboutism" – when it's actually an exposure of their hypocrisy.

But bifocal lenses aren't sufficient,

either. Trifocals are needed.

Consider: Every fatal attack against Jews in Europe in recent years, except for Halle, Germany, has been carried out by Islamist extremists.

From the kosher supermarket in Paris to a Jewish school in Toulouse, from the Jewish Museum in Brussels to the synagogue in Copenhagen, from the murders of Ilan Halimi and Sarah Halimi in Paris to the Israelis (and Bulgarian) killed in Burgas, they were all perpetrated by jihadists.

Add to that the genocidal ambitions of Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas, incendiary Salafist teachings in some madrassas around the world, and the ubiquitous antisemitism in segments of the Arab media.

By all means, we must shout from the rooftops our utter revulsion when Congresswoman Greene spouts her wacko theories, is assigned a seat on the House Education Committee, enjoys inexplicable support in her district and is reportedly attracting significant financial support.

Jewish dismay also needs to be manifested when members of Congress, from the other end of the spectrum and a different party, level toxic dual-loyalty charges against Americans who support the U.S.-Israel relationship, suggest that Israel is guilty of, yes, blood libels, and support groups calling for Israel's disappearance. And add the small handful of fellow legislators who support them, as well as those in Congress who endorsed their re-election last year and even, shockingly, contributed to their campaigns.

In other words, those who genuinely care about antisemitism must open their eyes wide and be swivel-headed and not allow partisan political thinking to narrow the field of vision and sense of outrage.▲

The AJC West Coast Florida office, located in Sarasota, can be reached at 941.365.4955.

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BRIEFS

ARAB ISRAELI DEFENDS ISRAEL ON VACCINES AT UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

After representatives from Iran, Qatar and the Palestinian Authority condemned Israel for its Coronavirus vaccination policy at the UN Human Rights Council on Tuesday, March 16, Yoseph Haddad, an Arab Israeli social activist, speaking on behalf of UN Watch, noted that he is an Arab from Nazareth who has been vaccinated.

“Accusations have been made against Israel that its vaccination program is racist and that is not true. Like me, my family, friends and hundreds of thousands of other Arab Israelis have been vaccinated. The State of Israel is campaigning in Arabic to encourage Arab Israelis to get vaccinated, and Israel’s Magen David Adom National Rescue Organization, which consists of Jews and Arabs, works directly with Arab communities to vaccinate its residents.”

Haddad concluded that he is “proud to be an Arab and I am proud to be an Israeli because Israel cares for all its citizens and even for others.” (Aryeh Savir, Tazpit Press Service)

THE PALESTINIANS WILL BE LEFT WITH A HAGUE HANGOVER

Despite the rejoicing in Ramallah over the International Criminal Court’s decision to investigate alleged Israeli war crimes, the decision has not and will not advance the Palestinians an inch closer toward realizing their ambitions. Recall that in 2004, the ICC ruled that the security barrier Israel built to protect its citizens against a deadly wave of terror was illegal, and asked that it be torn down.

After failing in their efforts to break Israel’s will with violence and terror, Palestinians now hope that cultural and economic boycotts, alongside decisions from UN organizations, will force Israel to its knees. Beyond this, the Palestinians hope that when the moment of truth arrives, the American administration will turn on Israel. The Palestinians, however, are destined for disappointment.

The spirit of the times has produced the Abraham Accords, where several leading Arab countries have declared that peace is the Arabs’ only path forward. Ultimately, the Palestinians will find themselves alone. (Prof. Eyal Zisser, *Israel Hayom*)

WHY IRAN’S HATE-FILLED SCHOOLS SHOULD BE A GLOBAL CONCERN

Public school teachers in Iran indoctrinate young people to export global revolution using terrorism. A new study of hate and extremism in current Iranian textbooks finds that they encourage terrorism and political subversion against Arab states. They also demonize America, Israel and the Jewish people.

The textbooks indoctrinate children with messages that put them on a permanent footing for war. They teach children how to assemble assault rifles, to carry out military maneuvers and to learn about cyber warfare. The books idealize young people who sacrifice their lives to export the Iranian revolution, glorifying child soldiers who died during the Iran-Iraq War or displaying children wielding rocket launchers.

Iran’s textbooks scapegoat Jewish people for a range of societal ills. All Jewish people who aspire to any form of self-determination are labeled “enemies of Islam.” (David Andrew Weinberg, Washington Director for International Affairs at the Anti-Defamation League, *Arab News* - Saudi Arabia)

ISRAEL IS NOT TO BLAME FOR THE FAILURE OF THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

- ◆ Israel fought tirelessly to explain every fault, loophole and danger in the 2015 Iran nuclear accord and did all it could to persuade the U.S. to quit the agreement. Benjamin Netanyahu’s presentation of the stolen Iranian nuclear archive was just the push needed to convince then-president Donald Trump that the whole accord was based on lies and deceit.
- ◆ There are clear facts that show how the current situation differs from that of 2015. These facts include Iran’s advancement of its nuclear program since 2018, as well as new findings shown in the archive leak and in reports from the UN over the past two years.
- ◆ Iran has used every lifting of restrictions provided by the accord to push forward its uranium enrichment, bolster its technological capabilities and produce advanced centrifuges.
- ◆ Iran has acquired the advanced technological methods needed for quick production of weapons-grade materials, regardless of what the 2015 deal said. A return to the 2015 deal will allow Tehran to install new advanced infrastructure at its covert facilities and obtain enough enriched uranium needed for the bomb.
- ◆ Findings today show that Iran’s road to getting the bomb was far smoother than originally predicted. The IAEA’s strict inspections were the single most viable and effective tool of the deal, but even these inspections ultimately proved to be useless.
- ◆ As we predicted, the deal failed not because of Israel, but because the accord failed to achieve the very goals it set out to accomplish. It is clear that the old deal cannot achieve those goals now. (Brig.-Gen. (res.) Prof. Jacob Nagel, who headed the Strategic and Defense Policy Directorate at Israel’s National Security Council from 2011 to 2015, where he led the Israeli experts team working with the countries that negotiated the Iran nuclear deal, *Ynet News*) ▲

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What do you mean by "Support the State of Israel?"

Israel's Independence Day falls on April 15 this year, and for me it will always be an occasion to celebrate. Over the years, though, several people have said to me, "I respect Jews and Judaism, but I do not support the State of Israel. Does that make me an antisemite?"

Taking into account the well-known adage, "Two Jews, three opinions," I must follow venerable Jewish custom and answer the question with a question: "What do you mean by 'Support the State of Israel?'"

If you mean you do not support all of the policies or actions of this or any previous Israeli government, welcome to the club. I often disagree with the actions of Israeli leaders or its government as a whole. Similarly, I consider myself a very loyal American, but I often disagree with decisions or poli-

cies the United States has implemented over the years.

On the other hand, if your position is, "I do not think a Jewish state in the Middle East has the right to exist without fear of attack and destruction by its neighbors," then, yes, in my opinion you are an antisemite.

Up until the end of World War I, the entire Middle East was controlled by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. At the end of the war the empire dissolved and more than 20 Arab/Islamic entities made claims of national sovereignty to portions of the vast land expanse. A map of the Middle East today shows how the land now includes Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Oman the United Arab Emirates and other countries.

Clearly, as my late friend Rabbi David M. Posner, of Temple Emanuel of the City of New York, pointed out to us on a trip though the Sinai Desert many years ago, Jews also lived in the Ottoman Empire. Why should a Jewish claim to sovereignty on our ancient

homeland be any less legitimate than any of the other states that arose after World War I?

When one, as one must, factors in the Holocaust in which one of every three Jews in the world and two out of every three Jews in Europe lost their lives as the world stood complicitly by, the need for Jews to return to our ancestral home became clear to all but the most hard-core antisemites.

Sadly, today, many young Jews fall prey to the propaganda of the Palestinians who claim Israel stole their land and should be wiped off the map.

Without question, Palestinians were displaced during the turmoil that led to the creation of Israel. And in the context of a sincere desire for peace on the part of its neighbors, Israel has always been willing to negotiate a settlement which would take what the Arab world calls the Naqba, the tragedy to them that the creation of Israel

symbolizes, into account.

But after 73 years of intransigent opposition to the very existence of a Jewish state, it is understandable that Israel's position has hardened. As each year goes by, a negotiated settlement acceptable to all becomes more and more elusive. To put all of the blame on Israel for this state of affairs is in itself evidence of antisemitism.

Even now, I would love to see Israel and representatives of all the Arab nationalities including the Palestinians sit down and negotiate a settlement with which everyone is willing to live. But make no mistake, if your idea of an acceptable solution does not include a place on the map of the Jewish State of Israel, then, yes, you are an antisemite.▲

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



■ Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

Why I became a rabbi

(Note: This article was approved by the family of Cynthia Boyer.)

Cynthia Boyer had a soft and warm smile. She was also quiet. Her family said they had to pry things out of her. She attended Shabbat morning services



■ Rabbi Marc Sack

frequently and enrolled in adult education classes at our congregation. Because she was quiet, I did not know a lot about her until I visited her in the hospital. She told me that she became Jewish in 1985, studying with Rabbi Sol Agin. Cynthia grew up on Long Island and had close Jewish friends. So, after a difficult time in her life, Judaism was a natural place for her to look for comfort. She began reading Jewish books while living in West Virginia. She moved to Fort Myers in the early 1980s and completed her conversion here.

I learned more from her family after her death. Cynthia kept kosher. She lit Shabbat candles, whether at home or when visiting family. She told her family not to call her from Friday night to Saturday night, that this was her Sabbath, her time to herself.

Then, after cleaning out her apartment, her family brought to the synagogue boxes of serious Jewish books that she collected over the years. And three containers – a tzedakah box and two makeshift tzedakah boxes – full of pennies. Cynthia dropped coins into her tzedakah boxes every Friday night when she lit her candles. She lived her Jewish life quietly but genuinely.

In rabbinical school, they taught us a lot of Jewish text. They wanted us to be informed teachers of Judaism. They also taught us about being pastors, how to listen and attend to the needs of our congregants. Over the years, my understanding of my role has grown. I still love Jewish study and teaching, and being a pastor is central to my work. But I have learned that I am also a witness to the strength of the human and Jewish spirit. I get to hear the stories of strength, determination, commitment and generosity. Sometimes, when doing a funeral, I can tell these stories to a broader community.

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, I was in the synagogue lobby during a break in the service. A man wearing work clothes, whom I had never seen before, walked up to the synagogue. He told me that he delivered bread from a commercial bakery to grocery stores. He had some loaves left over and wondered if we could distribute them to needy families. I said, "Sure," and he brought in a large lawn bag full of whole loaves of bread. I brought them to a downtown soup kitchen. A few weeks later, he came again with another large bag of bread.

I marvel at the spirit of ordinary people. It is my job to witness, testify to and, when I can, open doors to the expression of this spirit. I love teaching Torah and being a pastor. I am uplifted by the depth of the human spirit manifest in commitment, generosity and determination that I get to witness and tell to others.▲

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.



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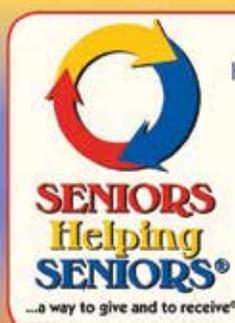
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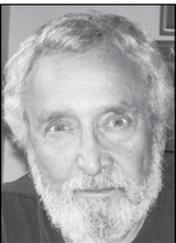
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Can you be a good Jew without being a dedicated lifetime learner?

He (Hillel) would also say: A boor cannot be sin-fearing, an ignoramus cannot be pious, a bashful one cannot learn, a short-tempered person cannot teach, nor does anyone who does much business grow wise. In a place where there are no men, strive to be a man." (Pirqay Avot 2:5)



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

There is a lot to unpack from this quote attributed to the legendary Hillel the Elder, but let's focus on *lo 'ahm ha'arets hasid* (an ignoramus cannot be pious).

The term *'ahm ha'arets* went through an evolution of meaning over the centuries. Literally meaning "the land's population," it became the *hoi polloi* "common folk" and, finally the *illiterati* – the uneducated. In Yiddish it morphed into *ammaretz*, and even today in Israel calling someone an *'ahm ha'arets* are real fighting words.

It's easy to see how in an ancient

culture that placed such a high premium on religious scholarship and reserved its highest accolades for the intellectual masters of our voluminous written traditions, calling someone the polar opposite of a scholar was and remains quite a low blow!

Now on to the second term in this quote, *hasid*, generally rendered as "pious," but better understood as "scrupulously devoted." It's quite a different use than the modern meaning of a *hasid*, one who follows the traditions handed down from the 18th century Israel ben Eliezer, the Ba'al Shem Tov, who led a revolt against Jewish scholarly elitism by promoting a primarily emotional connection to God.

In fact, the quote attributed to Hillel is exactly the opposite of the Ba'al Shem Tov's teaching. For Hillel, an *'ahm ha'arets* could never be a *hasid* who could "scrupulously" observe the complexities of their *halakhah*, the rules of religious observance. This is why, in principle, the Sages would not eat in the homes of the "common folk," marry their daughters, pray in their synagogues or even trade in the agricul-

tural commodities they produced in the Land of Israel. It gets a lot worse, and the ill will was more than reciprocated by the unlearned toward the Sages. (For more gritty details, see The Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Pesahim* 49b.)

I was raised in the *Litvishe* (Lithuanian) tradition, which subscribed to Hillel's quote regarding scholarship as a perquisite for Jewish piety and viewing men like Israel ben Eliezer as an *'ahm ha'arets* charlatan dunce. On my father's side we had more than one Lithuanian rabbi (the last before the war was my great uncle Rabbi Yaaqov - Yoseph Diamant of Kurkliai), and the yeshivah I attended had nothing whatsoever to with Hasidim or Hasidism. I was taught and still believe that a day without extended serious study is wasting God's gift of time to me. My commitment to teaching stems from this, since the best way to learn something is to have to teach it.

Jewish intellectualism continues to thrive in America, but our Jewish intellectuals have turned their attention to secular subjects like science, the arts and economics, and away from the realm of the traditional Jewish scholarship.

Today's American Jewish *hoi polloi* do not expect their rabbis to tower above them in Jewish learning (although that's gotten easier from generation to generation), but, rather, not to bore them to death, to attend to the congregation's pastoral needs, to be "good with the kids" and, with any luck, to be "personalities" (a.k.a. a *mensch*) who attracts and holds members while getting along with "the board."

This is very different from Jews of past generations who expected, or at least hoped, that their rabbi first and foremost be a scholar.

But let's end where we started. Is it possible for a Jew who is largely ignorant of our "Jewish sources" to be a "good Jew," Hillel's *hasid*? By a "good Jew" I mean more than knowing all the lyrics to *Fiddler on the Roof*, sticking up for Israel, enjoying a really decent corned beef or pastrami sandwich, and possibly supporting Jewish causes and organizations. Of course you can be "good" and you can be a "Jew," but can you be a good Jew without being a dedicated lifetime learner? ▲

Rabbi Bruce Diamond serves at The Community Free Synagogue in Fort Myers.

Our neighbors

When my husband and I first moved from Manhattan to rural eastern North Carolina, we met Will, the neighbor in the apartment next to us. After a few pleasantries, Will proudly invited us into his apartment to show off the buffalo he



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

had shot, now hanging on his wall. Later, when we were hanging up our mezuzah, he asked us earnestly and curiously if it was a security device. (I suppose to some extent...) We were not destined to become best friends, but we had a friendly, neighborly relationship.

All of us have a story about a neighbor. Sometimes our neighbors do become our best friends, sometimes we worry that a tense dispute over a fence or a leaning tree will ruin our relationship, and sometimes our neighbors surprise us with acts of kindness.

While Robert Frost says, "Good fences make good neighbors," our Jewish tradition provides many concrete examples of how to interact with those who live close to us. One common scenario is when we ask a neighbor to keep an eye on our house when we're going away. Or imagine you and your neighbor are both on your front lawns and you need to run back inside, so you ask her to watch over a lawn mower or nice bicycle. Is your neighbor responsible if a burglar robs your house while you're away or a thief steals your bike from the front lawn? According to Exodus 22:6-7, the answer is no. The verse

reads, "When a person gives money or goods to another for safekeeping, and they are stolen from that other person's house; if caught, the thief shall pay double. If the thief is not caught, the owner of the house shall testify before God and deny laying hands on the other's property." So even if you gave a pearl necklace to someone for safekeeping and it was stolen from their house, if they vow they did not steal it, they are not responsible.

Interestingly, this ruling changes if you pay your neighbor to watch over your things. So if you offer a neighborhood kid \$20 to water your plants, and they're all dead when you return, the kid is responsible. It also changes if your neighbor borrows something from you. Exodus 22 continues, "When a person borrows an animal from another and it dies or is injured, its owner not being with it, that person must make restitution." So if you let your neighbor borrow your tool set or hand mixer, and it breaks, your neighbor owes you a new tool set or hand mixer.

Like all biblical law, this scenario inspired discussion, arguments and questions from the rabbis in the Talmud and throughout the generations. Pirkei Avot, a short compilation of moral teachings, shares a broader view of what makes a good neighbor, stating simply that having a good heart leads to being a good neighbor.

May we be blessed with neighbors with good hearts, with whom disputes are easily resolved, whom we trust and enjoy their company, and may we strive to be such neighbors in return. ▲
Rabbi Nicole Luna serves at Temple Beth El in Fort Myers.

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Words have power

In the episode of the golden calf, our people regressed into idol worship. Moses pleads with G-d Who agrees to forgive B'nei Yisrael and after another 40 days on Mount Sinai, Moses returns with a second set of tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments.



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

With all this time Moses had spent with G-d, he was changed not just spiritually but physically. The exposure to G-d's presence caused his face to glow with a radiant light.

In this description of Moses, the word "karan" is translated as "was radiant" and can be found nowhere else in the Tanach. The word "keren" is more commonly used and means ray or beam, but also horn. As the Torah was translated from Hebrew into Greek and Latin, the term was no longer read to mean that Moses' face was radiant, but that it had horns.

If you've seen an image of Michelangelo's statue of Moses, you'll notice that he's actually depicted with horns. From a face aglow with the light of G-d, to a face with the horns of a demon, it's quite a transition and not a good one.

This image didn't make life any easier for our people in medieval Europe, where the Church often demonized and persecuted Jews. To this day, right here in the U.S., you can find people who live in small towns where there are no Jews who actually believe Jews have horns and are connected to Satan. One tiny misrepresentation can contribute to centuries of persecution, hatred and antisemitic violence.

Centuries ago we were in no position to demand an apology but today we are, so let's not take our position for granted.

Just weeks ago, the NBC show *Saturday Night Live* ran a segment with a joke that suggested Israel is

vaccinating only its Jewish population. Michael Che, the co-host of the show's news parody, "Weekend Update," said, "Israel is reporting that they've vaccinated half of their population, and I'm going to guess it's the Jewish half..."

Firstly, this joke is untrue. Israel has made the vaccination equally available to all its citizens, Jews and non-Jews alike. It's also made it equally available to Arab residents of Jerusalem, many of whom don't hold Israeli citizenship, but receive all Israeli health benefits.

Secondly, it's dangerous and nothing more than a modern spin on a classic antisemitic trope that has inspired the mass murder of countless Jews throughout the centuries.

NBC deserves even more criticism for a scene from the show *Nurses* that has been widely condemned for the way it portrayed a Chasidic patient who refused a bone graft from a "goy," an Arab or a woman. To make matters worse, the actor portraying the Chasidic man wasn't even Jewish. Does this recall any past images of promoting racism by dressing someone up to look like a particular ethnicity?

Being portrayed as "the other" has been a source of antisemitism since the story of our Exodus from Egypt where a new Pharaoh arose and said, "These Jews have become far too numerous, let us deal with them shrewdly before they rise up against us." These types of words and descriptions are a potential warning sign of what is to come.

There are times when we must engage in battle. The lessons of our past and the challenges we still face today teach us that sometimes the real war we're fighting is more a war of words. Words have power. May G-d grant us the strength to stand tall and unafraid to combat any words that promote ignorance and hatred with words of truth, understanding and love.▲

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

Second chances

When you've missed the boat, there's nothing you can do but wave to the passengers.

If the train has already left the station,



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

you might as well sit down and wait for the next one to arrive. There are many things in life that depend on being in the right place at the right time. If you're late, you've missed that opportunity forever.

Likewise, the Torah tells us that there are specific times for doing specific mitzvot. There is a proper time to put on tefilin, a proper time to light Shabbat candles, a proper time to eat matza and a proper time to sit in the sukka.

The Torah's narrative about Pesach Sheni, the "Second Passover" (always on 14 Iyar, this year on April 26), thus expresses a very radical concept in Judaism.

Right before their Exodus from Egypt, G-d commanded the Jewish people to offer the Passover sacrifice on the 14th of Nisan. One of the requirements, however, was that a Jew had to be in a state of ritual purity. As a result, not everyone was permitted to bring an offering, and the Jews who were excluded felt terrible. "Why should we be left out?!" they demanded of Moses. They were so eager to observe the mitzva, that G-d relented, granting them another opportunity to bring an offering one month later, on the 14th of Iyar.

This story reveals the unfathomable depths of the Jewish soul and the infinite power of teshuva, repentance. It teaches us that every Jew is so intimately connected to G-d that when he

makes a sincere and heartfelt demand, it "forces" G-d, as it were, to open up new channels through which to send us His abundant blessings.

The Previous Rebbe explained that the lesson of Pesach Sheni is that it is never too late to correct the past and return to G-d. It also emphasizes the power of a Jew's initiative. When a Jew cries out from the depths of his soul and with a genuine desire to fulfill G-d's will, G-d listens to his plea and grants his request.

There is an additional message of Pesach Sheni. What, in fact, was the cause of the ritual impurity which excluded some Jews from participating in the sacrifice? The Torah states, "There were people who were defiled by contact with the dead and were unable to offer the Passover sacrifice on that day." According to one opinion in the Talmud, these Jews were involved in the mitzva of burying a dead person found on the roadside who had no known relatives to do so. Even a kohen (priest) or a High Priest – neither of whom is normally permitted to come in contact with the dead – is obligated to defile himself by burying the dead person.

This concept applies on a spiritual plane, as well. When we encounter another person who is spiritually "lifeless," we are obligated to get involved with him, even if it takes us away from our own spiritual pursuits.

Ultimately, Pesach Sheni teaches us that we must never despair or give up on ourselves, on others, and especially in bombarding G-d with our demand that He send us Moshiach immediately.▲

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.

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Chabad at FGCU update

By Rabbi Mendel Gordon

February at Chabad of FGCU was a happening month. With Purim celebrated (always an annual highlight!) and the commencement of a new, thought-provoking course, students have engaged with and explored their Judaism in so many ways.

Twenty students came together to bake challah and experience the joys of Shabbat, its rituals, tastes and aromas. For some, it was the first time baking challah, the traditional Shabbat loaves that have graced our festive tables for centuries, while for others it was the comforting sights and scents of home.

We let loose on Purim, with two parties scheduled, enabling all students to participate with cheer and good fun. Purim Under the Sea and Glow in the Dark Purim were the party's themes, with dozens reveling in the exuberant holiday festivities.

Purim gifts were distributed to students from all across campus, ensuring that nobody would be left out of the fun. The Megillah, the scroll of Esther which chronicles the Purim story, was read, and its pertinent lessons remembered.

A popular new development is our latest course, Soul Maps, an in-depth study of the classic Tanya, the key guide to Jewish philosophy and mysticism. Tanya uncovers the layers of the soul, keying us in on life's most profound mysteries: How can I have a real connection with G-d. Does he really care about me and my actions? Who am I – my pizza-craving, egotistic, self-gratifying me, or my selfless, altruistic, spiritually-inclined self? And why do I have these two clashing personalities anyway? We are on a journey to discover ourselves (and like-

minded fellow Jewish students) and G-d's world around us.

Chabad will have in-person Passover Seders on March 27 and 28 for college-age Jews.

Chabad at FGCU caters to all Jewish students in Southwest Florida, providing a home away from home. Join us to learn, celebrate or just meet Jewish students your age. For more information, or to get involved, contact

Rabbi Mendel Gordon at 347.452.0489 or chabadfgcu@gmail.com.

Visit our website at chabadfgcu.com.



Celebrating Purim Under the Sea are Rabbi Mendel Gordon, Sam Poisak, Julian Reed, Courtney Carrol and Mel Duckson



Noa Hechtman with Purim gifts for her roommates



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To round out our year we have a number of special events planned. On March 31, we will be part of a special

program dedicating an ambulance to Magen David Adom, the Israeli Red Cross. The ambulance is dedicated in memory of Abraham & Minnie Berzon and David & Esther Goodman, and in honor of Irving L. Berzon, a WWII Camp Liberator.

On April 7, we will hold a special in-person educational program on Yom



Vashti's Ring Toss at the Purim Carnival

HaShoah. If you would like to attend this event, please contact me. On April 18, our children will participate in an in-person mitzvah project, assembling Blessing Bags to be distributed to those in need by the Homeless Coalition followed by a Yom Ha'Atzmut program.

On April 23-24 we will celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of our very own Allison Manekin. Details are available from the family. On April 30, we will celebrate with an in-person Religious School Shabbat. To round out the year we will conclude with a Lag B'Omer and last-day celebration on May 2.

For more information about Temple Judea Religious School or our programming, contact me at 239.433.0201 or tjswfledu@gmail.com.



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**GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA****(239) 963-9347****"Hate Never Disappears.
It Just Takes a Break..."***Ida Margolis*

Since January 6, I have been reading articles and statements relating to the insurrection at the Capitol. Generally, I was disappointed by the statements put forth by organizations that I expected to make a powerful statement about the horrible events that took place in front of everyone watching television that day.

I have read some well-written letters to the editor and thought-provoking articles. Two articles that I found significant were written for Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, 2021. While some months have passed since the events of January 6, the horror of the insurrection is still fresh for many and those articles are extremely relevant, especially as Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, approaches.

"Hate Never Disappears. It Just Takes a Break for a While. Why the

U.S. Capitol Attack Makes Holocaust Remembrance Day More Important Than Ever" was the title of an article from time.com, January 25, by Olivia Waxman. Waxman wrote that among the most shocking images from the January 6 insurrection on Capitol Hill were pictures of a man wearing the antisemitic sweatshirt that said "Camp Auschwitz" and "work brings freedom." Waxman wrote that while the display of antisemitism was shocking, to Holocaust scholars it was not new, and rather the latest example of the association between white supremacist and pro-Nazi sentiment in the U.S. More than 75 years since WWII, the attack on the Capitol was a reminder of the continuation of Nazi ideas.

University of Southern California history Professor Steve Ross said the January 6 events showed that hate never left this country, it was underground and resurfaced, and this is one reason that the Holocaust should be remembered. Ross noted that after WWII, resentment grew in areas of the U.S.

when minority groups started demanding more rights. In 1946 there were groups that wanted the extermination of the Jews and to return all Blacks to Africa. Ross said there were times in the past when, if government leaders and others had spoken out against white supremacy, antisemitism and racism, they could have stopped the hate groups. Ross concludes that right now we have a chance to make a difference "but nothing is going to change unless we confront our own history and confront it right now, not just for the past, but for the present."

An article in *America*, a Jesuit publication, noted that Pope Francis said, "Remembering the Holocaust and its victims is not only an act of solidarity but also serves as a warning to humanity that such horrors could happen again." In January, the Pope called on the world to "remember the Shoah" and to "be aware of how this path of death began, this path of extermination, of brutality."

Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, stated, "As hateful voices continue to rise, denying or distorting the implacable reality of these facts, we have a universal responsibility to remember each and every individual whom the

Nazis sought to erase from the face of the earth."

German Catholic bishops marked Holocaust Remembrance Day by calling for action against all forms of antisemitism. "The memory of the Holocaust fills me with profound sorrow but also with shame because so many remained silent at the time," wrote Bishop Georg Bätzing, president of the German bishops' conference. He said people must courageously oppose "anti-Jewish prejudice, conspiracy myths and every form of hatred in everyday life, at school or among friends." The "industrial murder of the Jews" had been at the end of a path "that began with hate speech, conspiracy myths and social exclusion. We must never go down that path again."

Holocaust survivor Margit Meissner said, "Days of Remembrance is an opportunity for us to remember the suffering that was, and the efforts that were made to put an end to such suffering, and it's a call to conscience today in our world to make sure that we aren't the silent ones standing by, contributing to the suffering of others."

Another survivor, Tova Friedman, said, "Today, as antisemitism is rearing its ugly head again, the voices of protest are not many and not loud enough."

**JEWISH WAR VETERANS
Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400****(239) 246-3151***Eryka Aptaker*

Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400 Jewish War Veterans is pleased to announce the eighth annual Herb Schwartz Memorial Scholarship Award. The Post annually awards a \$500 scholarship to one deserving High School Senior or student presently attending a college or university.

To qualify, the student must be a Jewish student from the Lee/Charlotte

community. The scholarship will be awarded to a student with good grades and a financial need. The Post committee will pick the scholarship winner.

To qualify, please send a copy of grades and a letter expressing achievements and need to:

Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400 JWV, c/o Harvey Charter, 11024 Lakeland Cir., Fort Myers, FL 33913

This must be received no later than May 27, 2021. The scholarship will be awarded by the end of July 2021.

**HADASSAH
Collier/Lee Chapter****(732) 539-4011***Joyce Toub*

Having recently celebrated our holiday of Purim with its heroine of Queen Esther, Hadassah, our organization is once again where it belongs: as a hero in today's international fight. We are about to celebrate another major holiday, Passover. The relationship from the past to the present is uncanny.

Passover tells us to remember the past as if we, ourselves, were participating in the Exodus. Do we find it difficult to imagine plagues today? Hunger and homelessness in our cities, snow and ice in Texas, insurgency in Mozambique, famine in Nigeria, attacks on aid workers in Syria, and the international terror of Covid-19. It is all too real and terrifying.

In this uncertain time there is the shining light of Hadassah, whose work centers on Israel, but whose research and humanitarian work resonates throughout the world. Our Hadassah Global Response Team has reacted to Covid-19 in many different ways internationally.

In Argentina, with the help of Hadassah International, the Jewish community has come together to fight Covid-19. Business leaders have donated \$100 million to the CV-19 Argentina Fund, which provides a volunteer network to support the elderly and establish temporary clinics. Jorge Diener, Associate Director of Hadassah International, is in daily contact with the community leadership to implement this program.

The Mexican Jewish community approached Hadassah Mexico to provide advice from HMO and

Hadassah International as to how they should protect the community. There's now a website that is a resource for the Jewish community:

<https://jerum.org>

In Chile and Ecuador, discussions were held regarding the handling of Covid-19. Jorge Diener reports daily on Covid-19 in Spanish and has a regular column in the Argentinian *Jewish News*, serving all of Latin America.

In France, the Jewish community turned to Hadassah for advice and information. A program with Professor Yoram Weiss, director of Hadassah Ein Keren, aired on Shalom Radio, the Jewish radio station.

Hadassah Australia has been facilitating contact between medical professionals at HMO and major hospitals in Melbourne, the Royal Melbourne and the Alfred hospitals, to discuss best practices.

In the hope of *Tikkun Olam*, Hadassah sets a positive example for the world: leading in healing, inspiring kindness and giving. We all continue to help Hadassah build on what has already begun so we can continue to see the fruit of our labors.

* * *

This month, we hope all our members will join us for these Expanding Horizons programs:

- ◆ Monday, April 5: "Remember the Ladies" will offer insights and interesting facts about the writings and education of several of America's first ladies. Our presenter is Jeff Margolis.
- ◆ Monday, April 12: "The Art of Fused Glass & Mosaics" will feature Judy Belmont from her studio, Naples Glassworks.

Michael Shapiro
P H O T O G R A P H Y**Bar / Bat Mitzvah Specialist**

Choosing the right photographer is an important decision. Michael Shapiro has more than 30 years experience in media and journalism. He is able to capture images that are unique, unexpected and spontaneous.

**Other Services: Weddings / Family Portraits / Events****239.770.6860**

mike@shapiro-photography.com

www.shapiro-photography.com

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 566-1771

Jewish lives matter since before the flood

Marina Berkovich

History is a study of past events and the impact they have on human affairs. Jewish history, from its biblical origins forward, is also a study of surviving the adverse human conditions that repeated destructions of civilization bring on. "Civilizations vanished, but the Jewish people have not" is an entire history lesson in itself that is taught at every Passover table and in many Gentile homes through learning the Exodus chapter of the Bible.

I believe the core of our survival is deeply rooted in those Jewish people, who despite direct threats, danger, fear, persecution and corruption, were able to preserve the values and practices of everyday Judaism for us, as pristinely and historically possible, through the millennia of change. Our generation,

with our ease of information and communication accessibility, is trusted to help carry our small personal share of that responsibility. Easy-peasy, you'd think.

There are 195 countries in the world now, 193 of them members of UN. The Vatican and "The State of Palestine" are not. Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Syria and Yemen now ban Jews from entering, but before the radical Islamists resurgence of the mid 1970s, these countries had thriving Jewish communities for double-digits number of centuries. Not without periodic pogroms, of course. Note, I reserve the word "pogrom" in its traditional meaning of rioting and killing the Jews in an acts of mass violence. It's a rare spot in the world that did not have these periodic pogroms.

Modern-day pogroms are institutionalized and systemic. In 2020, Israel was condemned by the UN 17 times, triple that of other nations. Everything is upside down lately, and the Jews, the under-one-percent people of the world,

are again frivolously called aggressors, oppressors and worse by the much more numerous groups, whose plight Jews have frequently championed.

As a Jew who understands the development of history, I fear that century XXI worldwide persecution of Jews is now a fete accompli, and it is only a matter of time before acts of overt antisemitism will spread to local communities. The quest I am on is to educate our people and our people's neighbors about us and our essential role in our local area. Perhaps, it could be a deterrent should we be faced with neighbors denouncing their neighbors again. Perhaps, it is a quixotic quest that would not play in a bigger game. I try, and I implore you to try with me. In my own humble eyewitness opinion, it is a much more realistic expectation to continue building up Jewish communities of the New World, where there is still a chance that human decency will prevail, than to funnel support into historically proven failures of the Old World, where no matter the era, the Jewish money was always used

to ultimately destroy their local Jews. Plenty of historical evidence supports this point.

All Jewish lives matter – from agnostic and cultural to the ultra-Orthodox. No Jewish leader, however large or small their group, has a right to disparage that.

The Jewish Historical Society of SWFL is home to the history of all Jews comprising our area's Jewish population.

Have you joined our mission yet? Family Membership is \$54; Individual Membership is \$36. 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 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.)

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS REFORM

Meets at Sanibel Congregational Church
2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel Island
Rabbi Stephen L. Fuchs
President: Michael Hochschild
Phone: 971-561-7888
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

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.com
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Religious school: Sunday 10 a.m.
Beginning Hebrew: Tuesday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.
Advanced Hebrew: Thursday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.
Organizations: Sisterhood
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

SYNAGOGUES & ORGANIZATIONS

IN LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

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.

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 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

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.

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 a.m., followed by a Kiddush

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 a.m. followed by a kiddush
Torah study: Wednesday at 8 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 a.m.; Shacharit 10 a.m.; Kiddush at noon
Minyan: Monday & Thursday 7:00 a.m.

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.

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
- Chevra Kadisha: Gene Sipe - 239-841-4615
- Generations of the Shoah SWFL: 963-9347
- Hadassah - Collier/Lee Chapter: Diane Schwartz - 732-539-4011
- 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
- Chabad Jewish Student Life at FGCU - 347-452-0489

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

We may not be meeting in person yet, but Temple Beth El is still going strong. Please join us for our April activities.

The TBE Book Club held a lively discussion in March on the book *Cilka's Journey: A Novel* by Heather Morris. The energy will continue when the group meets on April 7 at 2:45 p.m. to review *Red Famine* by Ann Applebaum. In this revelatory history of one of Stalin's greatest crimes, Applebaum reveals a great political atrocity. The starvation of the Ukrainian peasants was part of a larger Soviet policy against the Ukrainian nation.

The 2021 Winter History Series with Gerald Ziedenberg was successfully concluded on March 1. We thank Gerald for offering this informative

series free to our community.

Our Leslie Luzar Cantorial Series brought us the pleasure of hearing Michelle Citrin participate with Rabbi Nicole Luna in leading our service. We are honored to have Dan Nichols join us on April 2 and Noah Aronson on April 23. As always, the entire community is invited to join us via Zoom.

Our discussion group led by Paul Kling and Roberto Luna has a new name, Renew Nefesh, and discusses spiritual and psychological questions. The group meets every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. If interested, email paul@paulkling.com.

TBE's Sisterhood continues to offer wonderful programs. We all got comfy and had our popcorn ready for Sisterhood Movie Night. March 18 brought us the movie *Bombshell* and we are looking forward to April 22 at 7:00 p.m. to watch the zany Mel

Brooks movie *To Be or Not to Be*.

Sisterhood hosted a "sweet" Passover Cooking Demonstration on March 21. Carolyn Gora taught us how to make tasty macaroons, Rocky Road and flourless chocolate cake.

On April 25 at 1:00 p.m., a virtual tour of the Judith Lieber Exhibit at the Florida Jewish Museum-FIU is scheduled. You can expect to see a stunning collection of handbags and other items. In the evening, we have Quarantine Bingo at 7:00 p.m., sponsored by the Men's Club. Visit our website to purchase your Bingo card. The prices will remain at \$5 for two playing cards and \$10 for five playing cards. For additional information, please email tbe.mens.group@gmail.com.

Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day will be virtually observed on Wednesday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m. The yellow candles that were distributed in the TBE parking lot will be lit on this day.

Thank you to those who have been

contributing to our Food and Feminine Product Drive, organized by the TBE Mitzvah Committee. Donations can be dropped off at the front of the temple building on a designated Tuesday from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Monetary donations in the form of checks can be written out to Cycle Forward, Jewish Federation Food Bank or Harry Chapin Food Bank, as well as mailed to TBE.

Just as the Jewish people have risen above challenges for years, the TBE community is rising above the challenges Covid has presented. Come join us and take part in Zoom Hebrew classes, current events discussions, Shabbat services on Friday nights and much more.

Visit our website and follow us on Facebook (Temple Beth El Fort Myers) and on Instagram (@templebethelfortmyers) for updates, information and for an online community experience.

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

A first night Seder will be Zoomed from the Diamond home starting at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 27 beginning with Havdalah and concluding with the serving of the meal. To follow along, visit www.fortmyerssynagogue.com.

com for easy Zoom logon information and to download the C.F.S. "Stay at Home Seder."

In-person worship will resume with a Yizkor service at 11:00 a.m.

on April 4, the last day of Passover, and will continue each Friday at 7:00 p.m. followed by an Oneg Shabbat. Zooming of the services will also continue, as will Torah Study and Adult Education.

At 24 years, Rabbi Diamond's immensely popular 9:30 a.m. Sabbath morning Torah Study is our area's longest running Jewish Adult Education program. Selection of each week's Torah sedra are examined in-depth, and the lively give-and-take make this 90-minute class absorbing and fly by too quickly. A prayer for healing and the Qaddish are recited at the conclusion of each study session.

Home Adult Education classes are at 7:00 p.m. each Tuesday for an hour

on Zoom with a focus in April on the Psalms. For weekly reading assignments, email synfree@comcast.net.

Rabbi Diamond continues to teach prayerbook Hebrew reading skills online to community young people at no charge. Email synfree@comcast.net to make arrangements for your children to learn with him.

Stay current with C.F.S. events and donate by visiting www.fortmyerssynagogue.com. The synagogue is a Jewish community resource open to all.

Marcia Can Help

MARCIA CAN HELP, a fund of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Family Services, provides for emergency nutritional needs through our Food Pantry, gift card distribution, and crisis grants to prevent utility cut-offs, evictions, loss of transportation and other essential services without which none of us can live.



Inspired by the recognition that these needs must be addressed in our community, and as a tribute to Marcia Cohen, a long-time resident of Sanibel and social activist, her husband Jack established the **MARCIA CAN HELP** fund in 2017.



Help us meet these pressing needs by contributing to the **MARCIA CAN HELP** fund. For further information please contact Alan Isaacs at (239) 481-4449 ext. 6 or alanisaacs@jfdlcc.org.

TEMPLE JUDEA

Fort Myers

(239) 433-0201

www.tjswfl.org

On Wednesday March 31, Temple Judea members Herman & Paula Berzon will dedicate a new ambulance to Magen David Adom in honor of Irving L. Berzon, Herman's brother. This program will be outdoors at Temple Judea at 4:30 p.m.

Lunchtime Torah study with Rabbi Sack is the first Thursday of each month at noon, with the next class on April 1. At this time, the class is held over Zoom. There is no cost to attend and all levels of Jewish background are welcome. If you need the

Zoom login information, please call our office at 239.433.0201

Tab Scribner, Director of Congregational Learning, will lead an interactive and lively in-person Tot Shabbat service on Friday, April 9 at 5:00 p.m. All families with young children are invited to participate. Please contact Tab in our office to reserve your spot.

Chaverot Book Club meets to discuss Cambria Gordon's novel, *The Poetry of Secrets*, on Tuesday, April 13 at 7:00 p.m. Contact Leni Sack at msack@aol.com for more information.

On Sunday, April 18 at 9:30 a.m., our religious school students along with our Social Action Committee will be engaged in a mitzvah project. The

children will assemble Blessing Bags from the items collected by the congregation to give to those in need through the Homeless Coalition. A special "thank you" to Jan Klein and Doreen Kostel for coordinating this event with Tab and our religious school. Thank you to religious school staff and families for participating in this project. The children will conclude the morning with a Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebration.

Temple Judea members continue to donate food to the Jewish Federation Food Pantry and volunteer at the Harry Chapin Food Bank. We are also collecting toiletry items (sample sizes) for the Homeless Coalition to assemble Blessing Bags for those in need.

Rabbi Sack, our board and staff at Temple Judea wish everyone a happy

and healthy Passover. We will host an outdoor Yizkor service on Shabbat, April 3 at 9:30 a.m. All attendees must wear a mask.

"Like" the Temple Judea Facebook page to stream the service or call the office for the Zoom link.

Regularly scheduled events:

- Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m.
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m.
- Tot Shabbat the second Friday night of each month at 5:00 p.m.
- Rabbi Sack's monthly lunchtime Torah study sessions the first Thursday of each month

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!

We are hoping to be safely welcoming everyone back into our building for in-person services, clubs and special events soon. In the meantime, we all remain connected and engaged through Livestream services and Zoom meetings.

We invite the entire community to join us in person every Friday at 5:00

p.m. to drop off donations of canned goods, pet food and supplies, clothing, books, games and toys. This is a great way for us to help the needy while getting together safely

and with social distancing while doing a great mitzvah!

In addition to supporting the food pantries at the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties, Gulf Coast Animal Shelter, Lee County Domestic Animal Services and The Children's Network of SWFL, we're also supporting Hearts and Homes to help the homeless vets in SWFL and the ACT Shelter to help victims of domestic abuse. We are also collecting Jewish- and Israel-themed books to bring Yiddishkeit and Jewish light to the Kares Library in Athens, Alabama, where

it is so very needed. Thank you to all the wonderful members of our Jewish community who continue to support our outreach week after week. We are making a difference.

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

Every Saturday 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.

SLC also has a dynamic Women's Circle led by Rebbetzin Robin Dermer with an emphasis on women's spirituality and personal growth.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation, To-

rah Study, Women's Circle Ladies Night, Game Night, Café Kabbalah, Health and Wellness Team, Book Club, Green Team, Yiddish Culture Club, Genesis Study Group 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 or email us at info@shalomlifecenter.org.

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

Sanibel

(732) 780-2016

www.batyam.org

Chag Sameach! Wishing you and your families a healthy and joyous Passover. We certainly were not anticipating another "virtual" Passover celebration. Last year everyone knew the answer to the question, "Why is this night different from all other nights?" Last year we had a virtual service while learning about lockdown, pandemics, mask wearing and social distancing – but we thought it would be over by the summer. We anticipated physically gathering once more after this time of plague,

but here we are. We turn to our heritage to find an answer. Passover is an epic story of oppression, resolve and deliverance. We are going through a difficult time and we certainly need resolve and deliverance.

Now with vaccinations underway, we see light at the end of this very long tunnel.

Despite the circumstances, the year at Bat Yam passed with many highlights, too many to be mentioned in this short article. As a congregation we experienced these highlights thanks to the capable tech team, who made livestreaming a reality, and who taught us all how to mute and unmute while Zooming. The Social Action Commit-

tee hosted three successful 2020 Social Justice Series events with well-known speakers who focused on the civil unrest erupting in many American cities and who all were involved in efforts to bridge the racial and ethnic divide. We enjoyed the Summer Speakers Series, where we heard from experts in their field ranging from psychology, stories of being on the road in RVs to art as social commentary. These successful webinars garnered huge interest and were opened up to the wider SWFL Jewish community. Programs were recorded and links were sent to whomever requested them.

The High Holy Days were conducted live in the sanctuary by Rabbi Fuchs and Cantor Simon with piano accompaniment by Abigail Allison

and cellist Susannah Kelly. They were joined virtually by 125 congregants and friends worldwide. The Jewish calendar continued to unfold and soon we were celebrating Sukkot, Simchat Torah and Hanukkah, with Sanibel's first outdoor menorah lighting ceremony.

Bat Yam is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year and will be duly celebrated at our AGM on March 25. Thirty years ago we experienced an outpouring of support for the new Jewish congregation and we continue to welcome new members. At the AGM a new slate of officers will be introduced by the chairman of the nominating committee and once again new leadership will be elected and be at the helm, taking Bat Yam Temple of the Islands into the future.

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

Cape Coral

(239) 772-4555

www.templebethshalomcc.org

My next-door neighbor always told me that when things seem bad, we have to turn lemons into lemonade. Here at Temple Beth Shalom, we have decided to do just that. Since no one is using

a fresh coat of paint and new flooring. All of the renovations will be funded through donations, so we will be doing a lot of fundraising in the next few months.

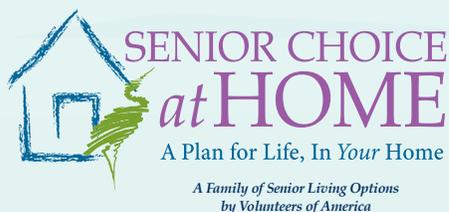
the sanctuary, we have decided that it is the perfect time to remodel the bimah. We will be taking out the steps that people were always tripping on, and give the whole place

Now that more and more of our members have been vaccinated, we are having more in-person activities in the parking lot and in the park. There is optimism in the air that the pandemic will soon be over and we will return to a new normal. That new normal will include some of the things we learned during the last year. Zoom will not go away. It will just be used as one more way to carry out activities. We will cherish it as a way to include our

out-of-state members.

We continue to have services every Friday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday morning Torah Study, Tuesday afternoon chats, Thursday night enrichment movies and Saturday night at the movies. All of our activities are open to the public. If you would like to join us, please call 239.772.4555 or email templebethshalomcommunications@gmail.com. We look forward to meeting you.

WHEN IT COMES TO RETIREMENT LIVING... YOU HAVE OPTIONS.



We are taking precautionary measures to ensure the safety of our guests, residents & staff. This includes keeping guests 6 feet apart during events. Upon entering, you will need to fill out a health screening form, get a temperature check, wear a mask, and wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

1333 Santa Barbara Blvd., Cape Coral, FL 33991   



Senior Choice at Home and Gulf Coast Village are Volunteers of America membership-based community. Learn more at voa.org. AL #12982, HHA #299993155, HHA #299991969, SNF #1188096

Life Plan at Home LUNCHEON

Hosted by Senior Choice at Home

Wednesday, April 14th at 11:00AM

Friday, April 23rd at 11:00AM

Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association
2001 Shreve St., Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Learn how you can stay in your home as you age with a safety net built on the solid foundation of Volunteers of America

Current Trends WORKSHOP

Hosted by Gulf Coast Village

Thursday, April 15th at 11:00AM

Gulf Coast Village
1333 Santa Barbara Blvd.
Cape Coral, FL 33999

We have an amazing panel of industry experts ready to share their insight and answer your questions! Join us over an exceptional lunch with representatives from: RE/MAX, Earp Enterprises, Sanibel Captiva Trust and Senior Living-Volunteers of America

Retirement Options LUNCHEON

Hosted by Gulf Coast Village and Senior Choice at Home

Tuesday, April 20th at 11:00AM

Heron's Glen Clubhouse
2250 Herons Glen Blvd.
North Fort Myers, FL 33917

Learn about your life plan options whether you choose to move to Gulf Coast Village OR remain in your home with Senior Choice at Home

Learn about options for a life plan on our award-winning campus, or in your own home!

RSVP
239-946-1725

or visit
SENIORCHOICEATHOME.COM
and
GULFCOASTVILLAGE.ORG