

May the lights of Hanukkah shine brightly
on your family and home.

The Jewish Federation Board and Staff



L'CHAYIM

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BBYO teens from Fort Myers and Naples connect

Hanukkah and cosmic credits

By Brian Simon, Federation President

One of the best Hanukkah gifts I received as a child came from a babysitter. It was "The Grand Illusion" album by the rock band Styx. The album came out in 1977, so I'm guessing I was 8 years old



■ Brian Simon

at the time. I was thinking about this recently as I listened to a few songs from that album (not the actual vinyl record – that's long gone – but off Amazon Music). And the thing that stuck out to me is that I don't even remember the babysitter's name. Or if I ever showed enough appreciation for what was a very thoughtful gift. I was 8. At this point, I hope I at least said, "Thank you."

All I remember is that she was one of the babysitters my parents hired

from Avila College, the Catholic girls' school across the street from our house in Kansas City. (Side note: that little college is now Avila University, a co-ed school with many sports programs including, surprisingly, football.)

Is it possible to show gratitude for something that happened 40 years ago? And if so, how? This is one of those situations where one could suggest that I put my appreciation out into "The Universe," where all the cosmic debits and credits are somehow reconciled. "The Universe" is the non-denominational, civic religion, politically correct way of accounting for God.

I have this theory that we experience God through our relationship with others. Rabbi Marc Sack has a similar theory. He says it's up to us to bring God's presence into the world. My friend (and often editor of this column) Keith Grossman says it's the work of God when people enter our lives, and we have free will to draw them in, push

them away or be blind to the opportunities they bring with them.

The work of the Federation is to bring a lot of good into the community. Our food pantry supports local families. Our Jewish Family Services division supports friends in need. Our Senior Lunch Bunch program provides a lot of benefit for the attendees and the volunteers. Our holiday gift bag programs let local seniors know that we're thinking of them. We support Israel both financially and through partnership programs. We sponsor Jewish cultural programs that enrich the lives of all of us in the Jewish community.

Call it cosmic credits. Call it bringing God's presence into the world. Call it experiencing God through our relationship with others. However you choose to see the work that we do – and by we, I'm including you – it's important work that should make us all proud. I appreciate your support. Happy Hanukkah.▲



24TH ANNUAL
JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL OF
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
FEBRUARY 2 - MARCH 1

OPENING DAY | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2 | 3:00PM

REGAL BELLTOWER THEATER, 13499 Bell Tower Dr., Fort Myers

Featuring *Golda's Balcony*

and special guest, Film Producer Dave Fishelson.

Discussion and dessert reception to follow at Society. (across from Regal)

Sponsored by: Norman Love Confections

Film: \$13, Reception: \$25 OR \$36 combo ticket



CLOSING DAY | SUNDAY, MARCH 1 | 3:00PM

REGAL BELLTOWER THEATER, 13499 Bell Tower Dr., Fort Myers

Featuring *Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles*

Reception and music to follow with special guest

Fretless Rock at Society. (across from Regal)

Sponsored by: Andi & William Horowitz

Film: \$13, Reception: \$25 OR \$36 combo ticket



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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.

OUR VISION

A Jewish Community that is based on Jewish values such as Tzedakah (benevolence), Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) and K'lal Yisrael (taking responsibility for one another).

L'CHAYIM

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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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**JANUARY ISSUE
EDITORIAL DEADLINE:
Thursday, December 5**

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Program notes

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

Welcome back to all of our snowbird friends. You were missed! You are back just in time for some amazing programming that you do not want to miss.

Upon writing this article, there were just a few seats left on our **JFED Hits the Road Bus Trip**. On Tuesday, December 3, we are heading north in a luxury charter bus to St. Petersburg. There you will enjoy lunch at Acropolis (one of my favorites), and then visit the beautiful Chihuly exhibit. Afterwards, we head to the Morean Arts Center for a glass-blowing demonstration. And, of course, I have left some shopping time in the schedule. The bus leaves from the Federation parking lot at 9:00 a.m. We will make two stops on our way up for our Charlotte County residents: Exit 141 at the Cracker Barrel in North Fort Myers and Exit 170 at the Cracker Barrel in Punta Gorda. If you would like



■ **Debbie Sanford**

to come along, please call me at 239.481.4449 x4 to reserve your space.

If you have ever thought about volunteering at one of our events or if you are already a regular volunteer, you will want to stop by our **Volunteer Open House** on Wednesday, December 4 between noon and 4:00 p.m. Check out the great opportunities we have for you to help make a difference in our community. Volunteers for programming, Jewish Family Services and office help are needed this coming season.

December also brings our much-loved **Community Breakfast** on Sunday, December 8, at a new location this year. The Heritage Palms Golf & Country Club offers beautiful views, accessible parking and, of course, delicious food. Our speaker from Space Florida will enlighten you to the collaborative programming, research and endeavors between the State of Florida and Israel. You will also hear about its involvement in assisting Israel with its first mission to the moon.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon. From my family to yours, Happy Hanukkah! ▲

Senior Lunch Bunch update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

Rabbi Marc Sack and Temple Judea hosted the Federation's Senior Lunch Bunch in October. The volunteer village that ensures the lunches run smoothly did a fantastic job, as always. The Federation would also like to thank our generous community partner, Jason's Deli.



■ **Jodi Cohen**

Rabbi Sack shared some stories about the community where he grew up, which he referred to as a "thick Jewish community," and invited others who came from the same kind of communities to share their stories. Several people told stories to the entire group, while people also told some tales to each other. A good time was had by all, as stories allow us to connect with each other so easily and with such heart.

The Senior Lunch Bunch is a free monthly luncheon sponsored by the Federation as an opportunity

for Jewish seniors to gather on a regular basis, eat a little something, learn a little something, and make new friends. If you are new to town, have been here awhile, are shy or outgoing, there is always a place at the table for YOU.

If you'd like to volunteer by making calls, helping with set-up or clean-up, bringing a dessert, visiting with seniors during lunch or driving seniors, please be in touch at 239.481.4449 x2 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org. ▲

NEXT SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH:

**Thursday, December 12 at 12:00 p.m.
Calusa Harbour, 2525 First St., Fort Myers
Valet parking will be available.
RSVP by Friday, December 6
to Jodi Cohen at
239.481.4449 x2 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org**

Photos courtesy Helene Glocer



**For a continuously updated calendar of events,
visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org.**

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



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

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The Federation expresses special gratitude to our Indigent Fund Pacesetters for the example they set for the rest of us.

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Shalom Dancers
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Roz Shraiar
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Bob & Ella Morley
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The Federation thanks

Temple Beth El

Temple Judea

Temple Beth Shalom

for their High Holiday Food Drive donations

"If you offer your compassion to the hungry and satisfy the famished creature, then shall your light shine in darkness." – Isaiah 58:10

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.



Joseph Horowitz Israel Travel Grants Available

The Joseph Horowitz Israel Travel Grant is available through the Community Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties.

The grant may be used for travel to Israel to participate in programs that are volunteer or educational in nature.

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

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



For more information or an application, visit our website at JewishFederationLCC.org.

Jewish Family Services update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

Food Pantry
A large, heartfelt “thank you” to Temple Beth El, Temple Judea and Temple Beth Shalom for their High Holiday Food Drive donations. The Federation food pantry is well-stocked (for now) with basic staples plus many other food items and toiletries as a result of this outpouring of support for the pantry. The photos show just one congregation’s donations as well as how the Federation social hall was transformed during the sorting and stocking of all the donations.

It certainly takes a village to unpack well over 150 bags and boxes, sort items, put everything away, and then break down and recycle materials. Several people contributed their time and energy to this amazing mitzvah: Karen Whitman, Suzanne Orkin, Barbara Gribin, Judith Yevick, Carolyn Gora, Mary Beth Mandelkorn, Laurie McConville, Hilary and Jerry Kobrin, Phyllis and Berny Aronson, Russ Bogen, Barry and Ruthie Belkin, Sharon Berry, Rabbi Marc Sack and Donna Cotler.

to get free food from the Midwest Food Bank of Florida. There are anywhere from 30-50 volunteers from local churches who work every day in the warehouse during client load-outs. Because the Federation doesn’t have volunteers to send to the MFB, we buy lunch twice a year for the volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to keep this phenomenal organization running.

The photos accompanying this article give you an idea of the size and scope of the operation. On the first

out. The generosity of spirit is larger than any physical structure, and the volunteers are incredibly appreciative when I show up with lunch.

Emergency Assistance

Things I heard from clients in October and November included, “I got my new teeth!” and “I was in a car accident.” Then there was what felt like a long pause during a conversation with a client who called asking for help with medical bills. I realized the client wasn’t talking because she was crying. People are so vulnerable when they call or come in and share their stories. I was quiet too then, and waited for the client to regain her composure.

I am always in the middle of something when someone calls, and it is imperative that I remember it is not business as usual for the person on the other end of the line or sitting across from me in my office. I have to stop whatever I am doing to listen deeply, pay attention, gather information and determine if or how the Federation can help. For some people it is difficult telling the story of their circumstances,

especially for those who are not used to asking for assistance. I sometimes bump up against people’s pride, embarrassment and reluctance to talk about their situation, and I have learned not to take things personally, as fear can show up as indignation or impatience.

After listening to over 100 people during my tenure at Jewish Family Services, I am astounded at how dense and complicated life is and how tricky it can be for a person or a family if just one cog in the wheel of life becomes jammed or out of sync due to illness, injury or the transition of housing/employment/family members.

In October and early November, the Federation helped clients with auto repairs, new tires, FPL bills and medical payments. Thank you for your continued support of the Federation’s Indigent and Marcia Can Help Funds. Every donation enables the Federation to offer assistance to those in our community who have no one else to turn to, who are unable to receive help anywhere else, and who are enormously grateful.▲



Cars drive right into the warehouse.



Federation aisle

Tuesday of every month, I drive into the warehouse, walk through the one aisle with non-perishable food items, choose which products I want for our pantry while volunteers make note of the inventory, load it onto a cart, and then load it into my car before I drive



Loading my car



Midwest Food Bank volunteers set up lunch provided by Federation



Temple Beth El HHD Food Drive donations



TBE volunteers at Federation

The numbers of those in need are rising, even before the holidays. The Federation served 76 people from a total of 19 families in October. Harry Chapin Food Bank provided the Federation with several Publix gift cards that were distributed to clients before Thanksgiving. Although the pantry is well stocked for now, your ongoing contributions are needed, as December is our busiest month for the food pantry.

The Jewish Federation is one of many organizations that are eligible

23rd HotWorks.org
Estero Fine Art Show
January 4 & 5, 2020
At JetBlue Park, Fort Myers

HotWorks.org Facebook.com/hotworksartshows Elaine Rose Lanoue, Painting

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Save the Date! 3rd Naples Fine Art Show March 28 & 29 at Naples Italian-American Club, Naples

Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

As 2019 ends, we are thankful for an incredibly exciting year for the Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center! Our first-ever capital campaign was successful, with its goal met and exceeded. The generosity of local philanthropist Janet G. Cohen and other donors enabled us to finally fulfill a long-standing dream – the purchase of a permanent home for the Museum. Through the efforts of Naples-based David Corban Architects PLLC and PBS Contractors, the former retail location was transformed into an award-winning new Museum. Specially designed exhibits with updated technology were created and installed by Capitol Museum Services. While this work was going on, the Museum continued to present interesting programs and exhibits in our old location. This summer, with the help of many dedicated volunteers, we packed up the collections and moved into our new, larger space. This beautiful space is now ready to fulfill its purpose – education. Since we opened in mid-September, we have already welcomed hundreds of visitors for special gatherings, adult group tours and student tours, as well as the general public.

Thanks to all who joined us at our Grand Opening and Dedication Ceremony on November 10. We are grateful for the wonderful media coverage and community support the event received. Nearly 500 people of all ages were in attendance. We thank all our special guests who participated in the ceremony: our Holocaust Survivors; State

Senator Kathleen Passidomo; Rabbi Amos Chorny of Beth Tikvah; Rev. Robert Kanter of St. Agnes Catholic Church and the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue of Collier County; Pastor Dawson Taylor of Naples United Church of Christ; Kamela Patton, Superintendent of Collier County Public Schools; and the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce for its assistance with the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

We were also honored by the presence of Museum co-founders and their families, some of whom came from out of town to attend this special milestone event; Golden Gate Middle School teacher Michelle Lee who worked with David Bell and students to create the “Out of the Ashes” project, which inspired the Museum’s founding; as well as current and former Museum board members. Many thanks to Governor DeSantis for his gracious letter about the Museum’s opening and mission, and to the Collier County Board of County Commissioners, Mayor Bill Barnett and the Naples City Council for their Proclamations honoring the Museum on its Grand Opening Day celebration. Thanks to Elias Brothers Painting, who painted the entire Imperial Square building pro bono to prepare for the Grand Opening.

2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of concentration camps. The Museum is working with a number of organizations across Southwest Florida to present a special year-long

program, “Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance.” Numerous events, films, speakers and exhibits will be presented throughout the year. Here are the January programs:

Film: *NOT The Last Butterfly*

Date/Time: Friday, January 10 at 2:00 p.m.

Location: South Regional Library, 8065 Lely Cultural Parkway, Naples

This film tells the tale of The Butterfly Project, a grass roots arts and education initiative that memorializes the 1.5

Film and Musical Performance: *The Boys of Terezin*

Date/Time: Sunday, January 26 at 2:00 p.m.

Location: Temple Shalom, 4630 Pine Ridge Road, Naples

The film features five Holocaust Survivors, a Pennsylvania boys choir and a chamber music group uniting to tell the story of the creation of a secret concentration camp journal. Accompanying the film will be a musical performance and appearance by a very special guest.

Film: *Defiant Requiem*

Date/Time: Monday, January 27 at 2:00 p.m.

Location: Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center, 975 Imperial Golf Course Blvd., Suite 108, Naples

The film celebrates the courage and resilience of the human spirit. It follows the trip by a modern-day choir to the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp (Terezin) where, in 1944, conductor Rafael Schacter taught his fellow prisoners to perform Verdi’s Requiem during the visit of the International Red Cross. Please note the Museum will be open that day for self-guided tours from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

For more information on the “Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance” program, visit the Museum’s website at www.HMCEC.org.



■ Susan Suarez



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Museum’s Grand Opening on November 10

million children killed in the Holocaust through global displays of ceramic butterflies... one butterfly painted for each child. The Butterfly Project’s messages of hope and healing are woven together with survivors’ courageous stories.

Butterfly Artwork Needed!

Calling all children, teens & college students...

We need Butterfly art & craft projects

for our Jewish Heritage Month displays at our local libraries.

All media welcome!

Please bring artwork to the Federation office

by December 15th, labeled with the child’s name and age.

Thank you!

Butterflies of
Hope
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December 10

Tuesday
December 17

Tuesday
January 7



*Michael and Tanya Hochschild
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TRIBUTES

The leadership and staff of the Jewish Federation extend condolences to:

- Rozzi Osterman, on the passing of her mother, Shirley Newman, in Los Angeles on October 26
- Marty Freling, on the passing of his wife, Judy, in Fort Myers on October 27
- Rabbi Marc Sack on the passing of his mother, Geraldine (Gerri) Sack, in Fort Myers on October 29
- Karen Kagan on the passing of her mother, Carol Levine

In memory of Alli Lazarus
from Jamie Beth Gates

In memory of Eleanor Lazarus
from Julie Schaffer

In memory of Shirley Newman
from Jim & Betty Rubenstein

In memory of Judy Freling
from Eileen Eckhaus
from Mark & Cindie Thompson
from Michael & Maxine Golding

Each month, **L'CHAYIM** will list your Tributes.
Please send them to **Lori Ramos**
at the Federation at loriramos@jfedlcc.org.

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OBITUARIES

Shirley Spokane Newman was born in Pittsburgh on September 13, 1927, and passed away in Los Angeles on October 26, 2019. She married the love her life, Albert, in 1949. They relocated for job opportunities and Shirley enjoyed raising her three loving daughters, Rozzi (John), Elisa (Andy) and Linda (Omri) in Washington State and Northern California. In her professional life, she was a talented and dedicated teacher, specializing in reading, and continued teaching many years after her retirement. Shirley enjoyed classical music, playing the piano, sewing and poetry. She will be greatly missed for her generous heart, sense of humor and love of family.

Judith Susan Freling (Bubba) passed away October 26 at the age of 82. Judy left behind her loving husband, Marty, of 62 years; two beloved daughters, Elyse Jonas (and husband Ron) and Ellen Levitt (and husband Eric); and sister Harriet Blattstein. Both daughters live in Fort Myers. Judy adored her five grandchildren: Jessica Jonas, Brandon Jonas, Lauren Levitt, Jordana Levitt and Gillian Levitt. Last, but certainly not least, is her beloved Cody, a 5-year-old Havanese pup who loved naps with his mom! For many years, Judy volunteered at the Federation, and only stopped due to health problems. These same health conditions prevented her from making her final and fourth visit to Israel

BAT MITZVAH



Congratulations to **Kathryn Ferrer**, a long-time Community Free Synagogue congregant, who will be called to read from the Torah for the first time as a Bat Mitzvah at Shabbat Minhah worship on December 28 at the Community Free Synagogue. A student of C.F.S. Auxiliary Rabbi Thomas Miess, Kathryn will also conduct a Torah class in the afternoon before services.

Kathryn was born in San Diego and raised on a farm near Corsicana, Texas. She moved to Cape Coral in 1994. She has worked in residential lending for 21 years, currently with Security National Mortgage Co. in Fort Myers.

Kathryn converted to Judaism in 1989. She has three sons: Sean Hartman, a political activist; Ethan Hartman, a medical student at UCF; and Conor Gavitt, a high school student and artist. In addition to spending time with her family, she enjoys doing charitable work for her community with the Lost Riders organization. She also enjoys running, yoga, reading, dancing and being outdoors in nature.

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

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The Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah presents

By Arlene Yedid

The Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah announces an exciting new series of educational and entertaining programs and events beginning on Thursday, January 16 with a unique memoir, *We Are Going to be Lucky: A World War II Love Story in Letters*. Elizabeth L. Fox will be in Naples to present her recently published love story told in a vast collection of letters between her parents, Lenny and Diana Miller, during their three long years of living separate lives.

The Millers were a young married couple deeply committed to social justice and bonded by love. Diana was pregnant when, in 1943, Lenny joined the throngs of young men volunteering for service.

Recognizing their need to bridge their separation, they pledged to write each other daily. The touching correspondence is filled with day-to-day details of their lives, and expressions of deep love and hope for their future. Written as casual conversations, they deliberately avoided mention of the deadly war or their darkest fears.

Despite being seriously wounded in combat during the aftermath of D-

Day, Lenny managed to send home his carefully saved packet of letters for safekeeping. Later, after being sent home, he decided to add details to his letters. Was this collection a means of preserving this wonderful love story for future generations to appreciate Lenny's and Diana's devotion during a time of war and uncertainty?

However, the correspondence sat on a shelf over decades awaiting discovery. This is where the story resembles a novel in which a woman opens a trunk in which lies an amazing collection of love letters. Unlike many romance novels, Elizabeth's find wasn't of family secrets; it was a declaration of her parents' love. She dedicated three years to transcribing, editing and finally publishing this tribute to her parents.

This special Hadassah program will be followed by refreshments and a book signing. Join us from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on January 16 at the Naples Conference Center, 1455 Pine Ridge Road, Naples.

Tickets are available for \$18 in advance or \$25 at the door. For more information, call Debbie Kaprove at 860.558.3331, or Dale Hackerman at 609.828.3765.▲

Community Free Hanukah 1st Night Dinner

The Community Free Synagogue will host a Hanukah 1st Night Latke and Quiche Dinner, catered by Cohen & Cohen Catering of Fort Myers, at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 22 in its Community Hall, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers. It is free and open to the first 150 reservations, which can be made by emailing synfreersvp@gmail.com or calling 239.466.6671.

The evening will begin with the dedication of the synagogue's new Grand Metro Menorah, designed and

built by David Schwartz. Each night throughout Hanukah, additional lights will be lit in keeping with the Sages' edict "to publicize the miracle."

The evening continues in the Community Hall with the lighting of family hanukiyot, a Hanukah sing-along led by C.F.S. Cantorial Soloist Traci Pavel accompanied by C.F.S. musician Joseph Brauer, followed by the meal.

Dreidls and chocolate Hanukah gelt will be on all the tables, but participants are encouraged to bring their family menorot and candles.▲

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December 2019	January 2020	February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020
 03 JFed Hits the Road 08 Community Breakfast 15 PJ Library Hanukkah Party 17 Major Gifts	 01-31 Butterflies of Hope Artwork Display County Libraries 08 Pacesetters 20 Out & About Films <i>Sustainable Nation</i>	 02 Opening Day Film Festival 03 - 28 Jewish Film Festival 23 JFF at Bat Yam	 01 Closing Day Film Festival 16 Lion of Judah 31 Out & About Films <i>Witness Theater FSW, Punta Gorda</i>	 05 PJ Library Passover Party TBA Skype the Author 19 Holocaust Memorial Program	 03 IsraelFest 2020 13 Annual Meeting

For more information visit our web at Jewishfederationlcc.org

Grand Chanukah Event Community Celebration

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First Annual Fort Myers Interfaith Service Day marked by tree planting, service and fellowship

By Laurie Morris

The 1st Annual Interfaith Service Day in Fort Myers was one of remembrance, solidarity and community service, held on the one-year anniversary of one of the worst religious hate crimes in U.S. history.

In October 2018, 11 people were killed and seven injured in a mass shooting during morning Shabbat services at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh. This year in South Fort Myers, followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam gathered to remember those lost, unite in the spirit of peace for people of all faiths, and work together for the greater good.

“In a world full of division, fear and distrust, it brings me immense joy to know we’re fighting for something better here in our community,” said

Rev. Robert Bledsoe, Associate Pastor of Cypress Lake United Methodist Church and one of the founders of Fort Myers Interfaith Service Day. “This is a time for building bridges and bigger tables.”

As an olive branch of support and friendship, Bledsoe and faith leaders from Temple Beth El, Iona-Hope Episcopal Church, Temple Judea and the Center for Islam and Cultural Awareness together planted a special “Unity Tree.” The cedar, expected to reach a height of 40-50 feet at full growth, joins 300 other recently planted trees at the newly founded Temple Preserve & Community Gardens at Temple Beth El.

“We all have common roots,” Abdul Haq Muhammed said. “I am here

this evening representing the Center for Islam and Cultural Awareness to show solidarity with the Jewish community and all those who may be experiencing injustice or suffering on some level or another. So this symbol this evening as we gather, is to recognize we have a common humanity through the roots of this tree.”

In addition to the Unity Tree, congregants and community volunteers spruced up the site by planting hundreds of shrubs. Other helpers lined up inside the temple, assembly-line-style, to pack meals for the homeless to be delivered to distribution points throughout Lee County. Some also crafted greeting cards for children at Golisano Children’s Hospital and active-duty U.S. military service members.

Temple Beth El’s five-acre preserve and garden site is one of the few remaining tropical hammocks between Summerlin Road and Hendry Creek. For years, the land was overrun by non-native, invasive species. This summer, with the help of Fort Myers reforestation non-profit OneTree.org, volunteers broke ground to begin the labor-intensive process of restoring and beautifying the property. Long-term, the area will yield a natural Florida forest and botanical garden. It will be a place where wildlife can thrive and the community will be welcome to peacefully gather, reflect, play and pray among pathways lined with sugarberry, maples, holly trees and cypress.

“One of the central tenets of Judaism is called *tikkun olam*, which commands Jews to confront the imperfections of the world and work to repair them,” Temple Beth El’s Rabbi Nicole Luna explained. “This can include acts of kindness – for each other and for the earth with which we’ve been entrusted. That’s what the preserve project is



Volunteers attach ribbons with messages of peace to the Unity Tree

about and it’s a big part of what Interfaith Service Day is about too.”

When the work was finished, volunteers shared a meal beneath a sprawling canopy of live oaks before faith leaders welcomed everyone to adorn its branches with messages of peace scrawled on white ribbons.

Rev. Thom Shafer of Cypress Lake United Methodist Church spoke of civil unrest throughout the world in recent years, but said, “As clergy and as we gather laity together, we have hope for a different tomorrow than we’ve experienced in our past.” ▲



Volunteers plant shrubs in the new Temple preserve



Members of the faith community enjoy a meal together

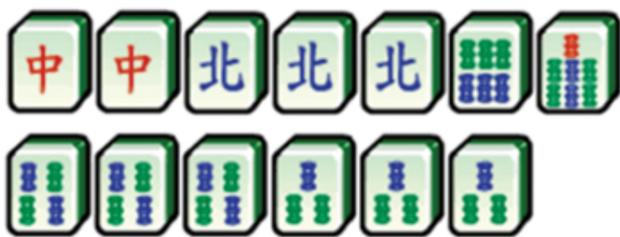
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Estero Fine Art Show to feature artist Yoram Gal

Hot Works' 23rd Estero Fine Art Show takes place January 4 & 5 at JetBlue Park in Fort Myers. This juried fine art and fine craft show brings up to 120 quality artists to JetBlue Park selling original and personally handmade art in all forms of discipline, including painting, clay, glass, fiber, jewelry, sculpture, wood, photography and mixed media. There is something for everyone, in all price ranges.

One of the participating artists in the Estero Fine Art Show is internationally renowned painter Yoram Gal. Born in Jerusalem in 1952, Yoram grew up and was educated in London and Tel Aviv. He started painting at age 12 and has exhibited his art since age 13. Yoram



was accepted to Art College at 15 but decided against it. He served as an infantry officer in the IDF and earned his BFA with Honors in Theater, Acting and Directing at Tel Aviv University.

Since 1977, Yoram writes plays for stage and screen, he paints, directs, acts and produces shows in his Traveling Theater. Yoram acts in Israeli,

British and American movies, designs sceneries, and exhibits in shows with his paintings. Yoram lives and works in Old Jaffa since 1978. He has had 14, one-man exhibitions of his paintings.

Wild, a feature film Yoram wrote and directed, participated in international festivals worldwide and won first prize for best feature film in Picciano, Italy, in 2001.

The Old Man & I, a play he jointly wrote with Nili Dotan, won the Israeli Prime Minister's Prize in 2001. *The Secret of America* is his first illustrated e-book, published on Amazon in 2009.

Yoram has been invited to participate in many art events in the U.S.; the Firenze Biennale, Italy; Beijing International Art Expo, China; and more. The Fu ZheNan Museum in Nanjin, China, acquired 12 major pieces in August 2011. Biennale at Stanback Museum SC acquired five major works in 2012. In addition, Yoram has won 50 awards in American Art shows, from 2004-2018.

Yoram's main influences are Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso, Matisse, Bacon, Miro, Hockney, Nolde, Munk, Ensor, Bruegel, Michelangelo, Kandinsky, De Kooning, Turner, Bonnard, Daumier, Soutine, Nahum Guttman, Fima and the Expressionists.

Yoram's artist statement is in Hamlet's words: "To hold a mirror up to nature." Paint as wide a range of modern life's rich diversity as I can, capturing fleeting moments of dramatic, comic and lyrical interactions between people. Juicifying the changing landscapes of our times on paper and canvas, stretching the styles of painting from realism to abstract, through my own expressionism. Experimenting in dangerous non-comfort zones, striving to go beyond my previous piece into something I did not know before. Starting from scratch, daily, working at re-inventing



my painting like a child. Having fun celebrating my decades on earth in the most colorful, joyful and intense way I can. Joie-de-vivre is my motto.

Meet Painter Yoram Gal and up to 120 other professional juried artists at the Estero Fine Art Show. Event hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. There is free admission and free parking. An optional \$5 donation supports the Institute for the Arts & Education, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that focuses on visual arts, cultural diversity, community enrichment and fostering art education among youth. There is \$1,500 in professional artist awards. More info can be found at www.hotworks.org.

While at the show, be sure to visit the Youth Art Competition. As part of our commitment to bring art education into the community, the competition is integrated within the art show. All students in grades K-8 or ages 5-13 are invited to submit original art that is publicly displayed

at the art show. There is \$250 in Youth Art Awards as students are exposed to the rules and entrepreneurship opportunity of doing art shows for a living. Youth art applications can be found at www.hotworks.org.▲



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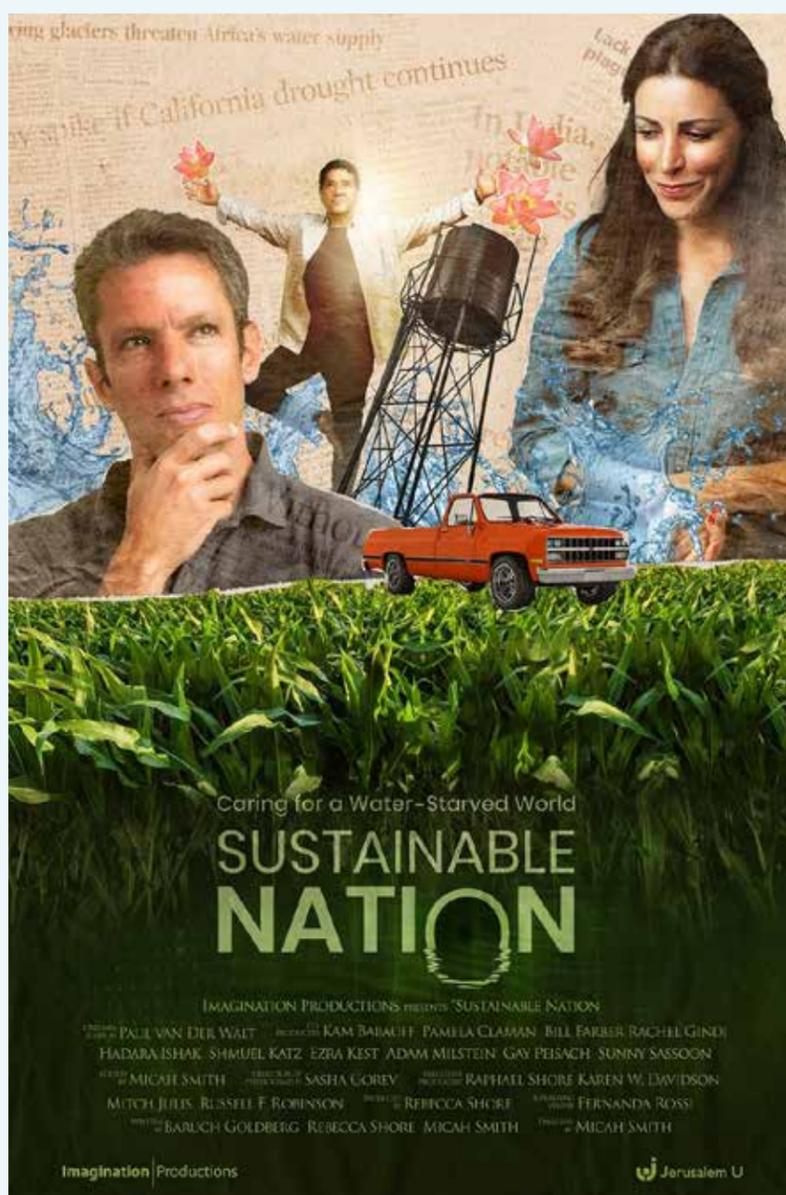
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Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old

Jews and “Jingle Bells” – sharing the holiday with our Christian friends

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

“It’s that time of year when the world falls in love.” Beautiful words for a beautiful time. Christmas time. For us Jews it is not our time of the year, but many of us like it just the same. In recent years, a PC assault on Christmas has swept the United States, leading many to believe that religious minorities have gone sour on the holiday. That being said, I want to share two things that have grown out of my decades of experience with interfaith issues. First, Jews don’t dislike Christmas. And second, even though we don’t observe the holiday, we are glad that Christians do.

For many of us Jews, especially those of us who grew up in the ’50s and before, we remember December as a challenging time. For those of us who were parents of Jewish children, the challenges were especially, well, challenging. Anyone who identifies as part of any minority group probably will tell you the same thing. It’s sometimes very hard to be different. At Christmas, Jews are part of a tiny minority who are not embracing practices and customs that almost the entire country has adopted and made into a national tradition. We’re on our own, celebrating Chanukah, a minor Jewish holiday that this year falls during Christmas week. So it’s understandable if the Jewish celebration takes a back seat to the month-long hoopla surround-

ing the observance of another religion. For our children it can be confusing. For us grown-ups it can be exhausting. But for the most part, we Jews aren’t mad about it, and many of us enjoy being guests at the party.

Over the years, that’s how I approached the “December Dilemma” with my family. Given the Chanukah Christmas crossover this December, you may find this approach helpful when discussing holidays with friends, colleagues, co-workers and interfaith family members.

In his book, *The Art of Jewish Living*, Dr. Ron Wolfson comments on toddlers and how they behave at birthday celebrations. It’s not unusual that when the cake is brought to the table, all the other children try to blow out the candles along with the birthday boy or girl.

Then as the gifts are opened, each child reaches for the toys. Wolfson tells us that is why party favors or “goody bags” were invented. These teach children the important lesson of “This belongs to you and that belongs to her.” Children learn the difference, Wolfson says, between celebrating one’s very own birthday and celebrating another’s special day.

Wolfson applies this message to Jewish families who live in a Christmas culture. Christmas is someone else’s party, not ours. Just as we can appreciate someone else’s birthday party, just as we can admire the gifts and decorations, just as we can eat the cake and maybe even take a token gift home with us and, most important, just as we can be happy

for them, so too, can we marvel at the beauty of the Christmas season. But it is not our party. It belongs to someone else.

Over the years, I’ve noticed something interesting about the Christmas season. I can walk through a shopping mall, scoot into the supermarket and dash into the drugstore, and amazingly most people are in a good mood. They’re dropping dollars into the Salvation Army kettle, they’re filling “Adopt a Family” food baskets, they’re more patient with their kids and they’re smiling at one another. There is less violence on television and more “family specials.” The songs on the radio share thoughts of peace, brotherhood and goodwill.

If the national focus on Christmas is responsible for this positive change in behavior, then I’m all for it.

So what do we do about Christmas? Many Jews appreciate invitations to neighborhood parties and being included in holiday gift exchanges at social clubs or at the office. We like it when non-Jews send us a Chanukah greeting or a card that wishes us “Happy

Holidays.” And when they sing carols around the piano, we’re not offended. It’s their party. If we’re friends or even family members, we’re happy they asked us to join them.

So, to all our friends in the Christian community, we Jews wish you a happy holiday season. We wish you and your families a season of peace, understanding and joy. For these are the very same things we pray for in our synagogues each week and work toward in our Jewish communities every day. Our families join yours in the belief that love for, and peace between, all people can happen in our time. And we applaud your celebration of values and ethics that apply to all people of goodwill everywhere. And yes, we wish you a Merry Christmas!▲

Rabbi Barbara Aiello is rabbi at *Sinagoga Ner Tamid del Sud* in southern Italy – a country where Christmas Nativity scenes are displayed in both private and public venues. She says, “Here in Italy Christmas is culture. And no, I am not offended.” She can be reached at www.rabbibarbara.com.



Rabbi Barbara Aiello

Chanukah begins Sunday night, December 22



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Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Contributing Columnist

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

At the Movies: December Offerings

Jumanji: The Next Level opens on Friday, December 13. It is a sequel to *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* (2017). Capsule plot: A team of friends returns to *Jumanji* to rescue one of their own but discover that nothing is as they expect. The players need to brave parts unknown in order to escape the world's most dangerous game. **JACK BLACK**, 50, reprises his role in the 2017 film. **JAKE KASDAN**, 45, directs. His father is director **LAWRENCE KASDAN**, 70 (*The Big Chill*, many others). All the *Jumanji* films are based on the 1981 children's novel *Jumanji* by **CHRIS VAN ALLBURG**, 70, who converted to Judaism decades ago.

Also opening the 13th are *Richard Jewell* and *Uncut Gems*. The former is a Clint Eastwood biopic about Jewell, a security guard who found a backpack with three pipe bombs at the Atlanta site of the August 1996 Olympics. He saved many lives when he alerted police and helped evacuate the area. However, shortly thereafter, an FBI leak to the press led to reports that he was suspected of planting the bombs. His life became hell for two months. In October 1996, he was completely cleared when the actual bomber was identified. The screenplay is by **BILLY RAY**, 48, an Oscar-nominated writer and director who has joked that his name doesn't "sound Jewish."

Gems is a black-comedy crime film directed and co-written by brothers **JOSH** and **BENNY SAFADIE** (35 and 33, respectively). The brothers, who

were raised in New York, are of Syrian Jewish background. This is the brothers' first big budget studio film, having made five well-received smaller budget flicks in the last 12 years. *Gems* has received great advance reviews, with star **ADAM SANDLER**, 53, getting unusually good notices. Sandler plays a jewelry store owner who is a compulsive gambler. He has to find a way to pay his debts before it is too late. The supporting cast includes **IDINA MENZEL**, 48, and **JUDD HIRSCH**, 84.

Trivia break: There are other persons of Syrian Jewish background who have made it in showbiz: **JERRY SEINFELD**, 65 (his late mother was of Syrian Jewish ancestry; his father, Ashkenazi); actor **DAN HEDAYA**, 79 (you know his face; among others, he played Nick, the no-good ex-husband of Carla, the waitress, in *Cheers*, and **ALICIA SILVERSTONE**'s father in *Clueless*); and **JUSTIN HURWITZ**, 34, the Oscar-winning composer of *La La Land*. His father is Ashkenazi and his mother is of Lebanese and Syrian Jewish ancestry.

Opening Friday, December 20 is *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*. Advance publicity promises us that this film will be the final part of the nine-episode Skywalker saga. This is a biggie, so I won't go into plot details. I will simply note that this one, like the last three really big *Star Wars* films, was directed and co-written by **J.J. ABRAMS**, 53. Also, one sad note: **CARRIE FISHER**, who died in 2016, does appear as Princess Laia one more

Interested in Your Family's History?

Nate Bloom (see column above) has become a family history expert in 10 years of doing his celebrity column, and he has expert friends who can help when called on. Most family history experts charge \$1,000 or more to do a full family-tree search. However, Bloom knows that most people want to start with a limited search of one family line.

So here's the deal:

Write Bloom at nteibloom@aol.com and enclose a phone number. Nate will then contact you about starting a limited search. If that goes well, additional and more extensive searches are possible. The first search fee is no more than \$100. No upfront cost. Also, several of this newspaper's readers have asked Bloom to locate friends and family members from their past, and that's worked out great for them. So contact him about this as well.

time. They are using footage from the two *Star Wars* films she made just before her death.

Guide to Tribe Members with a Big Impeachment Connection

Congress: **ADAM SCHIFF**, 59, the chair of the House Intelligence Committee; **JERROLD NADLER**, 72, the chair of the House Judiciary Committee; and Republican House member **LEE ZELDIN**, 39, a big President Trump supporter; Witnesses: Ambassador **GORDON SONDLAND**, 62 (his parents were refugees from Nazi Germany), and Lt. Col. **ALEXANDER VINDMAN**, 44 (born in Ukraine; came to the States when he was 3). Other: **LEV PARNAS**, 47, and **IGOR FRUMAN**, 47ish, the Ukraine-born associates of Rudy Giuliani. They are charged with using foreign funds to influence American elections.

Kosher Superheroes and Other Cast Notes

The number of Jews playing superheroes based on comic book characters

continues to rise. It was recently announced that **ZOE KRAVITZ**, 30, will play Catwoman in *The Batman*, a big feature that will open in 2021 (Robert Pattinson plays Batman). Other tribe members playing superheroes include **GAL GADOT**, 34, as Wonder Woman; **NATALIE PORTMAN**, 38, as Jane Foster (who often can wield Thor's powers); **SCARLETT JOHANSSON**, 35, as Black Widow; **EZRA MILLER**, 27, as The Flash; and **PAUL RUDD**, 50, as Antman.

Next February, you can catch Kravitz in *High Fidelity*, a 10-episode series on Hulu. It's based on the hit 2000 movie of the same name about people working in a hip little record store. Also, last month, it was announced that Gadot will produce and star in *Irena Sendler*. This biopic is about the Polish Jewish heroine who saved thousands of Jewish children during the Holocaust.▲

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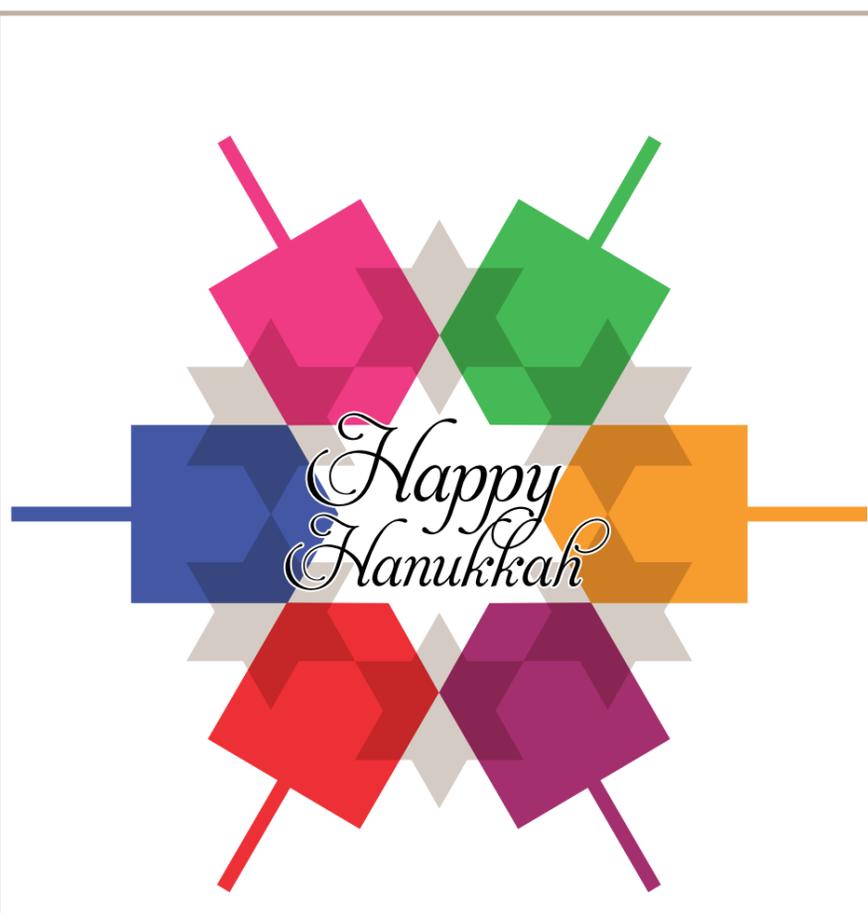
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David Lehman's top ten Christmas songs written by Jews

By Arlene Stolnitz

Don't get me wrong! I'm a nice Jewish girl from upstate New York. But still, I like hearing a Christmas tune during the holiday season, while at the same time wondering why these same composers, mostly Jewish, wrote lots – mostly all – of the great American Christmas songs. But not one of them ever wrote a Hanukkah tune, which does make me wonder! I do know the reason. It was their desire to be more American. But not even a single song?

Recently, I came across an interesting book about the story of American popular music having been written largely by Jews. David Lehman, poet, literary critic and non-fiction writer, is the author of *A Fine Romance: Jewish Songwriters, American Songs*. Lehman is the son of European Holocaust survivors and grew up in Manhattan, where he attended Stuyvesant High School and Columbia University, and then the University of Cambridge in England. His many accomplishments include writing for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *American Heritage* and *The Washington Post*. He is the series editor for the prestigious *Best American Poetry*, of which he is the founder.

In an interview published in *Smithsonian* magazine, Lehman discusses the artistry of the great lyricists: "The best song lyrics seem to me so artful, so brilliant, so warm and humorous, with both passion and wit, that my admiration is matched only by my envy... these lyricists needed to work within boundaries,

to get complicated emotions across and fit the lyrics to the music, and to the mood thereof. That takes genius."

And yet we know that these same composers were anxious to shed their immigrant past and reinvent themselves as American. The lyrics represent an America that offered a new idea of what America should be, even in the face of changing times, and it was especially true during the holiday season. It was their "affirmation of American ideals as they understood them... pressing back against the forces that aimed to extinguish them."

Recently, Lehman was asked to list his top ten Christmas songs written by Jews.

- ◆ 10. "The Christmas Waltz," music and lyrics by Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne
- ◆ 9. "Silver Bells," music by Jay Livingston, lyrics by Ray Evans
- ◆ 8. "Winter Wonderland," music and lyrics by Felix Bernard
- ◆ 7. "Santa Baby," music and lyrics by Joan Ellen Javits and Philip Springer
- ◆ 6. "Sleigh Ride," lyrics by Mitchell Parish (born Michael Hyman Pashelinsky)
- ◆ 5. "I'll Be Home For Christmas," music by Buck Ram and lyrics by Walter Kent
- ◆ 4. "I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm," music and lyrics by Irving Berlin
- ◆ 3. "Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow," music by Julie Styne, lyrics by Sammy Cahn
- ◆ 2. "The Christmas Song" (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire), music and lyrics by Mel Torme and Bob Wells
- ◆ 1. "White Christmas," music and lyrics by Irving Berlin

And, yes, they are all Jewish composers and lyricists!

Lehman says, "This Christmas phenomenon is just one example of this larger point: that the story of American popular music is massively a Jewish story." Their art is not one of defiance but an affirmation of American ideals.

But still the question remains. Where are the Hanukkah songs that could have been written? We all know "Hanerot Hallelu," "Ma'oz Tzur," "Hanukkah, O Hanukkah" and "The Dreidel Song" – just a few tunes in the Chanukah repertoire.

As I have noted in an earlier column, we do have Hanukkah songs written by contemporary composers. One I would like to focus on is the Mac-

cabeats' song "Burn." It incorporates a modern interpretation of a Chanukah song with the problem of bullying. In doing so, the group is addressing a social issue in modern society. How clever! I am always on the lookout for more tunes like this one. You can hear and see their accompanying video on YouTube. Check it out! ▲

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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Establishing the Łódź ghetto

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

Friedrich Übelhör was a German politician and Nazi Party official governor who ordered the construction of the Łódź ghetto on December 10, 1939 – 80 years ago this month.

He was born on September 25, 1893, in Bavaria. His father was a professor at the University of Würzburg, the city from where Übelhör graduated from high school in 1913. He joined an artillery regiment when war broke out in 1914, and then served for four years, fought on the Western Front, was assigned to the Army High Command, and received various decorations. He ended the war as a first lieutenant.

After the war, Übelhör served in the *Freikorps* militia of General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, and took part in the suppression of the communist uprising in Hamburg on July 19, 1919. He studied law and political science in Freiburg and Würzburg for five semesters but dropped out and did not complete his degree. He joined the Nazi Party in 1922.

In 1924, Übelhör moved to Naumburg, and on April 4, 1925, married Asta Popperoth, daughter of the former Higher Regional Court Vice-President,

Ludwig Popperoth. By June of 1925 he had become politically active, reorganizing the regional Party structure in Naumburg. In 1931, he became Nazi Party County Leader in Naumburg and was elected to the Reichstag on March 5, 1933.

Poland was invaded in September 1939, and the city of Łódź, second only to Warsaw in population and in the size of its Jewish community, was occupied by the Germans on September 8, 1939. On October 26, Übelhör was appointed as the provisional governor of the Kalisch district, with the rank of *SS-Obersturmbannführer* (lieutenant colonel). On November 9, Łódź fell under the authority of Gauleiter Arthur Greiser, who sought the rapid and total Germanization of the areas under his command.

It took little time for the Jews of Łódź to be subjected to rigorous legal orders and bans. On November 14, Übelhör announced additional restrictive measures: Jews were to wear a distinguishing Jewish yellow patch on their clothing, and a curfew was introduced for Jews between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. Übelhör's order to mark the Jews of Łódź was the first of its kind enacted in the Third Reich, having no previous basis in Nazi legislation. The head of the Reich Security

Main Office, Reinhard Heydrich, would later promulgate a decree on October 1, 1941, relating to the identification of Jews, but this did not apply to children under the age of six. Übelhör's decree certainly applied to infants; violations were punished by death, thus going well beyond that of his superior.

The Jewish community had their businesses taken away. They were imprisoned in their own apartments and, prevented from supporting themselves, were left without any means to survive. Many Jews were shot, and many others froze to death. According to Nazi estimates, more than 71,000 Jews either left or were deported from Łódź during the first few months of the occupation.

On December 10, 1939, Übelhör produced a report on the feasibility of establishing an enclosed area for Jews. Estimating that there were some 230,000 Jews in the greater Łódź region, he reported that he would be able to collect all of these into a ghetto. His report set out the boundaries of where the ghetto should be, and noted that preparation and execution of the plan would be carried out largely by German officers from different policing agencies. The ghetto would be enclosed in barbed wire and its borders guarded. A Jewish administration would be set up. Food and fuel for the ghetto was to be paid for by an exchange of materials in order to obtain from the Jews "all their hoarded and hidden items of value." Übelhör thereupon ordered the construction of the ghetto and was instrumental in the destruction of the Jewish population.

The Łódź ghetto was formally established in February 1940. It was sealed on May 1, 1940, surrounded by a wooden fence, barbed wire and armed guards. Bridges were built over

city streets that ran through the ghetto, thereby allowing the Jews to move to and from various sections of the ghetto without leaving it. A tram ran through the ghetto, but for non-Jews only, and no stops were made inside. The ghetto at Łódź became the longest lasting of all the Nazi-imposed ghettos in Poland, operating for more than four years.

Conditions for the Jews imprisoned inside were terrible. Overcrowding, disease (tuberculosis, typhus and dysentery, among others), atrocious sanitation, and the absence of electricity and running water were only some of the things that threatened survival. Hunger, leading to death by starvation, as well as contributing to the outbreak of some of the diseases already noted, was perhaps the greatest burden within the ghetto. Unlike some other ghettos, there was virtually no successful smuggling of food into Łódź.

Friedrich Übelhör was dismissed from his post as governor of Łódź in December 1942 after being accused of embezzlement. The charges were ultimately unproven, but the suspicion damaged his reputation and halted his advancement in the SS. In the latter days of World War II, he disappeared, and remained unaccounted for until he was declared legally dead by the West German government in 1950.

On January 19, 1945, when the Soviets liberated the ghetto – created 80 years ago this month – fewer than 10,000 of the 230,000 Jews of Łódź had survived.▲

Dr. Paul Bartrop is Professor of History and the Dir. of the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies at Florida Gulf Coast University. He can be reached at pbartrop@fgcu.edu.

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A zany crew pulls a fast one on the Third Reich in this surprising tale based on actual events

Book review by Philip K. Jason, Special to L'CHAYIM

The Ventriloquists: A Novel
by E.R. Ramzipoor.
Park Row Books. 544 pages.
Hardcover \$26.99

This astonishingly original debut novel draws upon a little-known piece of WWII history and the text of a journalistic hoax. It pays homage to the human spirit that can thrive in the midst of the cruelest oppression.

The Ventriloquists begins with, and often returns to, the need for someone to ask and answer questions. The questioner, a woman named Eliza, has heard something about this historical event and, fascinated, has spent 12 years tracking

down a witness or participant. Now she has found one, an old lady named Helen.

While author E.R. Ramzipoor often returns to the present-time conversation between Eliza and Helen, Helen's story (or Eliza's transcription thereof) reaches into a past in which the hoax was hatched and executed.

We are introduced to the main players. Their names, nicknames, personalities and experiences are slowly, vividly revealed. For the most part, the narrative is set in occupied Brussels, with some scenes in the small Belgian town of Enghien. The principal character is the main instigator of the grand charade, a journalist with a comic flair named Marc Aubrion (nicknamed "The Jester"). He is an intuitive planner and improviser. Among the other six key characters

are prostitute/smuggler Lada Tarcovich; David Spiegelman, who can write in the voice and persona of others; and Gamin, a girl disguised as a boy, who sets fires, creates confusion, picks pockets and carries out risky tasks in service to Aubrion's scheme.

They and others form part of the resistance movement that wants to block the omnivorous Reich, as well as Russian expansion. It is late 1943, and resistance forces are stalling until the Allies arrive.

To implement their plan for replacing an edition of the Nazi-propaganda-filled *Le Soir* with their own send-up version, *Faux Soir*, the conspirators need paper, ink, typewriters, typesetting machinery, a distribution system, money, hiding places and storage space.

They must also fool, among others, August Wolff, the regional Nazi paramilitary officer. Working under



E.R. Ramzipoor (photo credit: Sherry Zaks)

Himmler, Gruppenführer Wolff is somehow fooled by this motley crew, whose members agree to aid the Axis with their journalistic and other talents. Their skill at deceiving him is another kind of ventriloquism.

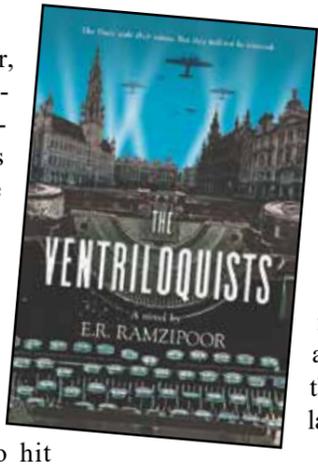
The novel explodes with released suspense every few pages as the chapters and their subdivisions shift from

character to character, setting to setting, and obstacle to obstacle. Eventually, the critical needs of the *Faux Soir* scheme are met, but not without close calls and tragic losses.

All along the way, time is of the essence. *Faux Soir* must come out on the same day that *Le Soir* is due to hit newsstands. Author Ramzipoor amplifies this time bind with "countdown" chapter headings: "17 Days to Print Afternoon," 15 Days to Print Late Morning" and so forth.

Readers are ushered back to the storyline's ongoing present (with Eliza and Helen, the latter of whom is the much older incarnation of Gamin) via headers like "Yesterday," and to events occurring long before the *Faux Soir* caper with "3 Years Before Faux Soir." Ramzipoor's control over the manipulation of time-sensitive information is splendid, and the results are magnetic.

The main narrative, energetic



enough, is further enlivened by unexpected subsidiary areas of interest. Perhaps the most thought-provoking and emotionally fraught subplot has to do with the relationship between Lada and a female judge. The thread involving these lesbian lovers and the circumstances that test their various loyalties could launch a fascinating sequel.

In today's world of propaganda wars, fake news and alleged fake news, *The Ventriloquists* holds up a dazzling looking glass for those intent on silencing others and for those who will not be silenced.▲

This review was first published in the *Washington Independent Review of Books* and is reprinted with permission. Philip K. Jason is Professor Emeritus of English from the United States Naval Academy. He reviews regularly for Florida Weekly, Washington Independent Review of Books, Southern Literary Review, other publications and the Jewish Book Council. Please visit Phil's website at www.philjason.wordpress.com.

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How much should wine cost?

By The Wine Whisperer

When you shop for wine, the cost question is always at the top of your mind. How can you figure out the relationship (if any) between a wine's price and its quality? Why do some wines costing \$300 get a 94-point rating from critics, and other wines costing \$30 get the same number of points or higher?

■ Jerry Greenfield

It's amazing how much the price for a particular wine will vary among retail outlets. A nice everyday drinking wine that costs around \$13 can cost up to \$3-\$4 more depending on where you

buy it. So it pays to know what factors affect the (widely variable) prices of wine.

First, the distributors. In Florida, wineries sell to distributors who then sell to bars, restaurants and retailers. Now, these distributors have monthly sales goals. So at the end of the month, when they find themselves with cases and cases of wine that didn't sell, the sales reps call their clients and offer crazy deals, cutting prices way below regular wholesale. The clients snap them up, but do they pass the savings on to their customers? You can answer that one for yourself.

Another issue is volume. Some retailers buy so much wine that they can demand insanely low prices from suppliers. On occasion, I'll find a wine on

the shelf for a crazy low price, and one of my distributor friends will tell me, "I couldn't sell it to you for that." Below wholesale? It happens.

Not surprisingly, wines that are produced in huge volume are priced in the \$8-\$15 range, just because of economies of scale. More exclusive wines made in smaller quantities demand higher prices. Supply and demand.

Another factor that influences pricing is what I call mystique. Certain "cult" wines have such reputations for rarity and quality that people will pay just about anything. The total production of Screaming Eagle, a Cabernet from California, is about 750 three-bottle boxes a year. They're available only to people on the exclusive member list...for about \$1,100 a bottle. Many lucky collectors just flip it right away on the secondary market and double their money.

Mystique affects many types of wine. A single bottle of Domaine de la Romanee-Conti Grand Cru 1990 from Burgundy will set you back around \$21,000. On the other hand, a bottle of 1990 Château Petrus from Bordeaux is a steal at \$3,500. Are they that good? I'm not the one to ask, but I can tell you how much we enjoyed this month's selections. Hope you do, too.

Tenuta Frescobaldi di Castiglioni 2014 (\$25) – Deep purple wine with an intense nose of blueberries and cherries, followed by floral notes of roses

and spicy scents of black pepper and game, with a lengthy smooth finish. Works well with creamy pastas and spicy cured meats. WW 93

E. Guigal Crozes-Hermitage 2015 (\$14) – This Syrah from the northern Rhône is a sensational value from a world-class producer. The winegrowing region surrounds the famous Hermitage hill, and this wine offers loads of sweet dark fruit on a core of typical Syrah pepper and spice. Fresh and very approachable now. WW 89-90

EX Chardonnay Unoaked Monterey 2017 (\$19) – As you would expect from an unoaked Chardonnay, there is plenty of minerality on the nose. The balanced acidity is quite refreshing and carries flavors of pear, citrus and especially lemon. WW 87-88

Scheid Vineyards Chardonnay Santa Lucia Highlands 2016 (\$45) – This Chardonnay has layer upon layer of floral aromas, oak and vanilla that go on forever. The pronounced oak is balanced by savory sweet green apple, pear and citrus. It's soft and crisp at the same time. A winner. WW 91▲

Jerry Greenfield is The Wine Whisperer. He is Creative Director of Greenfield Media & Marketing, and Wine Director of the international Direct Cellars wine club. His new book, Ask the Wine Whisperer, has just been published. Read his other writings at www.winewhisperer.com.



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You say latkes, I say sfenj – recipe by Chef Dalia Hemed

To a Jewish child in the United States, Hanukkah means parties, potato pancakes (latkes) and presents. To his cousin in Israel, it is the time to enjoy fluffy doughnuts filled with red jam or covered with sugar. In the U.S., latkes still reign supreme, but in my home, sfenj are the quintessential Hanukkah foods.

Latkes get all the glory around Hanukkah, but it's time they started sharing the spotlight. Tender, sweet sufganiyot – jelly doughnuts and sfenj (Moroccan doughnuts) – are the most coveted Hanukkah treat.

Sufganiyot first became a Hanukkah-time staple in Israel, but they've made their way around the world. Like latkes, sufganiyot and sfenj are fried. It's customary to eat fried foods during the Jewish Festival of Lights to recognize the miracle that the holiday commemorates: a small jug of oil kept the menorah in the Jewish temple lit for eight days instead of just one.

Sfenj are popular across Moroccan Jewish communities in Israel and in the U.S. The rich food traditions of the Moroccan Jewish community did not know of potato latkes or jelly doughnuts, but they had heard of the sfenj doughnut, which was made with the juice and zest of an orange. From the early days of nation building in Israel, the orange came to be associated with the holiday of Hanukkah as the famous Yaffa oranges came into season in time for Hanukkah.

One of the most unforgettable memories from my childhood is my first school Hanukkah celebration in first grade. The teacher explained to us in detail about the traditions of the holiday,

including special foods. On Passover we eat matzah, she said, on Purim we have hamentashen, on Rosh Hashanah we dip apples in honey, and on Hanukkah we make sufganiyot. At this point, she drew a picture on the chalkboard of a big round sufganiya with jelly bursting out of the top.

I ran home after school that day, burst through the door and fearfully asked my grandmother if we were Jewish. I mean, we didn't eat anything that remotely looked like what my teacher had drawn on the board. On Hanukkah, my grandmother prepared ring-shaped pastries and other sweet, fried dough delicacies. She just smiled at me and told me that of course we were Jewish, and that each community made their own types of fried pastries on Hanukkah.

Usually made from flour, water, yeast and salt, sfenj dough can be sweetened with sugar or left savory. Although it must be left to rise, the dough is not kneaded, and the result is a lighter pastry than American doughnuts.

The word "sfenj" comes from the Moroccan for "sponge," and the comparison is spot-on. The texture is soft and pillowy, like an airy, raised doughnut. But the yeast-based dough is barely sweetened, if at all, so its tanginess works well with sugary toppings or honey drizzled on top.

Enjoy your sfenj while it's fresh from the fryer. They are light and sweet, just crunchy on the outside, moist and fluffy inside. They are somehow dense but not heavy.



- Ingredients:**
- 3 cups flour
 - 4 tablespoons warm water
 - 2 tablespoons brandy
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 2 teaspoons sugar
 - 1 tablespoon dried active yeast
 - 1¼ cup warm water
 - Vegetable oil, for frying
 - Sugar and honey for garnish (optional)
- ▶ Make the yeast starter by dissolving 1 teaspoon of sugar in 4 tablespoons of lukewarm water in a small bowl. Stir in 1 tablespoon of dried active yeast. Let it sit for 15 minutes.
 - ▶ Mix the flour and 1 tablespoon of salt in a large bowl. Add the remaining water, brandy and yeast mixture, and stir vigorously with your hand or a spoon until smooth for about 10-15 minutes. The dough should be too sticky to knead or shape, almost like a batter. The alcohol in the brandy keeps the sfenj from absorbing too much oil when it's being fried. You can use any alcoholic beverage, but brandy makes the sfenj taste more like Morocco.
 - ▶ Oil a mixing bowl lightly. Oil your hands and push dough down into the center of the original bowl with oiled hands until you can easily pick it up and transfer to the oiled bowl. Wipe any dough that might stick to your hands, dip fingers in oil again, and turn dough over in bowl. Then cover with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap, and allow to rise for 3-4 hours.
 - ▶ When the dough rises, punch it down in the bowl with your fist. In a wide pot, heat an inch or more of vegetable oil until hot. You need



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

- ▶ about an inch of oil.
- ▶ Dip your hands in water and pull off a piece of dough about the size of an egg. Use your fingers to make a hole in the ball of dough, stretch the hole wide to make a ring about the size of a golf ball, and place the dough in the hot oil. The dough will puff up.
- ▶ Repeat with the remaining dough, wetting your hands as necessary to keep the dough from sticking as you work with it.
- ▶ Fry the sfenj until golden brown, turning once or twice. Remove the cooked sfenj with a slotted spoon and place on a plate lined with paper towels to drain.
- ▶ Serve the sfenj hot. If desired, dip the sfenj in sugar or drizzle honey to sweeten them.
- ▶ Allow for at least two sfenj per person. I am yet to meet anybody who can stop at one.▲

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Welcome to The Colonnade of Estero, a brand-new Life Plan Community coming soon to the Village of Estero, Florida. In fact, The Colonnade will be the first Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) in Estero, one of the most attractive and most sought-after residential locations between Fort Myers and Naples. A sister community to Gulf Coast Village in Cape Coral, The Colonnade will feature spacious apartment homes with an array of floor plans to choose from. Plus, residents will enjoy the latest in design, construction, services, activities, health care, and financial practicality to life on the Gulf Coast.

To learn more, schedule a visit to our information center at **(239) 491-8111** today. Ask about our special money-saving offers for initial depositors.



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The Colonnade of Estero is a Volunteers of America community. Founded in 1896, Volunteers of America is a national, nonprofit, faith-based organization dedicated to uplifting all people. Learn more at volunteersofamerica.org.





Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties Presents the 24th Annual Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida

Films will be screened at the Regal Belltower Stadium 20*

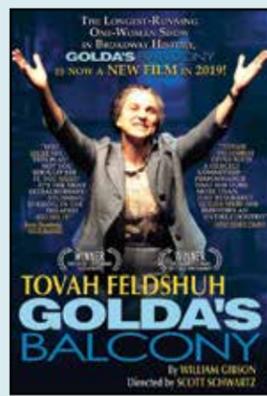
Open seating at all films for general admission tickets

Tickets will be mailed up to December 31.

Tickets ordered after December 31 will be available one hour before screening inside the theater on the day of the show.

*** February 23 event takes place at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel**

Sunday, February 2 at 3:00pm



Golda's Balcony

Based on the award-winning play and longest running one-woman show in Broadway history, *Golda's Balcony*, the film transcends both cinema and stage in this genre-bending emotional experience. Written by William Gibson (*The Miracle Worker*), the story of Golda Meir's rise from Russian schoolgirl to American schoolteacher to the fourth Prime Minister of Israel is revealed intimately and often humorously by the captivating Tovah Feldshuh. Recently discovered footage from the play's original run gives viewers the opportunity to witness Tovah's incredible performance up close and personal. **Documentary**
Language: English **Running Time:** 1 hr. 26 min.

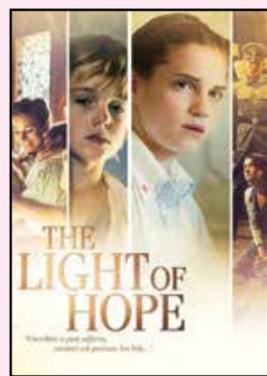
Thursday, February 13 at 7:15pm



Love in Suspenders

The encounter between two people with such different personalities, such as Tammy and Beno, has to result in a nightmare...but love has its own rules. From their first unfortunate encounter, when Tammy hits Beno with her car, Tammy and Beno experience all sorts of emotional, funny struggles. They get closer, break up, get back together and fight again, until ultimately their love wins out. **Comedy**
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 38 min.

Tuesday, February 4 at 7:15pm



The Light of Hope

In 1942, after three years of bringing back dignity to mothers interned in refugee camps and saving the lives of their babies, the Maternity of Elna has been ordered to close its doors by French authorities. Its director, Elisabeth Eidenbenz, the mothers and their collaborators who have helped to make everything possible, will try to prevent it. The film is based on the true story of Elisabeth Eidenbenz (1913-2011) and her female co-workers who saved the lives of almost 600 infants in World War II. **Historical Period Drama**
Language: Spanish & French with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 36 min.

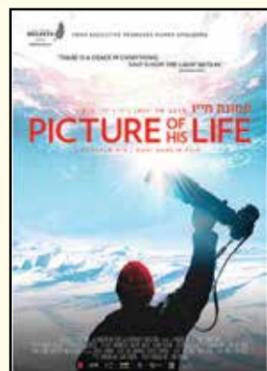
Tuesday, February 18 at 7:15pm



Unorthodox

The year is 1983, and Yaakov Cohen, the owner of a Jerusalem printing press, is tired of being pushed around. It seems that he was born on the wrong side, with the wrong family name, and in a moment's decision he decides to establish a Sephardic-ultra-Orthodox list that will run to the Jerusalem municipality. He gathers two friends, and together they improvise a campaign – no means, no connections, no money, but with much rage, passion and a sense of justice. **Comedy, Drama, History**
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 32 min.

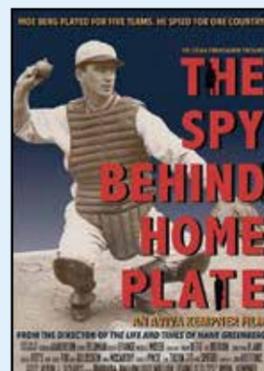
Thursday, February 6 at 7:15pm



Picture of his Life

World-renowned wildlife photographer Amos Nachoum has one final photographic dream remaining – to photograph a polar bear underwater while swimming alongside it. The film follows Amos in the Canadian Arctic as he prepares for his ultimate challenge. As the journey unfolds, so does an intimate and painful story of dedication, sacrifice and personal redemption. **Documentary**
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 12 min.

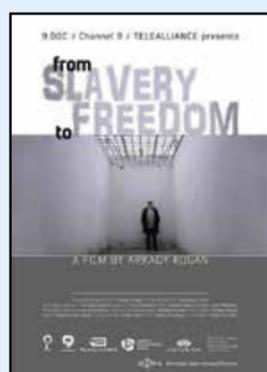
Thursday, February 20 at 7:15pm



The Spy Behind Home Plate

Morris "Moe" Berg was an enigmatic and brilliant Jewish baseball player turned spy. Berg caught and fielded in the Major Leagues during baseball's Golden Age in the 1920s and 1930s, but very few people know that Berg also worked for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), spying in Europe and playing a prominent role in America's efforts to undermine the German atomic bomb program during WWII. **Documentary**
Language: English
Running Time: 1 hr. 41 min.

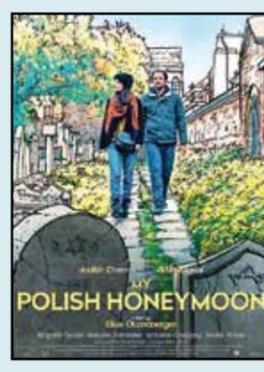
Tuesday, February 11 at 7:15pm



From Slavery to Freedom

The film portrays the story of Soviet "Refuseniks" through the prism of Natan Sharansky's biography. In 1977, Sharansky, a human rights activist, was arrested on charges of spying for the U.S., treason and anti-Soviet agitation. The film takes you back to a Soviet era where there was an overwhelming sense of fear and insecurity. No single person symbolizes the era more than Sharansky, who defied the entire Soviet system in his fight for freedom and national identification. After spending years in prison, he won the struggle, paving the way for all of Soviet Jewry. **Documentary**
Language: Russian with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 24 min.

Sunday, February 23 at 2:00pm

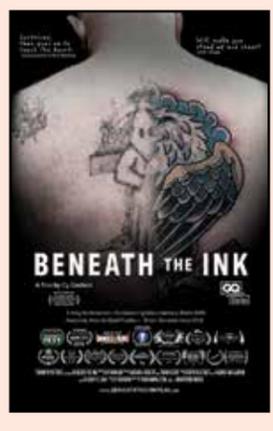


My Polish Honeymoon

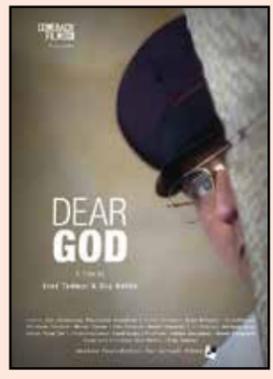
Anna and Adam, a young Parisian couple with Jewish origins, are about to travel to Poland for the first time. They are just married and this will be their honeymoon. They will attend a ceremony in memory of the Jewish community in the village of Adam's grandfather, which was destroyed 75 years ago. Adam is not enthusiastic, but sees it as an occasion to spend some quality time with his wife. Anna is both anxious and excited about the trip to her grandmother's country. She is hoping to reconnect with her roots and discover more about her own family's history. **Comedy/Drama**
Language: French with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 28 min.

Wed., February 12 at 2:00pm

Shorts Day



Beneath the Ink
"Bring me your mistakes" is the invitation Ohio tattoo artist Billy Joe White makes. A timely look at racism in contemporary America, *Beneath the Ink* reveals the possibility for change in one Appalachian community.
Short Documentary
Language: English **Running Time:** 13 min.

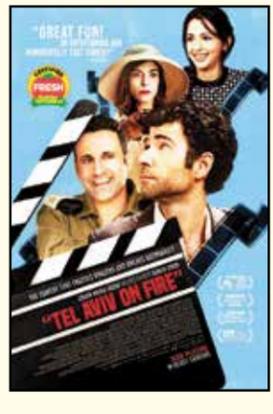


Across the Line
Hananel, a young religious Jew, is hurrying home for Shabbat. An unexpected encounter with Mundi, an unwanted and stubborn Palestinian hitchhiker, leads Hananel on a series of mix-ups that eventually teaches him a lesson in communication, friendship and love.
Short Comedy
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 29 min.

Dear God
A poetic Jerusalem told through the eyes of Aaron, a simple Wailing Wall guard that follows a mysterious beautiful woman's notes in the holy stones of the wall.
Short Drama
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 12 min.

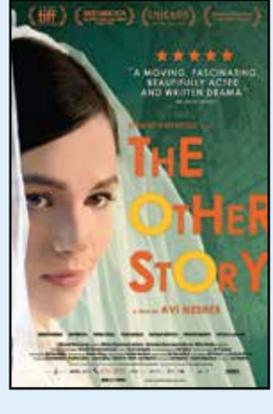
An Average Story
Avi Cohen has just been informed that he is the most average man who ever lived. Overnight, he reluctantly becomes a national icon and celebrity. With his wife's enthusiastic urging, they translate the situation into a business venture that goes awry.
Short Comedy
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 18 min.

Tuesday, February 25 at 7:15pm



Tel Aviv on Fire
Salam, an inexperienced young Palestinian man, becomes a writer on a popular soap opera after a chance meeting with an Israeli soldier. His creative career is on the rise until the soldier and the show's financial backers disagree about how the show should end, and Salam is caught in the middle. The film is a satire that highlights the awful absurdity of war, and proves it's possible to find humor in the midst of cultural conflict.
Comedy/Satire
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 40 min.

Wed., February 26 at 2:00pm



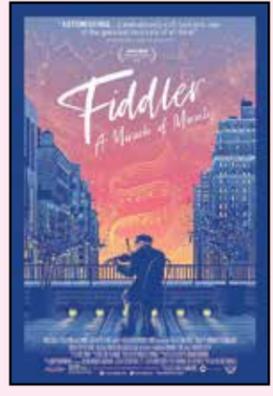
The Other Story
Anat is a rebellious young woman who wants to flee the chaos of secular hedonism for the disciplined comforts of faith. Sari is a young woman who wants to leave behind her oppressive religious upbringing for sexual and spiritual freedom. When Anat and Sari cross paths in Jerusalem, it soon changes both of their lives in startling and unexpected ways.
Drama
Language: Hebrew with English Subtitles
Running Time: 1 hr. 57 min.

Thursday, February 27 at 7:15pm



The Bird Catcher
On her attempt to flee the Nazi round-up in Norway, Esther finds herself alone, on an occupied farm forced to conceal her identity, leading to a series of choices and consequences which shift the paths of those around her. This story uncovers a hidden slice of history that grips at the heart and inspires us all at the deepest level.
Drama/Mystery
Language: English
Running Time: 1 hr. 40 min.

Sunday, March 1 at 3:00pm



Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles
When *Fiddler on the Roof* opened on Broadway in 1964, it explored themes of tradition, religion and anti-Semitism against a modern backdrop of radical social change that addressed gender roles, sexuality and race. Rare archival footage and interviews with musical luminaries explore the legacy of this long-running, award-winning musical.
Documentary
Language: English
Running Time: 1 hr. 32 min.

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties thanks the members of the 2020 Jewish Film Festival Committee for their help in reviewing and selecting films:
Sara Krivisky, Chair
Carolyn Gora, Co-Chair
Andi Horowitz, Event Chair
Karin Fine, Claire Goldhagen, Helene Glocer, Elisa Grossman, Jan Klein, Carol Lovitch, Leni Sack, Lynn Talone



INDIVIDUAL TICKET ORDER FORM

Regal Belltower Stadium 20 Theaters

*OPEN SEATING AT ALL FILMS
*Reserved seating for some levels of sponsorship.

- TOTAL # _____ INDIVIDUAL EVENING TICKETS @ \$13
 - TOTAL # _____ INDIVIDUAL MATINEE TICKETS @ \$10
 - TOTAL # _____ OPENING DAY EVENT TICKETS: @ \$25
 - TOTAL # _____ CLOSING DAY EVENT TICKETS: @ \$25
 - TOTAL # _____ FESTIVAL PASSES (evenings only): @ \$117
 - TOTAL # _____ FESTIVAL PASSES (evenings & matinees) @ \$135
- *Passes include 1 ticket to each film—event tickets sold separately

___ Golda's Balcony <small>Followed by: Dessert Reception with the Producer at Society. <i>Event ticket required.</i> *Sponsored by Norman Love Confections</small>	Sunday, February 2 3:00 P.M. Event starts at: 5:00 P.M. <i>Opening Day</i>
___ The Light of Hope <small>*Sponsored by Sylvia & Paul Simko</small>	Tuesday, February 4 7:15 P.M.
___ Picture of His Life <small>*Sponsored by Sara & Brian Krivisky</small>	Thursday, February 6 7:15 P.M.
___ From Slavery To Freedom	Tuesday, February 11 7:15 P.M.
___ Shorts Day <i>Matinee</i> An Average Story ~ Across the Line ~ Beneath the Ink ~ Dear God <small>*Sponsored by American House</small>	Wednesday, February 12 2:00 P.M.
___ Love in Suspenders <small>*Sponsored by Cypress Cove at HealthPark FL.</small>	Thursday, February 13 7:15 P.M.
___ Unorthodox <small>*Sponsored by DLS Construction, Inc.</small>	Tuesday, February 18 7:15 P.M.
___ The Spy Behind Home Plate <small>*Sponsored by Fort Myers Miracle Baseball</small>	Thursday, February 20 7:15 P.M.
___ My Polish Honeymoon -JFF at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands	Sunday, February 23 2:00 P.M.
___ Tel Aviv on Fire <small>*Sponsored by Gulf Coast Orthodontics, Dr. Michele Laboda</small>	Tuesday, February 25 7:15 P.M.
___ The Other Story <i>Matinee</i>	Wednesday, February 26 2:00 P.M.
___ The Bird Catcher <small>*Sponsored by Kushner & Kushner Attorneys</small>	Thursday, February 27 7:15 P.M.
___ Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles <small>Followed by: Reception & music at Society <i>Event ticket required.</i> *Sponsored by Andi & Bill Horowitz</small>	Sunday, March 1 3:00 P.M. Event starts at: 5:00 P.M. <i>Closing Day</i>

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Exp. Date _____

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Marsha & Mike Kistler

Irwin Kroskin & Nancy Kanter

Sofia & Howard Parish

Julia Perry

Marlene & Ron Schwartz-Ehrens

Gary & Mary Skogebo

Judith Yevick

Avner Yonai

Vicki & Steve Zellner

Anonymous in honor of Sara Krivisky



AJC 2019 Survey of American Jews on Antisemitism in America

On October 23, 2019, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) released the results of its landmark survey of American Jewish opinion on antisemitism in America. The poll represents the largest and most comprehensive examination ever of American Jews' experiences and perceptions of antisemitism.

This survey makes clear that American Jews view antisemitism as a significant problem in America – and one that is getting worse.

An overview of some of the key findings are below. For the full results along with in-depth analysis, go to AJC.org/Antisemitism-Survey-2019.

Antisemitism in America

- ◆ 88% of American Jews believe antisemitism is a problem in America today and 84% say it has increased over the past five years, including a plurality (43%) who say it has increased a lot.
- ◆ More than a third of all American Jews (35%) say they have personally been the targets of antisemitism

over the past five years; nearly a quarter (23%) say they've been targeted by antisemitic remarks in person, by mail or by phone; a fifth (20%) say they've been targeted by antisemitic remarks online; and 2% say they've been physically attacked for being Jewish.

- ◆ Nearly a third (31%) of American Jews have avoided publicly wearing, carrying or displaying things that might help people identify them as Jewish, while 25% say they avoid certain places, events or situations out of concern for their safety or comfort as Jews at least some of the time.
- ◆ Young people between the ages of 18-29 are the most vulnerable, with nearly half (45%) saying they have been the victims of antisemitism over the past five years, and four in ten (38%) saying they have concealed their Jewishness in public – more than any other age group.

Antisemitism and Israel

- ◆ American Jews overwhelmingly

believe that anti-Zionism – that is, the belief that Israel should not exist – is a form of antisemitism: 84% of respondents said the statement “Israel has no right to exist” is antisemitic.

- ◆ 80% of respondents said the statement “The U.S. government only supports Israel because of the Jewish money” is antisemitic, and 73% said so about the statement “American Jews are more loyal to Israel than to America.”
- ◆ Only 14% of American Jews say the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement targeting Israel is not antisemitic; over a third (35%) characterized the movement as mostly antisemitic, while 47% said it is not mostly antisemitic but has antisemitic supporters. The more familiar American Jews are with the BDS Movement, the more likely they are to consider it to be antisemitic, with a majority of those who say they are “very familiar” with the movement characterizing it as mostly antisemitic.

Government Response

- ◆ 72% of American Jews disapprove of President Trump's handling of the threat of antisemitism in America, compared to only 24% who approve. Respondents' assessment of President Trump's response to antisemitism varied vastly by their political affiliation, with 84% of

Republicans expressing approval of the President's response, compared to only 4% of Democrats.

- ◆ 81% of American Jews characterize U.S. law enforcement's response to antisemitism as either very or somewhat effective, compared to only 15% who said the response is not too effective or not effective at all.
- ### Responsibility for Antisemitism
- ◆ 89% of American Jews believe the extreme political right represents a threat to Jews in the United States, while 85% say the same of extremism in the name of Islam, and nearly two thirds (64%) say so about the extreme political left.
 - ◆ American Jews assign greater responsibility to the Republican Party for the current level of antisemitism in the United States than they do to the Democratic Party. When asked to assign responsibility on a scale of 1 (no responsibility) to 10 (total responsibility), respondents assigned the Republican Party an average score of 6.2, while the Democratic Party scored a 3.6.
 - ◆ While those who identify as Republican or Democrat tend to assign greater responsibility to the opposite party, American Jews also view their own parties as having some responsibility for the current level of antisemitism in America, with each rating their own party with similar scores of 2.7.▲

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Thursday, February 20
6:15-7:15 P.M.

- Give-Aways
- Raffles
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Fort Myers Miracle Baseball is the proud sponsor of the film *The Spy Behind Home Plate*




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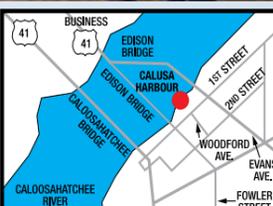
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BRIEFS

**JEWISH AGENCY AID
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The only thing that stopped the gunman from massacring those attending Yom Kippur prayers in Halle, Germany, was the synagogue's heavy door and security system, which had been recently upgraded with the assistance of the Jewish Agency Security Assistance Fund.

For the last few years, the Jewish Agency has been providing funds to communities across Europe to safeguard Jewish institutions from terror attacks. (*Jerusalem Post*)

**NORMALIZATION: 166,000
PALESTINIANS WORK
WITH ISRAELIS EVERY DAY**

"Normalization" has been adopted as a term of abuse by the Palestinian

leadership to stigmatize any form of joint Palestinian-Israeli activity. The elephant in this room is that every day, 130,000 Palestinians cross into Israel from the West Bank to work for some 8,100 employers. Their employment is an important part of the West Bank economy. Palestinians working in Israel bring home \$1.4 billion. Their average salary is two and a half times the average salary in the Palestinian autonomous areas.

In addition, 36,000 Palestinians are employed in Israeli firms in the West Bank, many earning up to three times the average Palestinian wage. Israel has established several industrial zones there, comprising around 1,000 businesses. This ongoing demonstration of Palestinian-Israeli joint activity on a massive scale is rarely referred to by the anti-normalization activists. (Neville Teller, *Jerusalem Report*)

**DWIGHT EISENHOWER,
HOLOCAUST RESCUER**

As commander-in-chief of the Allied Forces in Europe, Dwight D. Eisenhower was the primary driver behind the memorialization of the Holocaust; he ordered extraordinary measures to ensure the well-being of Jewish displaced persons during the occupation of Germany; and, following David Ben-Gurion's recommendation, he established a "temporary haven" in the American Zone of Occupation for persecuted Jews from Eastern and Central Europe – a policy that both the Soviets and the British strongly opposed.

Growing up in Abilene, Kansas, Eisenhower had virtually no firsthand knowledge of Jews or Judaism. He once told Abba Eban that as a boy he did not think there were any Jews on earth, that they were "all in heaven as angels."

On April 12, 1945, Eisenhower visited the recently liberated Ohrdruf-Nord concentration camp. In an effort

to eliminate witnesses to their crimes, the SS guards had murdered 4,000 prisoners before fleeing. The surviving prisoners were emaciated skeletons, and bodies were piled everywhere. Eisenhower called the atrocities "beyond the American mind to comprehend," and ordered every American unit not on the frontlines to see Ohrdruf. The next day he visited Buchenwald. "I made the visit deliberately," he said, "in order to be in a position to give first-hand evidence of these things if ever, in the future, there develops a tendency to charge these allegations merely to 'propaganda.'" (Benjamin Runkle, *Tablet*)

**ISRAEL'S RAFAEL
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Israeli defense electronics company Rafael has delivered a first consignment of Trophy anti-missile protection systems to the U.S. Army for Abrams

continued on next page

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BRIEFS

continued from previous page

tanks and armored personnel carriers. The system has been in operational use with the Israel Defense Forces since 2011 and has on many occasions intercepted missiles fired at Israeli armored vehicles.

Rafael CEO Gen. (res.) Yoav Har Even said, "There is great satisfaction that technology developed in Israel over many years of investment will play a major role in protecting U.S. soldiers."

Production of about half of the components making up the Trophy system is being carried out in the U.S.

The U.S. Army will also use Elbit's Iron Fist system for protecting Bradley armored fighting vehicles. (Yuval Azulai, *Globes*)

AMAZON LAUNCHES SERIES ON HI-TECH, WITH FOCUS ON ISRAEL'S STARTUP NATION

Over 50 cutting-edge Israeli tech companies are featured in the first season of a new series released on Amazon Prime Video on October 18 called *TechTalk*.

The show's creator is co-founder of Tech Talk Media, Jonny Caplan, a British-born entrepreneur who moved from England to Israel in 2013.

Tel Aviv has the highest concentration of startups per capita in the world.

The showcased startups include EyeRon Systems, makers of toughened first-response drones that fly indoors into burning buildings to give firefighters earlier warnings.

Intuition Robotics pioneers a small robot called ElliQ to provide companionship for the elderly. ElliQ provides someone to talk to and checks up on its "companion," suggesting exercise, games to play and even connects via Skype to family members.

The first season includes flying cars, 3D holographic surgery, the Israeli robot soccer team, cannabis scanners, car hackings, augmented reality snowboarding, and mind-controlled gaming. (Nadine Wojakovski, *Times of Israel*)

The U.S. experienced 780 anti-Semitic incidents in the first six months of 2019.

In at least three cases – in Monroe, Washington; Lehighton, Pennsylvania; and Las Vegas, Nevada – ADL's Center on Extremism provided critical intelligence to law enforcement, leading to investigations and arrests.

Since the Pittsburgh shooting on October 27, 2018, white supremacists have targeted Jewish institutional property on at least 50 occasions. (Anti-Defamation League)

BRITAIN'S GERMAN-BORN JEWISH "SECRET LISTENERS" HELPED WIN WORLD WAR II

Historian Helen Fry describes in her new book, *The Walls Have Ears: The Greatest Intelligence Operation of World War II*, how captured Nazi generals were confined at Trent Park, a stately country house in north London that resembled a gentleman's club. But unbeknownst to, and unsuspected by, the Nazi military commanders, Trent Park was wired for sound. "The generals did not realize that everything that could be bugged was – from the light fittings to the fireplaces, plant pots... under floorboards of the bedrooms, and even the trees in the garden," Fry says. The house and its surrounding estate were nothing less than "a theatrical stage set."

Unseen by the generals, an army of "secret listeners" – many of them Jewish refugees – eavesdropped on their conversations from a basement room. The conversations were transcribed, translated and passed on to intelligence agencies and government departments. Fry's book draws on thousands of transcripts and reports in Britain's National Archives which were released in the late 1990s.

The eavesdropping elicited a wealth of intelligence: on the Germans' battle plans, new technology being developed by the Nazis on U-boats and aircraft, and the progress of Hitler's secret weapons program that produced the V1 and V2 rockets. There were also graphic eyewitness accounts of the mass murder of Jews in the East – by the very men who had perpetrated them. "The unguarded conversations of the generals revealed to the intelligence services that Germany's military commanders not only knew about the war crimes committed, but some were complicit in it," writes Fry. (Robert Philpot, *Times of Israel*)

JEWISH AGENCY REPORTS HUGE SPIKE IN REQUESTS FOR HELP TO UPGRADE SECURITY AT JEWISH CENTERS

The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) has begun upgrading security at 50 Jewish institutions in 24 countries, following a spike in requests for assistance in the wake of increased anti-Semitic attacks around the world.

The Jewish Agency's Fund for Security Assistance for Jewish Communities was established in 2012 following an attack against a Jewish school in the French city of Toulouse in which an Islamist gunman murdered a rabbi and three children. Since then, the fund has provided assistance at 600 Jewish institutions in 260 communities in 60 countries at a cost of \$13 million, using money from donors in the Jewish diaspora.

The funds were used to install security cameras, bulletproof glass, shatter-proof glass, security fences and walls, anti-ramming barriers, guard posts and alarm systems. Fifty percent of the funds have gone to communities in Europe, 12% to countries of the former Soviet Union, 19% to Latin America, and the remainder to the rest of the world. (Jeremy Sharon, *Jerusalem Post*) ▲

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12,000 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

Currently, 11,853 international students are studying in Israel – 6,000 coming for a semester or summer courses, and 5,000 studying for full degrees, including almost 800 PhD students. (Abigail Klein Leichman, *Israel21c*)

ADL: 12 WHITE SUPREMACISTS ARRESTED FOR PLOTS, ATTACKS AND THREATS AGAINST JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE PITTSBURGH SHOOTING

According to data released by the Anti-Defamation League on October 20, at least 12 white supremacists have been arrested for terrorist plots, attacks or threats against the Jewish community in the year since the attack on Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue.



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From 2013 through September of 2015, Michael served as the Legislative Director for Congresswoman Grace Meng; prior to that, he practiced law in New York. Michael received a Bachelor of Arts degree Cum Laude from Tufts University in 2005 and a Juris Doctor from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in 2009.

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A comparison: the Israeli and U.S. electoral systems

By Jerrold L. Sobel, ZOA of SWFL President, October 29, 2019

Elections, elections, elections. It seems like you can't turn on the TV or listen to the radio either here in the United States or in Israel and not hear about an upcoming or past election. Surprisingly, given the opportunity to freely choose their own leadership, a bright millions around the world would die for, a large swath of eligible voters in Israel and the United States don't show up on Election Day. Starting with the United States, let's begin examining the electoral systems of both countries.

The United States is a federal republic comprised of individual states, all of which have a chief executive officer, called a governor, a state senate, a state legislature and a state Supreme Court. Unlike the federal government, based upon their census, each state can have many representatives. State elections normally take place on a yearly basis.

The federal government consists of three branches, including: a President, which by law is allowed to serve no more than two, four-year consecutive terms; a 435-member House of Representatives, whose members serve two-year terms and are considered for reelection every even year; a 100-member Senate comprised of two members from each state elected to six-year terms; collectively, the House and the Senate are known as the Congress; the third branch consists of a permanent nine-member Supreme Court, whose members, upon retirement or death, are replaced by a nominee selected by the president and confirmed by Congress.

Although there are several smaller parties such as the Libertarian party, the Conservative party, Reform party, the Green Party and many others, the modern political party system in the U.S. is a two-party system dominated by the Democratic and Republican parties. One or the other of these two political

affiliations has won every United States presidential election since 1852 and has controlled the Congress since 1856.

Regarding the president, no analysis of an election can be made without first discussing the Electoral College and its role in an election.

The founding fathers established the Electoral College in the Constitution as a compromise between election of the President by a vote in Congress and election by a popular vote of qualified citizens. It consists of 538 electors of which a majority (270) are needed for a candidate to be elected President. When you vote for a candidate you are actually voting for your candidate's electors within the state you are voting in.

Finally, if a candidate receives a majority of the popular vote, or a plurality of the popular vote in a state (less than 50 percent but more than any other candidate, with the exception of Maine and Nebraska), that candidate takes all of the state's electoral votes. Confusing, yes, but this has been the American system of electing a President since 1804, ratified by the 12th Amendment to the Constitution.

Let's now look at Israel's system of electing a Prime Minister, and you can decide which system makes the most sense. Whereas the United States has a presidential system of government, Israel is a parliamentary democracy. Its system is more similar to that of the United Kingdom.

Unlike the United States, the Prime Minister is the chief executive officer, whereas the Israeli president plays largely a ceremonial, figurehead role.

Similar to the U.S., there are two main political parties in Israel: the Likud, basically a secularist, center/right party, and the Israeli Labor party, a center/left party. On Election Day, the people only elect the 120 members of the Knesset.

In turn, the Knesset elects a government headed by a Prime Minister from among its 120 members. In effect, the administrative branch is part of the legislative branch. Following the election, the Prime Minister is ceremonially appointed by the President upon recommendation of the Knesset.

Another dissimilarity to the United States is that the Israeli system is heavily centered on innumerable smaller political parties, which play a critical and central role in its electoral process.

Forty-five days prior to elections, all parties within the Knesset must register themselves and submit a list of their proposed candidates. First on the list will be the party leader, usually the larger parties' candidate for Prime Minister.

On Election Day, all Israeli citizens above the age of 18 and residing in the country are eligible to vote. Here again, voters do not vote for individuals or candidates, nor do they vote according to the area or district where they live. Instead, every citizen in the country

is given the same option: to select one political party and the vote goes to the candidate represented by that party.

The reason it's been difficult to form a new government over the past two elections in Israel is that the 120 Knesset seats are assigned in proportion to each party's percentage of the total national vote, thus making it difficult or near impossible for one party to receive a majority of 61 seats. When this occurs, as it often does, compromises and coalitions with smaller parties come into play in the hope one side or the other can garner the 61-seat majority needed to elect a Prime Minister and form a government.

At first blush, this electoral process may seem archaic to the American way of thinking, as the Electoral College might be to the eyes of an Israeli. One thing for certain is, if given the liberty, the Hong Kongese and multitudes of others throughout the world would be ecstatic embracing either democratic system. ▲

Connecting the dots

You may not know this about me, but my father was a wandering Aramean. Actually, this isn't quite true. My father was from Pittsburgh, not Aram, and he wasn't much of a wanderer either. Nonetheless, these words might be familiar to you from the Passover Haggadah where we read: "My father was a wandering Aramean and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with but a few persons, and there became a nation, great, mighty and numerous." But if you read the original text from Deuteronomy, the ending is a lot better. The farmer who has just harvested his fields brings the "first fruits" of his produce to the Temple, lays his basket down and then recites this prayer of gratitude ending with "...and God has brought us into this wonderful land as He promised." And as a sign of that gratitude, he offers this token of the harvest. Thanksgiving, indeed!

That may be a long prayer to recite, but how beautiful it is! Gratitude is on my mind today. Not just because Thanksgiving is around the corner, but for all of the great things that happen every day. Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, says: "We have thousands of opportunities every day to be grateful: for having good weather, to have slept well last night, to be able to get up, to be healthy, to have enough to eat...There's opportunity upon opportunity to be grateful; that's what life is."

When we retire, how do we say thanks for that wonderful occasion?

When we move to Southwest Florida, full- or part-time, how do we express our gratitude? When we buy a condo or house, what prayer do we say?

Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel once said, "By performance of sacred deeds, we concretize our faith in G-d; we justify G-d's faith in us." So, the question troubling me today is what do we say or do – sacred text or sacred deeds – to show our status has changed or our lives have changed? Where is the ritual that can parallel "my father was a wandering Aramean" with bringing the first fruits to the Temple?

Of course, the first challenge is to take a moment to reflect and appreciate the change. Without that moment of reflection, we won't be able to feel the gratitude bubble up. The second challenge is to find a way to express this in some act. Maybe you will choose to volunteer some of your time to a local organization. Maybe you will choose to find some charity whose work you approve of and will donate to them. And maybe some of us will cash in our "first fruits" and take the proceeds to Israel. Or maybe you will choose to do all of the above.

Two principles stand out, though. The first is that for the moment to be a "sacred deed," there must be a physical expression, even if that is writing a check. The second principle is you need to feel the joy that comes with the moment. As Brother David says, "The root of joy is gratefulness. It is not joy that makes us grateful, it is gratitude that makes us joyful." ▲

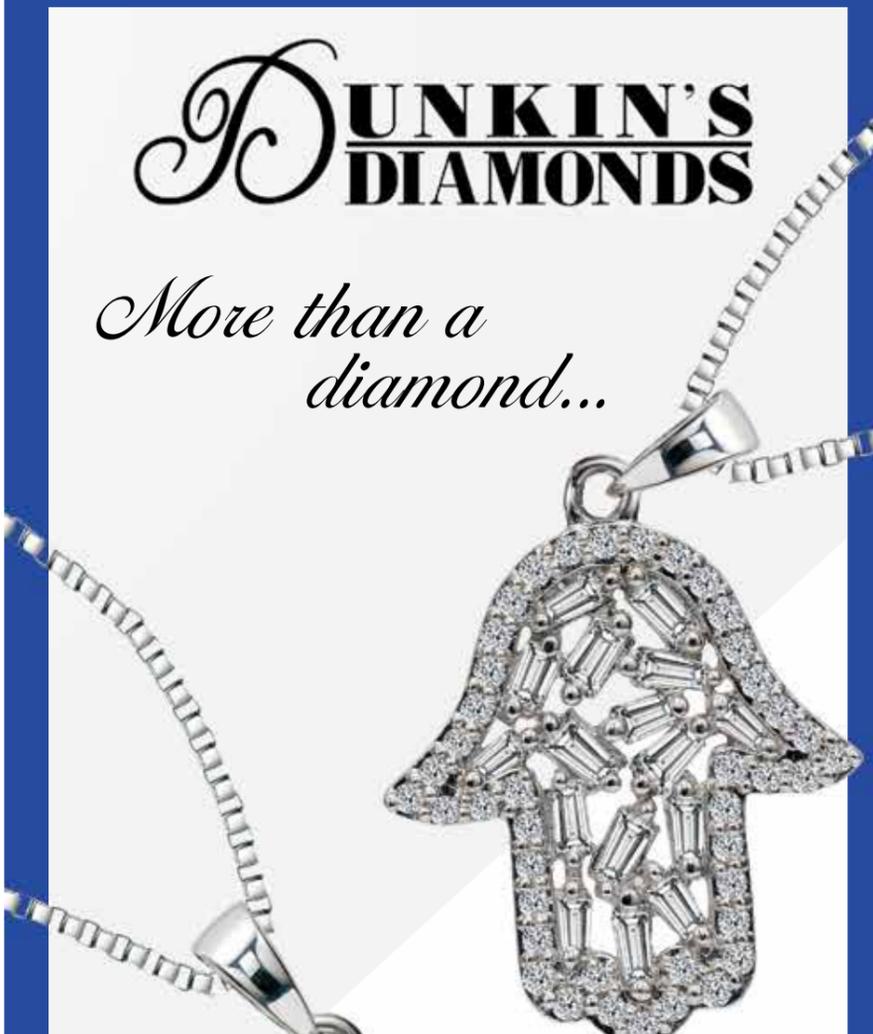
Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Schorin, MAPC, BCC is a Chaplain in Lee Health's Department of Spiritual Services, and ministers at the Gulf Coast Medical Center.



■ Rabbi Michael J. Schorin

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Hanukkah memories

Imagine it is the first night of Hanukkah. A little girl and her older brother anxiously wait as their father takes down the old menorah, that has been polished, and places it before the two children. The box filled with orange Hanukkah candles is placed on the table with a box of wooden matches. Dusk is beginning and anticipation is mounting.

Finally, it is time. Two candles are chosen and placed in the menorah. A match is lit and one candle is lit. Three blessings are sung with gusto. The children look at the tiny flames from

the candles and vie as to which candle will expire first. Daddy always tells the story of Hanukkah and ends with new pennies that are given for the dreidls game that always commenced after the story.

The battle is real but invariably the older brother always wins the gambling game. Is it over? No way!

Mom appears with homemade latkes, apple sauce or sour cream. A small family laughs and looks forward to celebrating for eight days. Gifts? Not the main event. They were small and not memorable. The lights and stories, games and latkes, remain a memory filled with joy.▲

Rabbi Devora Buchen serves at Temple Beth Shalom in Cape Coral.



■ **Rabbi Devora Buchen**

The Chanukah miracle we still need

If you ask most Jews about Chanukah, beginning this year on Sunday evening, December 22, they will tell you it is the story of a miracle. The Assyrian Greeks conquered Judaea; they polluted our Temple in Jerusalem and used it as a shrine to sacrifice pigs in pagan rites. After a courageous struggle, under the leadership of Judah and the Maccabees, we rededicated our Temple and wanted to light the eternal flame on the altar. There was, however, only a little cruse of oil enough to last for one day, and everyone knows that it takes eight days to make new oil. Miracle of miracles took place, though, and the oil lasted for eight days.

In truth, the legend of the cruse of oil does not appear in any Jewish source until at least 300 years after the actual events of Chanukah took place in 165 BCE. The "oil story" is about as central to the real meaning of Chanukah as Santa Claus is the real reason Christians commemorate Christmas.

The real story of Chanukah is much more complex and much more contemporary. The real story pitted two groups of Jews in Second pre-Christian century Judaea against one another. On the one hand there were those who wanted to assimilate. They wanted to abandon much of Jewish life and practice in order to follow the Greek way of life and culture, which was sweeping the world at that time.

On the other side of the conflict were the Jews who resisted the strong assimilationist pull. These Jew proclaimed, "We have a Covenant with God. We must maintain it." It was not until the tension between those two groups, the Jews who were willing to

give it all up and the Jews who wanted to remain loyal to our tradition, came to blows, and there was civil war in the streets in Judea, did Antiochus, the emperor of Assyria, intervene.

Of course, if he was going to intervene between those who wanted to be more like him and ones who wanted to be more Jewish, there is no question as to what side he would take. In taking over the Temple and forbidding the practice of Judaism in any way, shape, size or form, though, Antiochus went too far. It is similar to today. Many Americans rarely practice their faith, but they would protest strongly or even be willing to fight if the government forbade them to practice their faith. So it was in ancient Judaea.

For the first time in human history, a people took up arms in order to preserve the freedom to practice their religion. After a difficult three-year struggle, the Jewish fighters, led by Judah Maccabee, drove out the Assyrian soldiers. We commemorate that victory by celebrating Chanukah for eight days.

Why eight days? Not because of the little cruse of oil but because we were forbidden during the time of the struggle to celebrate our major festival Sukkot.

The real message of Chanukah, then, is a message about values. We almost lost the right to be Jewish 2,200 years ago, not because of a Syrian oppressor but because of our own apathy. Such religious apathy is rampant today.

Chanukah reminds us that no outside force can destroy our people, but we can destroy ourselves. Apathy is our greatest enemy. Neglect of Jewish learning and observance is the force that almost destroyed us 2,000+ years ago. They are the very forces which we need a Chanukah miracle to thwart today.▲
Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs serves at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel Island.



■ **Rabbi Stephen Fuchs**

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Seeing each other

In the Modern Love column of *The New York Times*, writers share stories of their romantic struggles and triumphs. In one article, titled "Take Me as I am, Whoever I am,"



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

Terri Cheney writes about dating while managing her bipolar disorder. The story is both humorous and heart-breaking. She picks up a guy in the produce aisle but then can't get out of bed to answer the door when he comes over. In a later interview she explains, "Other than my doctors, very few people knew what was going on with me. I would just disappear from the world so nobody saw."

The story of Noah is an example in our own tradition when we often fail to see the full picture, the complete story. We may know about the ark, the flood and the rainbow, but the text is very adult in what happens next. Genesis 9:30-23 reads, "Noah, the tiler of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk, and he uncovered himself within his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a cloth, placed it against both their backs and walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness; their faces were turned the other way, so that they did not see their father's nakedness."

When Noah wakes up from his wine, he curses Ham, who saw his nakedness, but blesses Shem and Japheth who avert their eyes. However, Rabbi Shira Milgrom, has a different understanding. She writes, "They didn't see, and from then on, they didn't know. We don't see, we don't know. Those in our community who suffer from alcohol and drug addictions not only suffer, they suffer alone."

Our task in creating a holy community is to be open to hearing the fullness of people's stories, to make sure no one suffers alone. We have members of our Jewish community who struggle with alcoholism. We have members of our Jewish community suffering through addiction. We have members of our Jewish community managing their bipolar disorder. We have members of

our Jewish community dealing with mental health issues. The stigma and taboo only increase the suffering.

Temple Beth El is taking steps to become a community where people do not suffer alone. We are hosting a Jewish Recovery Group meeting for anyone in the Jewish community who struggles with addiction. Temple Beth El is showing that the Jewish community must be a place where people can be their truest selves and find acceptance, solidarity and support toward change. I hope the Jewish Recovery Group at TBE will strengthen our community as a place of honesty and hope.

We are only willing to be "seen" in our fullness if we know we will be received with loving support. If we are truly to become a community of compassion, we must move away from judgement. This is modeled for us by none other than God. In the beginning of the story of Noah, God decides to send a flood because of humanity's wickedness. God then promises to never again send a flood because God recognizes our potential to do evil. The same reason is given for sending the flood and then for not sending another! Rabbi Shai Held writes, "What has changed after the flood is not human nature but God's attitude toward it. The very same shortcomings which had called forth doom and denunciation now elicit forbearance and generosity instead. Judgement gives way to mercy, condemnation to compassion."

No one should suffer alone in our community. No one should feel like they have to hide part of who they are. No one should feel they will be judged for their struggles or terrified that someone will find out. No one should feel shame. In revealing our full selves, we come into relationship not only with each other, but with God. Later in Genesis an angel will ask Hagar, where are you coming from and where are you going? Hagar shares her story, her full self. And she names God, "the Living One Who Sees Me." When we create a sacred community that sees each person's worth and acts with compassion, we mirror God, the Living One Who Sees Us.▲

Rabbi Nicole Luna serves at Temple Beth El in Fort Myers.

Hanukah is about courage

This year I am thinking that Hanukah is about courage. It is about the courage to stand up to what seems impossible and to do what you believe you must do no matter what.

In the ancient story, it is about the courage to face Antiochus' war elephants and to light sacred lamps that couldn't possibly stay lit for very long.

Protestant theologian Paul Tillich wrote what soon became a 20th century religious classic called *The Courage to Be*. It's about how we "moderns" must find the courage to stand up to the darkness around us and within us without relying on ancient mythologies and superstitions, and why we should.

Sometimes it takes great and persistent courage to answer Hamlet's immortal question, "To be or not to be?" in the affirmative. Surely our lives are marked by moments of great joy and beauty, but to get from one of those moments to the next often requires the

courage to persevere and move forward, even when the reasons why we should don't seem entirely clear. As Rabbi Moses Hadas, the great scholar who served Kansas City's Congregation Beth Shalom for many years, observed, "God gives us just enough good things to keep us interested."

Hanukah teaches that somehow we must find enough sacred oil to keep our light alive to see where to place our next step as we grope our way through the darkness. But to actually take that next step requires courage, since that light is a tender solitary flame. That is Tillich's "Courage to Be."

There are those whose flame goes out and all that remains for them is darkness. The most important thing we can do with our lives is to help rekindle the light within them. So no matter how small that reservoir of sacred oil might at times be within us, it is the greatest commandment to share what we have with those for whom it is utterly depleted.

In this way we become the miracle of Hanukah.▲

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



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

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Congratulations to the Jewish Federation for another great Jewish Film Festival! ~ Bob and Reina Schlager



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A spark of the divine

On Hanukkah, the lights of the menorah are kindled by the *shamash*, the lead or service light. Every menorah has such a special light, whose sole purpose is to provide the spark of the others.



■ Rabbi Solomon Agin

The importance of the spark can be seen in the following story:

A young man who had become an apprentice to a blacksmith, learned during the course of his training how to hold the tongs, how to lift the hammer, how to smite the anvil, and how to blow the fire with the bellows. Having finished his apprenticeship, he was chosen to be employed at the royal smithery. But the young

man's delight at his appointment soon turned to despair when he discovered that he had failed to learn how to kindle a spark. All of his skill and knowledge in handling the tool were of no avail because he had not learned the most elementary principle – to light the fire.

Unless we are fired with the conviction of what we do, then what we do will be essentially meaningless. Unless we find that we are warmed by enthusiasm, any project in which we engage will eventually cool off. The spark that kindles a world, a people or a person illuminates the causes in which we are involved and fires us with the energy to carry through. The Maccabees of old proved that people who possess a spark of the divine will leave their brand on history.▲

Rabbi Solomon Agin serves at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte.

"Thick" communities

I go to Hartford, Connecticut, my hometown, infrequently. My parents left there for south Florida in the late 1990s. None of my siblings live there. Now, it is only funerals, this time my mother's, that bring my family and me back to Hartford and yet I still think of it as home.

In his recent book, *The Second Mountain*, David Brooks describes some communities as "thick." Neighbors know each other and spend time together. Multigenerational families are rooted in a place and are connected on many levels. People stay in touch for many years. This described well the Jewish community of Hartford in which I grew up.

My great grandparents emigrated to there in the 1910s and built small businesses. My parents were born and raised there and had an extensive web of friendships from childhood into their adult years. Everyone knew that I was Gil and Gerri's son, Saul and Lil's, George and Rose's grandson. It is this thickness that keeps me thinking of Hartford as home. My family and I were known.

Lorraine Grody Pinsky – whom I could only call "Mrs. Pinsky" – came to the luncheon we had after my mother's funeral at the synagogue where my family was a member for 32 years. Mrs. Pinsky's father, Izzy Grody, owned the Chevrolet dealership in Hartford from whom my grandfather bought cars and I bought my first car. Mrs. Pinsky, who went to high school with my father, was my first-grade Hebrew School teacher. I grew up with her daughter. It's been more than 40 years since I've seen her, but I knew her right away when she came in with her walker.

Howard Sowalsky was there. Howard, who I only knew as "Howie," is now the executive director of our Hartford congregation. His father was a leather goods salesman who sold to my father. He was also the *gabbai* at the synagogue. I saw him every Shabbat morning.

Jay Gershman's mother, a cousin of my father's, fixed up my parents when they were in high school. His father became my father's business partner for 30 years in a neighborhood drug store. Jay came and stayed to shovel in the grave at the end of the funeral.

There are more of these stories. What I did not appreciate growing up was how strong this environment was. It's no coincidence that four rabbis and several Jewish educators came out of my congregation, not to speak of the others. Jewish life was all-encompassing. It was home.

I don't know if the Hartford Jewish community of today is as thick as it was in the '50s and '60s when I was growing up. I suspect, because of mobility, it is not. To create a thick community, we in the synagogue and Federation businesses must be more deliberate. It is worth the effort. It gives Jewish children and their families a strong sense of belonging.

My family and I received a note from Bev Wilson, my mother's best friend for more than 50 years. Bev now lives in south Florida and was unable to come to the funeral. Her husband, Pete, built my parents' home and the families became fast friends. It was to Bev that my mother made her last phone call.

These relationships sustain us. They certainly did for me. The hard work of building and maintaining them is worth the effort.▲

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.

Miracles – faith and action required

The Talmud teaches that, "A person should never stand in a dangerous place and say that a miracle will take place which will save him, for perhaps a miracle will not occur." The words *ein somchin al hanes*,



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

"we do not rely on miracles," remind us never to place ourselves in dangerous situations armed solely with the belief that Gd will save us with a miracle. As we know, Gd helps those who help themselves. Gd will always meet us halfway provided we take the first step. We must pray for Gd's help while simultaneously taking action – Asiah! So how do we relate the idea of miracles with the special emphasis on miracles so deeply engrained into the holiday of Chanukah? Maybe there were really two miracles in the story.

During the Festival of Lights, we celebrate the miracle of the menorah in the Temple. However, before that miracle could come to be, we needed a different miracle to occur. In the Al Hanisim prayer, we give thanks and praise to Gd for our military victory as He stood by us and protected us in our time of distress, waged our battles, defended our rights, and avenged the wrong done to us. It is said that "Gd delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous..." Looking back, we observe this military victory as nothing short of a "miracle," but we should never forget how the Maccabees did more than just wait for a miraculous Divine intervention. They took the necessary action to rise up and defend themselves against their Greek oppressors. It was the combination of faith

in Gd and themselves, along with the willingness to take action that truly made the Chanukah miracle possible. Both miracles, the military victory and the miraculous oil, happened only after the Jews refused to rely on a miracle, and fought for their freedom.

We learn from our past so that we may have a brighter tomorrow. In our times it cannot be disputed that the survival of the modern-day Jewish State of Israel could possibly be considered anything less than a miracle. Since the very moment of our return in 1948, we have been surrounded by enemies that share a common goal, our destruction. Israel has defeated its enemies, survived and turned the barren and lifeless desert into an oasis of life. Israel has emerged as a leader in utilizing the power of technology and is now considered a world leader not only in military tactics and self-defense, but in medical advancements, cybersecurity, water conservation and biotechnology.

Like the Chanukah miracles, the miraculous victories over Israel's enemies over the past 70+ years were made possible because we refused to wait for a miracle, but instead took the necessary action needed to make the miracle happen. Just like the Maccabees did so many years ago, we must continue to take the initiative to ensure our survival, knowing that our faith in Gd will provide us with the strength we need to overcome any and all obstacles.

This year, as we celebrate Chanukah and allow the light of the menorah to illuminate our homes and our world, may we continue in the tradition of generations past so that future generations will be able to look back and say about us, "*Nes gadol hayah sham*," "A great miracle happened there." *Chag Sameach!*▲

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

For a continuously updated calendar of events, visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org.



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Friday, December 20, 2019
Friday, January 17, 2020



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Invitation to Follow

*Minimum gift of \$1,800 to the Annual Campaign required

BBYO happenings

By Jessica Zimmerman, Associate Regional Dir., North Florida Region

In October, Fort Myers BBYO gathered with Naples BBYO for South-west Florida Fall Fest in Miami on October 6. Thirty-two teens came together for an all-inclusive day in Miami filled with arcade fun, rock climbing, bumper cars, a visit to the Wynwood Walls and Miami's famous Salty Donut Shop. Teens had a wonderful time! Jalen Goodman, Or Shemesh BBYO President, said, "Fall Fest was one of my favorite events because I saw all of my best friends and met so many new ones. We bonded as we experienced Miami."

Later in October, Or Shemesh gathered once again with Naples BBYO for an event at the Haunted Corn Maze at Farmer Mike's U-Pick. Nearly 20 Jewish teens took on the maze on October 19, and everyone came out ready for more.

In December, Or Shemesh will meet on Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8 for its winter sleepover and chapter

elections, which are both member-only events.

If you are a Jewish teen in grades 8-12, you are eligible for BBYO membership in Fort Myers. BBYO is a pluralistic youth movement. We welcome all Jews regardless of affiliation or temple membership. Membership is a one-time fee and lasts through 12th grade graduation. With membership comes opportunities for chapter leadership, discounts to almost all local and regional programming, and the opportunity to participate in BBYO summer programming.

To register for these great events and to learn more about membership or local programming, email me at jesszimmerman@bbyo.org.
Happy Hanukkah from BBYO! ▲



Jessica Zimmerman



Mishpacha BBG teens at the Wynwood Walls



Fort Myers and Naples BBYO teens at the entrance of Farmer Mike's U-Pick for the Haunted Corn Maze event



Fort Myers and Naples BBYO teens outside of FUNDimension in Miami

TEMPLE BETH EL SCHOOLS Fort Myers

Temple Beth El Religious School

Temple Beth El religious school held its first Camp TBE extended day on October 13. After religious school ended at 12:30 p.m., the students gathered in the Dubin Center for pizza and drinks. At 1:00 p.m., our youngest students made their way to the sukkah where they enjoyed "Smoothies in the Sukkah" sponsored by PJ Library. Our older students worked with the Confirmation students to make smoothies and decorations to hang in the sukkah. The students had a blast as they were able to get crafty with the decorations. At 2:00 p.m., we all headed to the sukkah to hang our decorations and drink our smoothies. The next extended day camp will be February 2 to celebrate Tu B'Shevat.

On October 20, following a delicious catered dinner, children in the religious school participated in our Simchat Torah service. Our newest religious school members received blessings on the bimah under the chuppah, and participated in the service. Our students really love helping with

the prayers and blessings from the bimah.

On October 27, the religious school and Confirmation students partnered with the larger religious community of Fort Myers to honor the victims of the Pittsburgh shooting. Students helped plant a Unity Tree and wrote messages of love and hope, and made sandwiches for the homeless.

On Sunday, December 15, we will have a Hanukkah Religious School luncheon. On Friday, December 20, join us for a Hanukkah dinner and family service following dinner.

For more information, call the Temple Beth El office at 239.433.0018 or email religiousschooltbe@gmail.com.



Rabbi Nicole Luna with Religious School students in the sukkah



Confirmation students making smoothies to drink in the sukkah

Family CHANUKAH Bash

Sunday, December 15 ✨ 12:00 – 1:30 PM

Come celebrate the festival of lights



For families with kids 8 & under. No Charge!

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★ Stories & Crafts

Registration is required. Email or call Debbie Sanford at debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org or 239.481.4449 x4



Candle lighting times:

December 6: 5:17
December 13: 5:19
December 20: 5:21
December 27: 5:25



High School Students: Earn CAS Credits!

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

If you are interested, please send the following information to debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org:
 Name
 Address
 Phone #
 Age
 Grade
 School
 Preferred volunteer hours (e.g. 2 - 5PM. Sundays)



TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS Fort Myers

Temple Judea Religious School
 Tab Scribner,
 Director of Congregational Learning
 November marked a turning point for Temple Judea Religious School. As the public and private school systems went into holiday mode, we made our adjustments and tried to make the most of a limited schedule.

November and December are both short months as we approach the midpoint of the year. It is good to see progress in the time we've had so far. Our fifth-grade class has stepped up to the plate on numerous occasions this fall in leading our student minyan. It is great to see more and more of our students get comfortable with their Hebrew and synagogue skills and lead the group.

On Sunday, December 8, our eldest students will put the finishing touches on a take-home project in making their own tallitot. The children, with their parents, will participate in a family education program on tefillin and tallitot, and tie the tzitzit together. Independently they have selected the fabrics, sewn on ornamentation (if desired), prepared the holes, and had the material hemmed in preparation for our family program.

On Friday, December 13, we will host our monthly Tot Shabbat program. All families with toddlers are

welcome to come for the music, crafts and light service. RSVP to me in our office so I'm sure to

have enough craft materials for your child(ren). Also on December 13, we will host our first Religious School Shabbat program beginning at 6:30 p.m. Students will lead the Kabbalat Shabbat service to round out the fall term.

On Sunday, December 15 from noon to 1:30 p.m. we will host a Chanukah/PJ Library Celebration in conjunction with the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. All children



Religious School students Brenden and Josh engage in a traditional Chevruta on Pirke Avot

and families are welcome. You do not need to be affiliated with Temple Judea to participate. Come join in the food, fun and crafts for all ages.

We bring the calendar year to a close with a two-week vacation, and classes will resume on Sunday, January 5. If you are interested in any of our religious school or toddler programming, or would like to volunteer for our programs, please contact me at 239.433.0201 or tjswfledu@gmail.com.

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Families can sign up for PJ Library at pjlibrary.org

JEWISH WAR VETERANS
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(239) 246-3151

Eryka Aptaker
While we did not have a “traditional” meeting in October, our Post decided to visit The Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center at its new location in Naples. The gentleman giving the tour was quite educated about the Holocaust and that time period and I learned so much! While I am very involved with our WWII veterans and try to keep myself knowledgeable of both the Holocaust and WWII, it’s amazing to me that there are so many underlying stories and events of which I was not aware. If you haven’t been to the museum, I would highly recommend it.

While there is so much sadness wrapped around the Holocaust, where horrific, inhumane acts took place, there were also some stories which renewed my faith in mankind – stories of those who worked diligently to save members of our Jewish population, simply because it was the right thing to do. Visiting this place really put things into perspective for me and reminded me to never take what we have for granted. At the end of our visit, our Commander, Harvey Charter, presented the museum staff with a donation from our Post. We are in full support of them and grateful that we were able to coordinate a tour.

On November 2, members of our Post participated as Honor Guard for Vietnam Veteran Martin S. Posnansky, U.S. Army. Mr. Posnansky was a Vietnam veteran who passed away in 2006 and was buried at Coral Ridge Cemetery without a marker. With the help of Hearts and Homes for Veter-

ans, as well as the efforts of Mr. Posnansky’s best friend, Bert Seidman, Mr. Posnansky now has a grave marker which not only recognizes his military service but also showed that he was a Bronze Star Medal recipient. There was an unveiling of the stone and a Mitzvah Service. Commander Charter played “Taps” following our Honor Guard, who presented a rifle salute (21-gun salute).



21-gun salute for Martin S. Posnansky

What a wonderful way to honor one of our veterans. Mr Posnansky now has the recognition he so deserves. I am so proud of this Post’s commitment to participate.

Our next “traditional” meeting will be Sunday, January 26. Our meetings are held monthly, on a Sunday at 9:30 a.m., at the Jewish Federation office in Fort Myers. Come join this wonderful and committed group as we engage in great conversation and enjoy bagels and cream cheese.

To become a member or if you have questions, please contact Commander Harvey Charter at hbcharter@aol.com or 239.246.3151.

The Jewish War Veterans, founded in 1896, is the oldest continuing veterans organization in America. We are challenged in the pursuit of new members to keep our organization alive. With the loss of many of our WWII veterans, we are striving to have members of our younger generations join and show support to the JWV. We have a Patron membership for non-veterans. If your family members were veterans, think about honoring their memory by joining the JWV Post 400. I joined in honoring the memory of my father, a Korean War veteran. Best decision I have ever made. This group has been a blessing in my life and some of the members have become like family to me. We hope to see you at our future meetings!



Grave marker for Martin S. Posnansky



Post 400 members at The Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center



Commander Harvey Charter presents museum staff with a donation from Post 400

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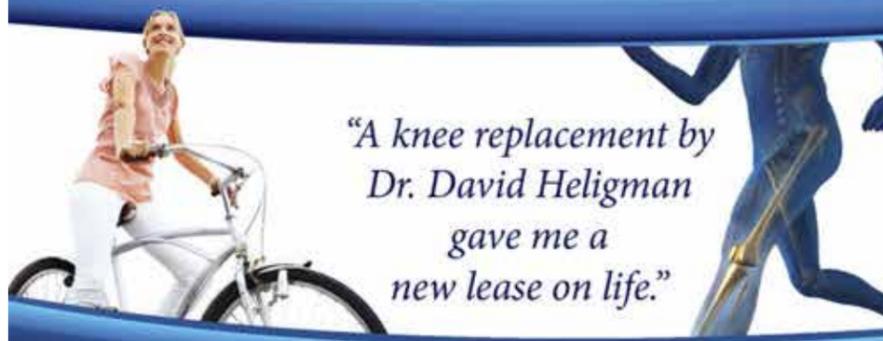


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Diane Schwartz

Advocacy is central to Hadassah's mission – helping our members and supporters realize their potential as a dynamic force in American society and acting on our beliefs and values.

From supporting the creation of the State of Israel and selling war bonds, to championing stem cell research and women's health equity, Hadassah has a long and proud history of advocacy on issues important to women and the Jewish community.

You can be an advocate for an issue that touches you – your heart, your family, your conscience, our state, our country. On vital issues, the option of sitting on the sidelines is not our best choice. We are good people and we can do something!

Hadassah encourages education and action on many issues informed by specific Policy Statements, the organization's official stance, which "speak to" and carry weight and import on current and important issues in our society and in our lives.

Hadassah's Legal Advocacy focuses on Amicus Briefs which are filed on legal actions relating to Hadassah's interests and policy positions as well as the Hadassah Supreme Court Swearing-In Program.

The Legislative Advocacy initiatives support contacting government officials to make your voice heard on issues of importance to you.

You can gather additional information on the subjects listed below, read the complete list of positions and activities, and contact Congress and other

lected officials by finding your legislators on Hadassah.org/Advocate.

You can also sign up to receive Advocacy Alerts from Hadassah's Government Relations Office.

You can take action on gun control now! Hadassah has long been a strong supporter of strict legislative gun control initiatives and believes that current laws do not go far enough, nor are enforced rigorously enough, to help prevent gun violence. Hadassah urges Congress and state legislatures to enact stronger gun control legislation, including a ban on assault weapons, and ensuring more consistent enforcement of current laws, that will protect our communities and our nation. Specific legislative changes that Hadassah support include: raising the minimum age for purchase of a firearm from 18 to 21, requiring a mandatory waiting period for purchase, implementing universal background checks, and mandatory seizure of household guns when an emergency restraining order is issued for domestic violence.

Today, on the state level in Florida, Hadassah Chapters across the state are joining Ban Assault Weapons Now (BAWN), seeking to place a Florida Constitutional Amendment on the ballot in 2020 which would create legislation to ban assault weapons. Hadassah members and associates, concerned citizens and gun control advocates are joining together to reach toward 700,000+ signatures by December 31, 2019, to achieve the first step in this Florida gun control measure.

If you are interested in supporting an Assault Weapons Ban on the Federal level, pending legislation in the House of Representatives is the Assault Weapons Ban of 2019 (H.R. 1296).

You can reach out to your congress-

sional representative to share your position and ask for their support of the above legislation. Since the assault weapons ban was lifted in 2004, the number of people who have died in mass shootings has increased by 400%, according to March for Our Lives.

A partial list of other Hadassah's advocacy positions and platforms includes: Combating Anti-Semitism; Women's Health Equity; Racial Jus-

stice; Refugees & Immigration; Care-giving; Women's Economic Equity and Security; Support and Funding for Women's Health Research; Hate Crimes; Economic Justice & Social Welfare; and Violence Against Women.

For more information on advocacy and the effort to support the Florida gun control petition drive, please contact me at dianepschwartz@gmail.com or 731.539.4011.

Save the Date:

- ▶ Wednesday, December 4: Knowledge and Nosh featuring Lee County Sheriff's Office Crime Specialist, Heather Turco: "What to Do in an Active Shooter Situation – contact Elyse Morande at amorande@aol.com or 239.498.0623
- ▶ Sunday, December 15: Keeper of the Gate 20th Anniversary Breakfast featuring Ellen Hershkin, National Hadassah President, open to all members – contact Ellen Harris at ehjh@comcast.net or 508.395.5116
- ▶ Thursday, January 16: Hadassah Presents... A Book Reading: *We Are Going to be Lucky: A World War II Love Story in Letters* – contact Debbie Kaprove at dkaprove@hotmail.com or 860.558.3331, or Dale Hackerman at dhackerman@comcast.net or 609.828.3766
- ▶ Thursday, January 23: Installation of Officers and Fashion Show by Rebecca's – contact Elyse Morande at amorande@aol.com or 239.498.0623
- ▶ Monday, February 3: Annual Mahjong, Card & Game Day – for reservations, contact Carol Weisberg at carolw@tetragonia.com
- ▶ Monday, March 16: Spring Luncheon featuring That's Entertainment with vocalist Carolann Sanita – contact Elyse Morande at amorande@aol.com or 239.498.0623



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**HAZAK 55+ CHAPTER
at Temple Judea
(239) 433-0201**

Temple Judea's active HAZAK 55+ Chapter is a chartered member of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. HAZAK Chapters are for singles or couples. Membership in the organization is open to the community. Join HAZAK and meet new friends. It's an organization that enables members to meet and socialize with each other. Our monthly programs vary in nature.

HAZAK members, in November, had an enjoyable outing to the Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary in Punta Gorda.

In December, HAZAK will celebrate Chanukah at Temple Judea's annual dinner party along with our entire congregation. Future programs will be announced.

Members of the community are always welcome to join and attend our programs. Dues are a moderate \$10 per year. For more information, please email tjhazak@gmail.com or call Temple Judea at 239.433.0201.

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

December is a busy month at Temple Judea. Chaverot and Temple Judea will co-sponsor a special program on Saturday morning, December 7. Lesley Sachs of Women of the Wall will give the D'var Torah during Shabbat services. Her talk will be about "The Cracks in the Wall Let the Light In: The Battle for Equal Rights at the Western Wall." For 30 years, Women of the Wall has been waging the battle to achieve gender equality at this sacred Jewish site. Lesley will give a history of this group, as well as the progress that has been made and what it still hopes for the future. The community is invited to attend.

Sixth and seventh graders and their families will participate in a "Talit and Tefillin" program on Sunday, Decem-

ber 8 for the last hour of religious school.

Chaverot begins a monthly program of "Lattes and Learning" on Wednesday, December 11 at 10:30 a.m. in the synagogue social hall. Bring your own favorite coffee or drink, or we'll provide the coffee and something sweet, while learning and discussing topics of current interest.

Come to Tot Shabbat on Friday, December 13 at 5:00 p.m. There is always a fun activity included with the musical and entertaining services designed for toddlers and preschoolers. Following Tot Shabbat, Religious School students will lead regular Friday evening services.

On Sunday, December 15, Temple Judea is partnering with the Jewish Federation to hold a PJ Library Hanukkah party from noon to 1:30 p.m. The party is open to all families in the community with young children.

On Friday, December 27, the con-

gregation will enjoy a fun Chanukah dinner. Reservations are required. More information about the dinner will be available from the synagogue office.

Adult Education classes, which began on Monday, November 11, will continue through Monday, December 16 as follows:

- Starting at 6:15 p.m., Rabbi Michael Schorin, Gulf Hospital Chaplain, will teach a class on Pirke Avot
- At 7:15 p.m., Rabbi Sack will teach a class based on the book, *The Holy Fire: The Teachings of Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto* by Nehemia Polen
- Also, at 7:15 p.m., Tab Scribner, Director of Lifelong Learning, will teach a beginning reading Hebrew class

Call the synagogue office to enroll in the classes. There is no charge to attend.

Rabbi Sack's monthly lunchtime Torah study will be on Thursday, De-

cember 5. The class is held the first Thursday of the month at noon at the offices of Myers & Brettholz. There is no cost to attend and all levels of Jewish background are welcome.

Our monthly service of meals at the Salvation Army's Meals with Compassion continues. Meals are served on Monday evenings and volunteers are needed for December and January. Please contact Linda Idelson to help at lindaidelson@gmail.com.

Regular scheduled events:

- Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m., preceded each week with a wine and cheese reception starting at 6:15 p.m.
- Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. followed by a Kiddush luncheon
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m.
- The Rabbi's Monthly Torah Study, the first Thursday of every month at noon at the offices of Myers & Brettholz

TEMPLE SHALOM**Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands****(941) 625-2116****www.templeshalomfl.com**

The month of November was indeed a most active time at Temple Shalom. The first Sisterhood meeting had more than 30 women in attendance. There was an early lunch meeting and a movie to follow.

On November 5, the Book Talk with author Marica Rudin was most rewarding. Mrs. Rudin spoke about her book, *Flower Toward the Sun*.

The students of Charlotte County School Choir performed on November 17 under the direction of Dr. David Sommer. This was their second time performing

at our temple.

The "Lunch and Learn" had its second session. This is a current events program of Jewish interest supported by the Sylvia and Lesleigh Hershkowitz Fund.

On November 22, David Bernstein, President and CEO of the Jewish Council on Public Affairs, was our speaker.

The month of December will have some great programs that are open to all.

On Friday Evening, December 13, Rabbi A. James Rudin will speak on the theme "How Christmas is Linked to Hanukkah." The event is sponsored by the Robert "Bob" Bader memorial and is open to the community.

On Tuesday, December 17 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m., join us for "Lunch and Learn." A newspaper and lunch are

provided. Please call to register. The program is sponsored by the Sylvia and Lesleigh Hershkowitz Fund.

Join us on Sunday, December 22 at 4:00 p.m. for our outdoor lighting of the Hanukkah menorah. There will be Hanukkah treats, latkes, cookies, gifts and a special Klezmer Music Program. Special thanks to the Sheldon and Marc Friedman Fund.

The Azi Schwartz concert on January 12 is sold out.

Send updates and changes to the Jewish Directory below to loriramos@jfedlcc.org.

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
Adult Educator: Jessica Evers
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**

7470 Hickory 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

- Shalom Life Center
- Lawrence Dermer, Spiritual Leader - 218-3433
- 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

TEMPLE BETH EL

REFORM
16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Nicole Luna
E-mail: rabbiluna@templebethel.com
Preschool director: Jesyca Virnig
President: Governance Committee
Email: governancetbe@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 Mitzah 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: Harvey Wolfson
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: Thursday 4:00 - 6:30 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: Barry Fulmer
Phone: 732-780-2016
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*

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM
Cape Coral

(239) 772-4555

www.templebethshalomcc.org

What a wonderful High Holy Day season we experienced at Temple Beth Shalom. It's so nice that in addition to our annual theme of repentance and spiritual renewal, we always enjoy the feeling of great friendship and connection that's integral and essential to our congregational life. Our choir adds so much to our worship experience and we're grateful for the time and effort they put forth to enhance our holidays.

After a delicious Sukkot dinner and service and the October Rosh Chodesh, we entered into our Fall/Winter season filled with fun, fellowship and educational experiences. Our art show featuring Jewish and Tikkun Olam themes opened with a reception on November



The Temple Beth Shalom Choir

10. We visited the Holocaust Museum in its new location in Naples, had an amazing docent-led tour, and then lunched at Stir Crazy.

Our South American dinner hosted by Helene and Jorge Glocer and Denise and Peter Simenauer is sure to be a delightful evening on Saturday, December 7. The annual Sisterhood Chanukah dinner and Chinese auction on Tuesday, December 10 will be hosted by Robin Razowsky at her home. The Brotherhood's annual Latke Party on Friday, December 27 and the Honoree Gala on Sunday, January 19 round out our December and January activities. Religious School meets Wednesdays at 4:15 p.m.

For information on any of our events, please call the temple office at 239.772.4555 or email us at office@templebethshalomcc.org. Guests are always welcome.

SHALOM LIFE CENTER
Fort Myers

(239) 218-3433

www.shalomlifecenter.org

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

December is a very busy and exciting month at SLC. We invite the entire community to join us on Sunday, December 22 with our second annual "Latkes and Laughs" comedy night featuring Michael Blaustein, who has been seen on Comedy Central, MTV and CBS! On Friday, December 27 at 7:00 p.m., we will "Light Up the World" with our epic community menorah lighting, musical Shabbat service, and lots of delicious, gourmet latkes and other Chanukah treats.

In addition to our Chanukah celebrations, SLC offers many exciting and wonderful services, classes and special events.

Every Friday night at 7:30 p.m., we experience an uplifting, musical and meaningful Shabbat service followed by an always spectacular Oneg.

Every Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m., SLC offers a delicious bagel & lox breakfast followed by 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 that meets the second Monday of the month for soup, salad and soul, led by Rebbitzin Robin Dermer with an emphasis on women's spirituality and personal growth.

Our Men's Group enjoys monthly dinner meetings and special outings, and is currently involved in a holiday toy drive to benefit the Golisano Children's Hospital

Our Yiddish Culture Club gathers the fourth Monday of the month for laughter, learning and lunch.

Our Exodus study group meets for monthly discussion exploring the themes and interpretation of Exodus chapter by chapter using the book *The Rational Bible: Exodus - God, Slavery, and Freedom* by Dennis Prager.

SLC also offers a Book Club, Mahjong, Canasta, Choir, religious learning and Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation as well as 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.

For more information on all our inspiring services, classes, great activities and upcoming events, visit www.shalomlifecenter.org, email info@shalomlifecenter.org or call 239.218.3433.

Women's Giving Circle

What is a Women's Giving Circle?

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

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

To join and for more information call Debbie Sanford
239.481.4449 x4 or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

Food Pantry Needs

JEWISH FEDERATION
FOOD PANTRY

- Following is a list of staples always in need at the food pantry:
- Peanut butter and jelly*
 - Rice and beans*
 - Cereal*
 - Condiments*
 - Pasta sauce (pasta, not needed)*
 - Canned vegetables and fruits*
 - Canned meats*
 - Toiletries for adults & children*

Gift cards to places like Publix, Walmart, Target, etc., as well as cash donations, are also appreciated. Jewish Family Services helps seniors, individuals and families with a variety of needs.

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

Holiday time is upon us. People may be traveling, families may be gathering. Holidays can be fun. However, for some people the holidays are a struggle. Some people feel alone in a crowd. You needn't struggle alone. If you're a friend of Bill W., or if the letters AA, OA, GA, NA, etc., mean anything to you, the Jewish Twelve Steps to Recovery meeting is here for you

on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. at TBE. It's open to those seeking wholeness through the Jewish twelve steps. There is no cost to attend. Anonymity is our watchword. Contact the Recovery5780 group at recovery5780@yahoo.com or 239.354.7487.

Don't miss this: Sisterhood presents Trivia Night on Thursday, December 5 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Register at templebethel.com or call 407.592.8280.

TBE's High Holy Days food drive was hugely successful. Delivering food

to the Jewish Federation's food pantry is a mitzvah for those in our community who would otherwise go without. Grocery bags were returned filled with food. Cash and grocery store gift cards were donated, too. It's not too late to do a mitzvah: food/cash/gift card collection is ongoing. Also ongoing is the Cycle Forward program, which collects and distributes women's menstrual health supplies to 15 sites throughout the county, year-round. During summertime, Cycle Forward collects food for school children. We are excited to have Chaverot, the women of Temple Judea, collaborating with us on Cycle Forward.

Learning about Sukkot, Confirmation Class students examined anti-Semitic myths circulating in society. Using materials provided by the Anti-Defamation League, anti-Jewish tropes and the facts that combat them were studied. They read case studies about anti-Semitic moments they might encounter, such as someone saying, "Jews think they're better than everyone else," when Jewish students miss school for Jewish holidays; or someone nominating a Jewish student for treasurer because "Jews are good with money." Lightening up a bit, they learned about building a sukkah. Split into groups, with handouts regarding Jewish law concerning building a sukkah, they had fun deciding how they would build theirs. Religious School kids decorated the sukkah and enjoyed smoothies in the sukkah, as well as an extended school day/day camp. Todah rabah to the Confirmation class for

their help during our Religious School extended day program.

On Simchat Torah, which everyone loved, young and old got to parade with all seven Torah scrolls around the sanctuary, wave flags, dance with the Torah, and see an entire Torah scroll unrolled around the sanctuary. Our newest Religious School students were welcomed with a blessing under the chuppah.

The TBE Book Club's upcoming choices are *My Mother's Son* by David Hirshberg, for December, and *The Gown* by Jennifer Robson for January. Join us at 2:45 p.m. on Wednesdays, December 4 and January 8 for lively discussions, even if you haven't read the books. Book Club meets the first Wednesday of each month.

The new Jewish Hispanophone Group meets Wednesday, December 18 at noon. Meeting the third Wednesday of each month, these gatherings are attracting Spanish speakers who were originally from several other countries. The Jewish Francophone group meets the second Wednesday of each month at noon. The next meeting is December 11. Both groups are an opportunity to meet new people and speak languages you love. Love Hebrew? Hebrew for adults meets each Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. Current events meets Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Save the dates: Sunday, January 26 for Mitzvah Day 2020; Mah jongg tournament on Tuesday, February 18, doors open 8:30 a.m.; TBE 65th anniversary on Sunday, February 23.

SNOWBIRDS,
newspapers don't fly...
however, your
address will!



Sign up for the Federation's weekly e-blasts. Send an email to debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org.

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 or alanisaacs@jfedlcc.org.

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

Sanibel

(732) 780-2016

www.batyam.org

As the calendar for 2019 quickly draws to a close, here are some thoughts for 2020. An article in *The Wall Street Journal* on October 9, 2019, by Jason Riley, was titled, "Harvard's Asian Quotas Repeat an Ugly History." It starts with a ditty dating to the 1910s, "Oh, Harvard's run by millionaires, And Yale is run by booze, Cornell is run by farmers' sons, Columbia's run by Jews." In 1914, about 40% of Columbia's students were Jewish. By 1918, quotas at Columbia reduced the number to 22%. The Harvard class of 1925 was 30% Jewish. Then the Ivy League schools went beyond Columbia and set their Jewish quota at 15%. According to Mr. Riley, Harvard claimed that while Jews were excellent students, they had deficient personalities and were focused

on their studies to a fault. Jews were considered a poor fit for the Harvard environment. Now Asians are the target for exclusion. A lawsuit was filed in 2014 against Harvard. On October 1, 2019, Federal Judge Allison Burroughs issued a decision in favor of Harvard's admissions policies. History repeats itself.

The next Grief Support meeting is Wednesday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m., to be held in the library (second floor) of the Sanibel Congregational UCC. It is a safe space to discuss feelings from loss and is open to the community. Questions may be addressed to Dr. Ellen Feingold at 302.345.7187.

If you missed the first two classes given by Rabbi Stephen Fuchs about Genesis, plan to attend the last class on Thursday, December 5 at 10:00 a.m., titled "Cain and Abel: The Symbol Story of the Human Soul." Bring your Bible if you have one at home.

On Saturday mornings, Rabbi

Fuchs teaches Hebrew reading from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. Then from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Rabbi Fuchs offers commentary on the Bible. At 10:30 a.m., a congregant or guest presents on a topic of interest. On December 7, Kay Sadighi will speak about DNA and ancient migrations. Sid Picker will convey the Russian perspective on Russian-U.S. relations on December 14. No classes on December 21 or 28. Jewish current events begins at 11:30 a.m., led by Leonard Minsky. Vickie Fuchs is coordinator of programming for Adult Education.

The Chanukah celebration is scheduled for Sunday evening, December 22. Add this to your calendar.

Joint classes will be taught by Rabbi Fuchs and Reverend Danner on Wednesdays, January 8, 15 and 22 at 10:00 a.m. and repeated at 7:00 p.m.

The Shared Scholar lecture will take place on Sunday, January 26 at 3:00 p.m., and the Shared Scholar Seminar on Monday, January 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Shared

Scholar will be Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker. Dr. Tucker is a Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar at Yale University, where she has appointments in the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, the Divinity School and the Department of Religious Studies. She teaches in the joint MA program in religion and ecology and directs the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale with her husband, John Grim.

We extend best wishes for a healthy and peaceful year ahead to all of our Temple Bat Yam family and friends whether in SWFL or elsewhere in the U.S. We look forward to having everyone together again at Bat Yam very soon.

Bat Yam services and classes are in Fellowship Hall (second floor – stairs or elevator) on the campus of the Sanibel Congregational UCC at 2050 Periwinkle Way on Sanibel. Members of the community, guests and visitors are always welcome to join with congregants.

COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE

Fort Myers

(239) 466-6671

www.fortmyerssynagogue.com

Rabbi Bruce Diamond and people of The Community Free Synagogue express heartfelt condolences to Rabbi Marc Sack, whose beloved mother, Geraldine Sack (z"l), went on to the world to come, in early November. Her soul will be bound in the bonds of life.

Rabbi Diamond will speak at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 8 at the Holiday Luminary Service at the Fort Myers Memorial Gardens, 1589 Colonial Boulevard. It is a deeply moving interfaith holiday season gathering for family and friends of those for whom the cemetery is their final resting place.

The Community Free Synagogue will host a Hanukkah 1st Night Latke and Quiche Dinner, catered by Cohen & Cohen catering of Fort Myers, at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 22 in its Community Hall. It is free and open to the first 150 reservations, which can be made by emailing synfreersvp@

gmail.com or by calling 239.466.6671. See the story in this issue for more details.

The synagogue's next "Brown Bag Movie Night" starts at 6:30 p.m.

on Thursday, December 26, and features Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Admission and soft drinks are free.

Worship on Sabbath Eve, December 27 starts at 7:30 p.m. at the All Faith Unitarian Congregation, 2756 McGregor Boulevard. Torah Study will be at the synagogue the following morning.

Kathryn Ferrer will be called to the Torah for the first time as a Bat Mitzvah on Sabbath afternoon, December 28 in the synagogue. At 3:00 p.m., Kathryn will teach a Torah lesson concerning her Torah portion, followed by *minhah* at 4:00 p.m. A *se'udah shlishit* meal will be served at the conclusion of the afternoon service. The meal will be followed by *ma'ariv-havdalah* and the benedictions for the new moon of Tevet. All are encouraged to attend.

Each Friday at 6:30 p.m., The Community Free Synagogue serves a traditional Sabbath dinner. It is free and reservations are never required. At 7:30 p.m., the Sabbath is welcomed with prayer and song. A coffee hour follows worship.

Every Saturday at 9:30 a.m., C.F.S. offers a light breakfast followed by a lively discussion of the week's Torah portion with Rabbi Diamond until 11:30 a.m., when the Mourner's Qaddish is recited.

Founded in 2005, The Community Free Synagogue is an open Jewish community resource rather than a

private membership organization. It is comfortably supported by volunteerism and voluntary donations.

The synagogue is guided by Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D., now in his 23rd year in Fort Myers. He is assisted by Auxiliary Rabbis Thomas Meiss and Terri Goldberg, and Lay Cantors Richard McConville and Traci Pavel.

C.F.S. meets at The Southwest Florida Masonic Center, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers. For additional information, visit the C.F.S. website at www.fortmyerssynagogue.com or call 239.466.6671.



Community Free Synagogue volunteers joined the Cape Coral Rotary at Mariner Middle School to distribute frozen turkeys and all the Thanksgiving side dishes to those in need

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Ira H. Zlatkin,
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 Fort Myers, FL 33908
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 Email: Ira@PegFin.com

www.PegFin.com



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Fort Myers

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Shred the potatoes. Pour the oil.

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