

HAPPY HANUKKAH



L'CHAYIM

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 7 Community Focus
- 10 Jewish Interest
- 20 Jewish Film Festival



FEBRUARY 5 - MARCH 2, 2023
Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida

- 22 Israel & the Jewish World
- 24 Commentary
- 28 From the Bimah
- 31 Focus on Youth
- 34 Organizations
- 36 Temple News
- 39 Community Directory



12

Rabbi A. James Rudin receives Papal Knighthood



23

14 reasons Shira Haas is a superhero on and off screen

My time at the General Assembly and a hurricane follow-up

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

■ Debbie Sanford



I traveled to Chicago the beginning of November to attend The Jewish Federations of North America's General Assembly (the GA). It couldn't have come at the worst, but also possibly the best, time.

Coming just a month or so after the hurricane, I was very hesitant to leave my post and our community. Up

to that point, we had concentrated all our resources on helping as many people as we physically could. On the other hand, I had not slept much for a whole month, so a change of scenery and time away from my cell phone was exactly what I needed.

My family and Federation Board President Marsha Kistler agreed. Marsha attended the General Assembly with me. It was my first GA and I was very excited to meet people I had only met on Zoom calls up to that point. As a new Executive Director, I

was really looking forward to learning from other seasoned professionals.

When I accepted this role, I made it my mission to create a Federation that was unified and compassionate, and committed to outstanding Jewish programming.

With staff changes in the programming department and the burden of programming for the Federation on my shoulders (immediately following a disaster), I was getting nervous and commanded myself to not lose sight of how important the role of programming was to our community.

What I learned at the GA is that

continued on next page

New Bereavement Support Group

Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Schorin, MAPC, BCC

Mitch Albom, who used to be a well-known sportswriter from Detroit and is now a bestselling author, once claimed that "death ends a life, not a relationship." Many of us know this to be true. But many of us, under the pain, sadness and grief that we are experiencing, may well come to doubt this statement. And we may also doubt our ability to carry on with life's tasks.

Jewish tradition suggests the process of mourning takes just about a

whole year. But the truth is more complicated. Sometimes, we will need to process our grief for much longer than 12 months. And sometimes, when we have spent months or years caring for a relative, we may find the mourning period going more easily, or less traumatically, than we imagined. In reality, however, it does not matter. Once begun, we need to follow the process until the tears run dry.

To help all those who have been bereaved recently, the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties is setting up a Bereavement Support Group. This group is intended for all those who might have lost someone in the past year. Whether the person lost

was a spouse, parent or any other relative does not matter. The deceased should have been an immediate member of your family and we ask that you already have two months of mourning before you join us.

Our job as mourners will be to give voice to the person and relationship that we lost, to the pain we are experiencing, and to wondering whether time will heal us. Along the way, we will look at wisdom from our Jewish tradition and insights from modern psychological studies of grief. We will also explore how to deal with grief, learning to cope and, eventually, finding resilience.

continued on next page

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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.

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

OUR MISSION

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

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Debbie Sanford...continued from previous page

changes are normal and naturally happen all around us. Filling open positions is not as easy as it used to be. Our Federation is growing and that is good news for our community.

What the GA addressed are issues that our Federation is working on each day: antisemitism, security, collaborations, engaging the youth, Israeli partnerships, increasing a social media presence to network with unaffiliated Jews, and growing our Jewish Family Services (JFS) department to not only handle the influx of people requiring assistance after the hurricane, but to deal with bereavement and loneliness, food insecurity due to inflation, housing and much more.

You will see new faces at the Federation office and at upcoming events, and I am proud of the team we have assembled.

I will introduce them to you at the Community Breakfast on Sunday, December 4 at 10:00 a.m. We will be at the Crowne Plaza for a wonderful program and delicious food. It is not too late to get your tickets, so please register online. To celebrate our rebranding and show off our new logo a little bit, we have a lovely gift for all attendees.

Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Schorin...continued from previous page

Sessions will be held in the Community Room at the Federation building, 9701 Commerce Center Court, Fort Myers. The group begins on Friday, December 2 at 10:30 a.m. and will run for six weeks (taking off one week for the New Year season). There is a minimal cost of \$36 for the six weeks. To register, please email me at FriendlyVisitor@jfedlcc.org. You may also call the Federation office and leave me a phone message at 239.481.4449 x2.

Hurricane Ian recovery update

Thanks to the support of our donors, our emergency food and supply distribution center has served over 2,000 people! And not just people in Fort Myers, near our office. We have pop-ups in Port Charlotte and Cape Coral. We are serving Jewish families and the community at large exactly where it is needed the most. Thanks to the very hard-working Jodi Cohen and her amazing volunteers, this is possible.

In response to the overwhelming need, the Federation just hired a Case Manager/Social Worker for JFS. If you need assistance, call 239.481.4449 x2. This new role will help alleviate calls Jodi and I receive for assistance. The Case Manager will help with FEMA claims, auto and homeowner insurance claims, the SNAP program, financial resources and more.

With Rabbi Michael Schorin running the Friendly Visitor program and our new Case Manager, we feel we are better equipped to serve the community, which is what your Jewish Federation is here to do. And if I say so myself, we do it well!

This time of hope reminds us of our resilience. Wishing you peace and light this holiday season and in the year ahead. Happy Hanukkah! 🌟

As Shakespeare said, "Give sorrow words, the grief that does not speak knits up the over-wrought heart and bids it break." I hope you will join us so that, together, we may find the right words.

Rabbi Michael J. Schorin serves as the JFS Community Chaplain and Friendly Visitor Program Coordinator for the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. This position is made possible by a grant from ARPA (The American Rescue Plan). 🌟

**LUNCH
 BUNCH**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15
 12:00 - 1:30 PM**

**Chabad of Cape Coral
 1716 Cape Coral Parkway
 West Cape Coral, FL 33914
 RSVP by DECEMBER 9**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 12
 12:00 - 1:30 PM**

**Temple Beth El
 16225 Winkler Road
 Fort Myers FL 33908
 RSVP by JANUARY 9**

LET US KNOW IF YOU NEED A RIDE.

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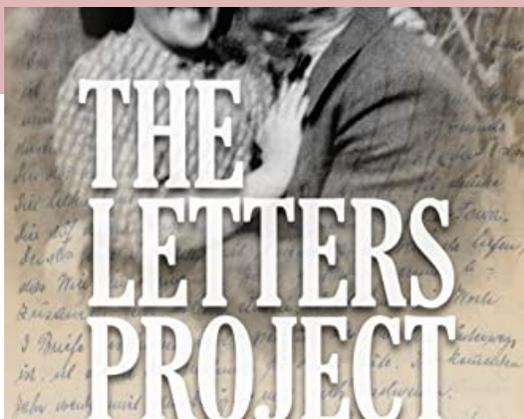


Jewish Family Services
 A division of the Jewish Federation
 of Lee & Charlotte Counties



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author of the best-selling book, The Extraordinary Unordinary You, is a keynote speaker, wife, and mother to six multi-cultural children. Simone was the 2018-2019 Co-Chair for the Jewish Federations of North America's National Young Leadership Cabinet and has participated in many philanthropic missions around the world. Her greatest desire is to help others recognize that what they do matters—and it's the little everyday things that can have the largest impact on the world around us.

Limited Space

Register: [jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar](https://www.jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar)

*Requires a \$180 minimum gift to the Annual Campaign.



Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

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



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



TRIBUTES

In honor of Debbie Sanford & the Federation Staff

from Sylvia & Paul Simko
from Valerie Stankavage
from Judith Yevick

In memory of Linda Idelson

from Debbie & Andy Shuping

In memory of Harvey Cohen

from April Richards

In honor of Julie Pakrosh

from Melissa Fabian

In celebration of Peter Goldberg

from Lynn Jaffe

In memory of those lost to Hurricane Ian

from Sam Rabinowitz

In honor of First Responders

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In loving memory of Ruth Lefberg

From Debbie Sanford & the Federation Staff



Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION SERVES

Local Jewish Education and Culture

- ✧ Community-wide Jewish Education and Cultural Programs for all ages including the Jewish Film Festival, Jewish author events, Out & About Films, Israel celebration, day trips, Israeli folk dancing, PJ Library & TRIBE, a young adult group.
- ✧ L'CHAYIM published monthly to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues.
- ✧ New CRC-Community Relations Council to address issues of anti-Semitism and Interfaith Relations.
- ✧ Israel Advocacy and Initiatives to strengthen local Jewish community ties with Israel. Holocaust education for middle and high school students in the community and a college campus Jewish life experience committee.
- ✧ Volunteer opportunities for all ages.

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.

Jewish Community Foundation

- ✧ An endowment that ensures future social and educational programming and support for our community.
- ✧ Needs-based college scholarships and study scholarships in Israel.
- ✧ Jewish camp scholarships.
- ✧ Projects and programs aimed at Jewish community enrichment.



Jewish Family Services

A division of the Jewish Federation
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

Local Seniors Services

- ✧ Lunch Bunch, a monthly gathering with a free lunch for older adults to meet and schmooze.
- ✧ Holiday baskets and teen visits to seniors and senior facilities for Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah and Passover.
- ✧ Holocaust survivor outreach.

Local Social Services

- ✧ Non-sectarian, individual and family outreach, information and referral services.
- ✧ Friendly Visitor Program.

Local Emergency Services

- ✧ Food Pantry and gift cards.
- ✧ Emergency financial assistance grants to families and individuals in crisis.
- ✧ Local disaster outreach and assistance.

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Jewish Family Services update

By Jodi Cohen, Jewish Family Services Coordinator

Ted Kohn drove over from Boca Raton to volunteer three weeks after the hurricane and showed up with work gloves, no ego, a heart as big as the sky and a fierce work ethic. He did major lifting and schlepping. He also spent a large part of the day giving out food and toiletry bags to the hundreds of people who came to The Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry. He thanked me profusely for the turkey sub I bought him for lunch, no mayo. Midday, he came into my office after hearing a heartbreaking story from a client and cried.



■ Jodi Cohen

nominated for an Oscar. I saw *Norma Rae* when I was 23 and it changed my life. My inner plates did not shift immediately or consciously at first, but I saw how people become allies one conversation at a time and how you must actually do the footwork required to change in the world. Most importantly, I saw the power of being a mensch.

Here is an exchange between Reuben Warshofsky, the lawyer, and Norma Rae after she tells Reuben that she'll sign up to join the union.

Rueben: "You're the fish I wanted to hook!"

Norma: "Well you got me! So what the hell are you gonna do with me?"

Rueben: "Make a mensch outta you, kid."

Norma: "You are!" (Pause) "What is that?"

Rueben: "Somebody who goes to the Old Folks Home on Saturday morning to visit instead of playing golf. Somebody who puts a dollar in a blind man's cup for a pencil."

Norma: "I'd do that."

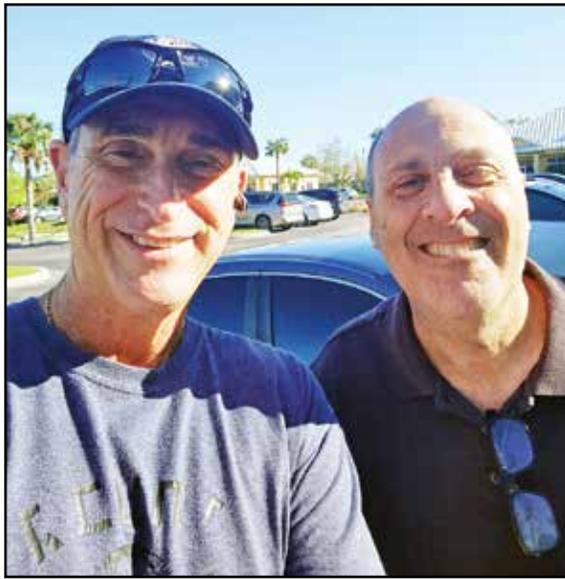
Rueben: "Uh-huh, but would you take the pencil?"

Norma: "Course I would. I paid for it."

Rueben: "Hey! Somewhere between logic and charity, maybe there falls a little shadow?"

Being a mensch means showing up after a hurricane to unload and open hundreds upon hundreds of boxes that are delivered every day; putting socks, underwear and t-shirts in bags according to sizes; bringing over extra linens, towels, bedspreads and pillows to give away; packing thousands of bags of food and toiletries; carrying water, towels, pet food and diapers to clients' cars; opening more boxes; listening to the people who visit the pantry and are terrified, bewildered and desperate; running around looking for that cooler/flashlight/inflatable bed because someone needs it; making jokes in order to avoid sobbing; offering to run a simple errand that ends up taking hours; bringing gooey, noshy snacks for the volunteer; and continuing to show up again and again.

Everyone's menschkiteness is what keeps me going. I've had the privilege of getting to know so many volunteers



Volunteers Ted Kohn and Marty Levy

these last weeks and am blessed to have an abundance of Angels whispering to me.

I cannot kvell enough about my colleagues, but please, let me try! We are quite a team, if I'm allowed to say that: immediately connecting to local, national and international resources for funds, equipment and supplies; creating order amidst the chaos of the donations; giving food, water, clothing and supplies to every single person who showed up at the pantry; work-

ing around the clock to help Holocaust survivors who lost everything; generating ideas, networking opportunities and connections in places where none existed before; bending, lifting, schlepping every half hour on the hour; being wild, kind and unstoppable.

Jewish Family Services still needs volunteers because there are many new food pantry clients each week. We're using SignUp Genius now to ensure that we've got all shifts covered on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Come on down!

Four ways to sign up to volunteer in the pantry:

1. Email me at jodicohen@jfedlcc.org and I'll send you the link.
2. Call me at 239.481.4449 x1 and I'll share the link.
3. Find the Jewish Federation sign-up link at signupgenius.com. Scroll to the bottom of the home page, click on FIND A SIGN UP and enter my email: jodicohen@jfedlcc.org.
4. The SignUpGenius link is listed in the weekly e-newsletter.

P.S. *Norma Rae* isn't available to stream anywhere, but for a small fee I will act out the entire movie – accents and all. 🌍

mensch
/men(t)SH/
a person of integrity and honor.

I thought of that quote from the Talmud, "Every blade of grass has its Angel that bends over it and whispers, 'Grow, grow.'"

Ted was my angel the day he worked with us. His kindness and generosity inspired me to keep doing the next right thing, and then the next, on a list that was longer than Moses' beard.

Many, many people continue reaching out to Jewish Family Services for assistance. In the middle of listening to tragic stories from the people who come to the pantry, to the daily calls from people literally crying for help, what has kept my own heart and soul buoyant are the kind-heartedness, magnanimity and graciousness of every single person who has shown up to help.

Please indulge me for a moment while I set up my inflatable podium and talk about my favorite movie, *Norma Rae*. It's based on the true story of a Jewish labor lawyer from New York City who goes to North Carolina to unionize the textile workers and meets Norma Rae Wilson. The screenplay was written by Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank Jr., both Jewish, and was

Four ways to sign up to volunteer:

- Email: jodicohen@jfedlcc.org and I'll send you the link.
- Call 239-481-4449, x1 and I'll share the link.
- Find the link at **WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM**, at the bottom right on the site click on **FIND A SIGN UP** and enter email: jodicohen@jfedlcc.org.
- Click the **SIGNUP GENIUS** link in the weekly e-newsletter.

Every blade of grass has its Angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow, grow."

- The Talmud



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Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

It has been a very eventful year on many fronts for all of us. Southwest Florida is now slowly recovering from the biggest event of all – Hurricane Ian. We are grateful to all those helping our community rebuild – the first responders, the community organizations providing relief to people hardest hit by the storm, and the companies coming from near and far to rebuild infrastructure and homes and restoring power. The most wonderful thing was seeing how people stepped up to help each other before, during and after the storm. It is heartwarming to see that in this crisis, our common humanity and respect for each other held strong. We've witnessed countless examples of kindness and empathy, often in the face of terrible danger. The hashtag “#SWFLStrong” says it all – SWFL will endure and emerge stronger than ever.

North Wing construction underway
Our long-awaited expansion has begun! Designing and creating the Museum's new North Wing are David Corban Architect, PBS Contractors and Capitol Museum Services. These firms brought our award-winning new Museum location to fruition in 2019. The North Wing expansion space and renovations will include a new Auschwitz

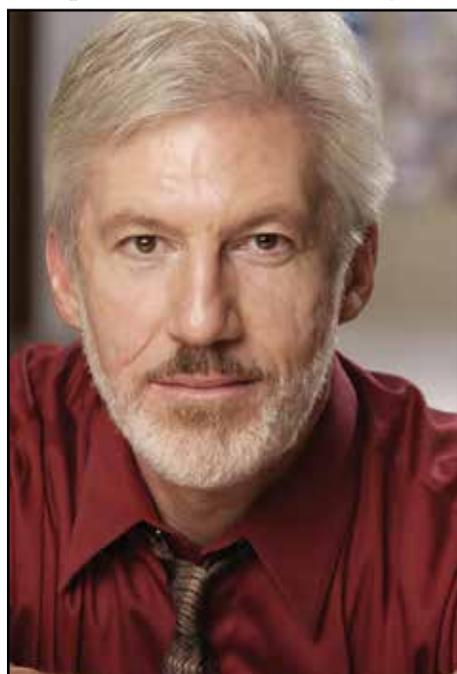
gallery, a large classroom, a new special exhibit gallery, and a gallery focused on Other Genocides and Human Rights. There will also be restrooms, a small catering kitchen, more storage and Education Staff offices.

Many thanks to our Board of Directors and the generous donors who made this expansion a reality.

Naming opportunities are still available. For more information, please contact me at Susan@HMCEC.org or 239.263.9200.

The Luncheon

The Museum's annual winter fundraiser takes place on Wednesday, December 7. The program will feature actor/author Tom Dugan performing excerpts from his award-winning one-



Tom Dugan

man play, *Wiesenthal*. A very limited number of tickets may still be available as this December issue of *L'CHAYIM* is published. If you are interested in attending, please visit www.HMCEC.org or email Tim@HMCEC.org.

“Many thanks to the Sponsors of this year's event. As of November 9, they are:

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David Nelson Lecture Series

The David Nelson Lecture Series, “Stories of the Holocaust,” continues at the Museum on Tuesday, December 13 from 11:00 a.m. to noon. The presentation will focus on “Varian Fry – The Artists' Schindler.” Tickets are \$10 and advance registration is required. Visit www.HMCEC.org to RSVP and purchase your ticket. This is the final lecture in this year's series created by David, who is the Museum's Education Specialist.

GenShoah Annual Potluck at the Museum

GenShoah's Annual Potluck Dinner will take place at the Museum on Sun-

day, December 18 from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Shelley Lieb at liebro@gmail.com.

End-of-year charitable contributions

Please consider an end-of-year contribution in support of the Museum's Education Programs. Your generosity allows us to reach students and teachers across SWFL with year-round impactful programming. By sharing the important lessons of the Holocaust, you help inspire the next generation to stand up to hatred, bigotry and violence. Please contact me for more information, and thank you for your consideration.

Coming in January

Sign up now for the “Nazi Looted Art – Unfinished Business” lecture series by Ellaine Rosen. The five-part series begins January 12. The lectures will be held at the Museum from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The lectures are free but a suggested minimum donation of \$18 is greatly appreciated. Advance registration is required at our website.

As the year ends, I would like to acknowledge and express our appreciation to all our dedicated volunteers and generous supporters. Your wonderful contributions of time, talent and financial support make it possible for us to pursue our mission for the past 21 years. Thank you!

I wish you and your families a happy Chanukah. I look forward to seeing you at the Museum and our programs soon!

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Collier/Lee Hadassah announces Second Annual Inspiring Women honorees

By Diane Schwartz

Collier/Lee Hadassah announces and celebrates the 2023 inspiring women from Collier and Lee counties. Dr. Jaclynn Faffer, Mia Hyatt and Gail Markham will be honored on Sunday, February 26. Hadassah is proud to present each honoree with the Lynn Wilner Award in recognition of the chapter's late past president who inspired so many to join and become active in Hadassah.

Through its programs, training and work around the globe, Hadassah empowers women to learn and lead in their career, volunteer and community leadership roles. With this emphasis in mind, the Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah has created the Inspiring Women event to recognize the importance, value and impact empowered women make in our communities. The honorees have used their leadership skills, dedication, experience, generosity and time to make a difference in their organizations and the quality of our lives. Ultimately, their efforts impact so many people in our communities, and Hadassah is proud to honor these women.

"It's exciting to recognize Dr. Faffer, Mia Hyatt and Gail Markham not only for their individual accomplishments but also for their impact," said Chapter President Joyce Toub. "Geared to the community as well as Hadassah members, attendees and supporters of these inspiring women will

have an opportunity to celebrate their talents, gifts and their passion for what they do."

Dr. Jaclynn Faffer

Dr. Jaclynn Faffer has been a visionary leader in the field of human services for over 35 years. She is the President/CEO of the Naples Senior Center, a non-sectarian human services agency. She received her Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from Tulane University and her Doctoral Degree in Social Welfare from Wurzweiler School



Dr. Jaclynn Faffer

of Social Work at Yeshiva University. Past positions have included Director of Human Services at UJA-Federation of New York, where she was responsible for planning and allocations for 11 New York human service agencies,

Director of Adult and Geriatric Psychiatry and Social Work at Brunswick Psychiatric Hospital on Long Island, and CEO/Executive Director of Ruth Rales Jewish Family Service of South Palm Beach County.

Dr. Faffer has served as a consultant to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society on issues related to the psychological impact of chronic illness. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Adelphi University, Hunter College, Wurzweiler and Barry University Graduate Schools of Social Work. She has published numerous articles in juried professional journals on social work practice and administration and human resource development.

She is past chair of the Collier County Leadership Coalition on Aging and is a graduate of Greater Naples Leadership Class XVIII, where she serves on the board. In July 2014, she attended the Harvard Business School Executive Education program for CEOs, Strategic Perspectives in Non-Profit Management. She was recently appointed as Chair of the Collier County Dementia Care and Cure Initiative by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

Mia Hyatt

Mia Hyatt is a Vice President and Private Banker in the Naples office of J.P. Morgan Private Bank. With a 15-year career in financial services, she provides experienced advisory guidance

for the wealth management needs of her clients including investment management, strategic planning and asset allocation. Most recently, she was a Vice President at FineMark National



Mia Hyatt

Bank & Trust as a Private Wealth Advisor/Portfolio Manager. Prior to FineMark, she spent seven years at Wasmer Schroeder, focused on fixed income.

Mia has a B.S. in International Economics from the University of Florida. She has her Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation and is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP). Mia is the Vice President of the CFA Society Naples and is a co-founder of SWFL Women in Investment Manage-

continued on next page



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Collier/Lee Hadassah...continued from previous page

ment. She is on the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army-Naples. Mia was previously a volunteer for Guardian ad Litem of Collier County, serving as an Advocate for abused, neglected and abandoned children. She is a member of the Leadership Collier Class of 2021 and of GAIN (Growing Associates in Naples), class of 2012. She was also a *Gulfshore Business* "40 Under 40" Award Recipient in 2021.

Gail Markham

Gail Markham is the founding partner of Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Company, P.A. Certified Public Accountants and Consultants. She graduated cum laude from the University of Maryland College of Business and Management.

Gail has extensive experience in litigation support services, family mediation and forensic accounting. She is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), a Certified Financial Planner (CFP), is Accredited in Business Valuation (ABV), is Certified in Financial Forensics (CFF) and is a Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator.

Gail is being recognized for her commitment to her community through business leadership and philanthropy. A noted and recognized business leader, Gail is Chair of the Advisory Board of the Lee County Industrial Development Authority and a member of the Charter Class and Charter Steering Committee of the Chamber of South-west Florida, Leadership Lee County.

Committed to her community, Gail is also a Trustee and Vice Chair of the SWFL Community Foundation (Collaboratory). She is a member of the Board of Directors of the FGCU Foundation Finance Committee and a member of the Presidential Search

Advisory Committee. She founded the Lee County PACE Center for Girls, which she chaired for seven years. The PACE Center for Girls envisions a world where all girls and young women have power, in a just and equitable society.

Some of the highlight honors bestowed upon Gail include the 2022 ERC Thomas Burrage Award from the Expert Resource Connection honoring



Gail Markham

professionals who display expertise in business valuation, forensic accounting and offer mentorship to future leaders and philanthropy to their community; the 2018 *Gulfshore Business* Lifetime Achievement Award; and in consecutive years, the 2011 *Gulfshore Life Magazine* Woman of the Year Award and 2010 *Gulfshore Life Magazine* Philanthropist of the Year Award.

You are invited to mark your calendar for the February 26 event, a brunch from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Audubon Country Club in Naples. For information and to receive an invitation, please email collierleehadassah@gmail.com.

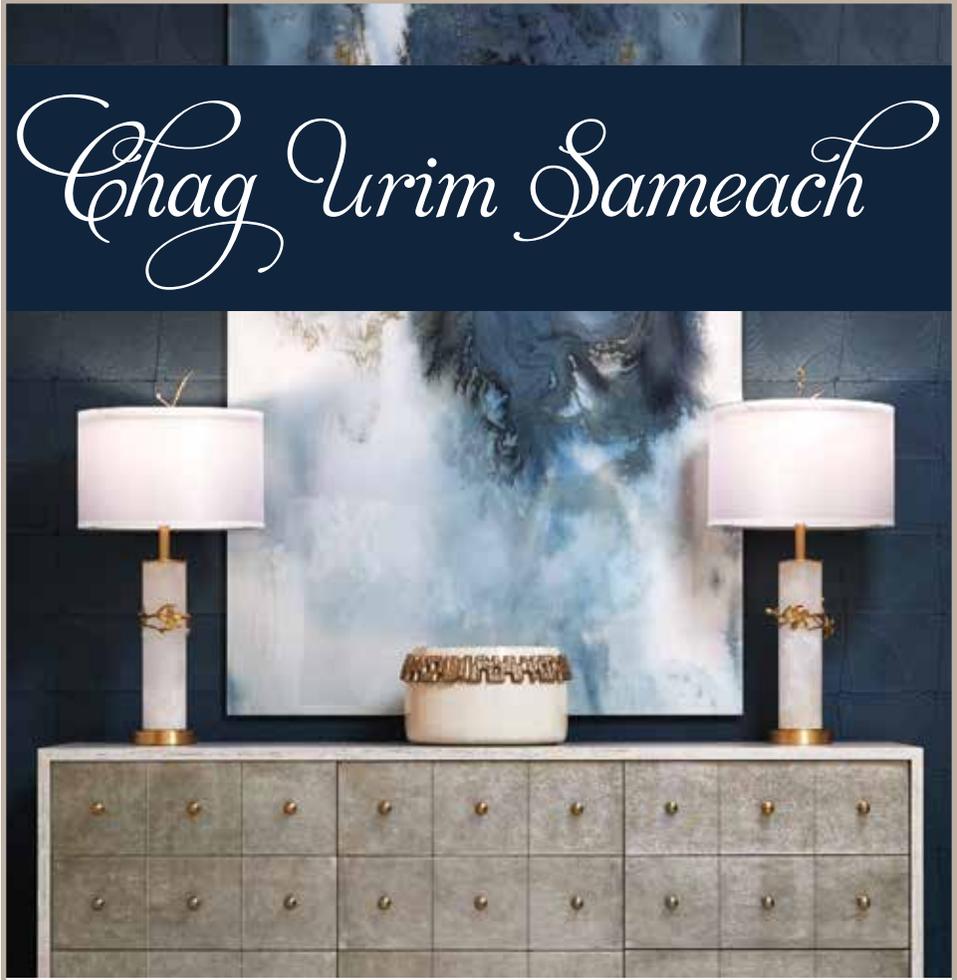


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Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old

Inflation is killing our budget – should we ask our kids for help?

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

The kitchen table in Beth and Martin's apartment was covered with papers, each in its own neat stack. There were utility bills, grocery receipts, doctors' prescriptions and an occasional scratch-off lottery ticket, symbolic of the no-win situation that currently characterizes the couple's finances.

Martin shook his head. "I don't know what to do. Everything we buy now costs double or triple what it cost last year." Beth rubbed Martin's shoulders. "I know it doesn't help much but lots of seniors are in the same boat. Our neighbors have given up eating out. Our friends cut down on driving to see their grandkids, and one of the ladies at temple just downsized to a studio apartment."

Martin shook his head while Beth took a deep breath. "I know you don't want to hear this," she said, "but it's time to call the kids."

Unfortunately, Martin and Beth are not alone. Although they've been frugal all their lives with Martin main-

taining their savings accounts while Beth studied specials and shopped with coupons, the current economic downturn was more than the family budget could bear. With inflation on the rise, many seniors face situations similar to Martin and Beth's.

According to CBS News' online *MoneyWatch* (October 6, 2022), reporter Aimee Picchi found that "even before inflation spiked in 2022, more seniors were falling into poverty," with the ranks of poor seniors topping nearly one million. Consumer prices are rising at a pace not seen in four decades with many seniors facing the same problems as Beth and Martin. Retirement incomes and savings accounts are being swallowed up by runaway inflation – a situation that prompted Beth to propose the unthinkable.

She pressed forward. "Martin, let's discuss it. We need to ask our children for financial help." Reluctantly, Martin agreed. "So what do we do? I mean, we can't just pick up the phone!" Beth agreed. "Let's think this through."

Although Beth and Martin were not regulars at their local synagogue, they turned first to their Jewish traditions to determine if there was any rabbinic guidance regarding adult children's responsibilities to aging

parents. Martin wondered, "Is there any direction beyond the commandment to 'Honor your father and your mother'?" Martin found that the Torah states the commandment twice, a clue to the importance the Torah gives to parent/child relationships.

In addition, our greatest sage, Maimonides noted that an adult child is responsible for the care of elderly parents, unless a serious condition such as dementia requires that the parent receive specialized assistance. If not, Maimonides' contemporary, Rabbi Abraham ben David, noted, "Who but the children can provide an appropriate

before a family discussion takes place, parents should organize their finances so that they can share specifics about their financial situation with their children – an essential Step One.

Step Two requires that the parents ask that the family meet together. All the children should be present so there is no confusion about the specifics of their parents' financial situation. Financial consultants advise that the family meeting be discreet and apart from Thanksgiving dinner or the Passover Seder. The family meeting on family finances should remain separate from family celebrations.

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

level of loving care?" This implies that in ancient times, no one but their adult child was more qualified to care for elderly parents.

"That was then," Martin said. "This is now. We've always been strong for our kids, helping them financially when they needed it. Asking our own kids for help now is humiliating."

Beth was sensitive to Martin's concerns, but she knew their financial problems were not unique. In fact, when a good friend confided to Beth that she was "on the edge" financially, Beth shared her own anxieties and asked, "So what did you do?"

Beth's friend Monica found that it was easier to ask her children for help when she shared a sermon given by the pastor of her church. In the words of Pastor John K. Jenkins, spiritual leader of the First Baptist Church in Glenarden, Maryland, "Parents shouldn't have to beg their adult children to take care of them. In fact, adult children should set aside money each month specifically to be used to care for an elderly mom and dad."

Thanks to Beth's friend, Martin and Beth felt more comfortable making a plan to speak with their children. An internet search netted an article on CreditCards.com where Martin and Beth found the information they needed to move forward.

Financial planners suggested that

Step Three suggests that the parents consider holding the meeting in a neutral venue and invite a third party to moderate. Meeting in an attorney's office or in the home of a trusted friend will offer a level of objectivity that may be necessary if there are family contentions between siblings or parents.

Step Four requires that parents avoid "tit for tat" statements such as, "We sacrificed for you, now it's your turn." Adult children who are made to feel guilty will become resentful and angry, closing the door on further discussion.

A healthy Step Five requires that parents set ego aside and share honestly about income and expenses. Financial planners agree that if parents need financial help from their children, the children need to understand the specifics of the situation – even if those specifics might include poor investments or frivolous purchases.

These are difficult times, especially for aging parents. A practical approach that includes love and compassion can make current financial challenges easier to bear.

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



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Rabbi A. James Rudin to receive Papal Knighthood

Cardinal O'Malley to present historic honor to American Rabbi on behalf of Pope Francis in ceremony at University Campus, North of Tampa.

St. Leo, FL, November 3, 2022 – For only the third time in history, a pope is honoring an American rabbi with the Papal Knighthood of the Order of St. Gregory the Great. This also marks the first time in his papacy that Pope Francis is granting the honor to a Jewish person: Rabbi A. James Rudin, co-founder of Saint Leo University's Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies (CCJS).

Pope Francis will recognize Rudin for his decades of work in building positive Catholic-Jewish relations throughout the world, fostering inter-

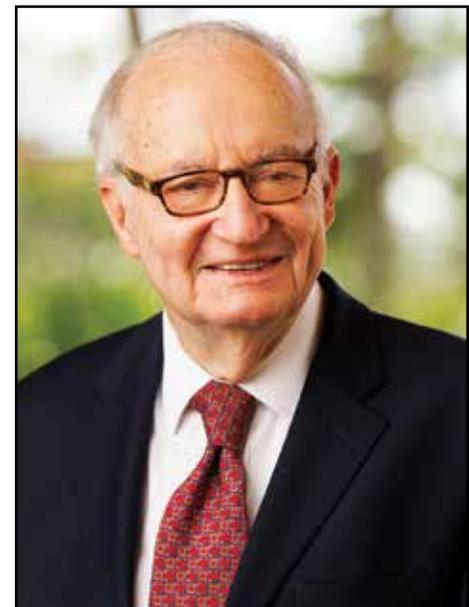
religious dialogue and understanding. Rudin is the American Jewish Committee's (AJC) senior interreligious adviser, having previously served as its Interreligious Affairs Director. He also is a distinguished professor of religion and Judaica at Saint Leo University, in addition to establishing the university's Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies.

On Sunday, November 20, Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley, OFM, of the Archdiocese of Boston, will represent Pope Francis and conduct the investiture ceremony at Saint Leo University.

"For more than 50 years, Rabbi James Rudin has worked to advance Catholic-Jewish relations, and interfaith relations on a wider scale, with extraordinary skill, dedication and success," O'Malley said. "The Catholic Church was particularly blessed by Rabbi Rudin's many years of close working relationships with Cardinal John O'Connor in New York and Pope Saint John Paul II. We are all blessed by Rabbi Rudin's achievements in promoting dialogue and collaboration among communities of different faiths. The impact of this work continues to grow as successive generations build on the foundation Rabbi Rudin has established.

"I am honored to be able to present the rabbi with the papal honor bestowed by Pope Francis, a most deserved recognition and tribute," continued O'Malley, the Archbishop of Boston. "We are grateful to Saint Leo University for generously hosting Rabbi Rudin and all who will gather for this recognition of his dedication to bringing people together in the name of the Lord."

Rabbi Eric J. Greenberg, director of United Nations Relations and Strategic Partnerships for the Simon Wiesenthal Center, has worked with Rudin in the field of interfaith relations for more than 25 years. He noted that the papal honor, "comes at a crucial time when Jews are under



Rabbi A. James Rudin (photo by Brian Tietz, Saint Leo University)

assault around the world, and this knighthood clearly demonstrates the evolving positive relations between Catholics and Jews. Rabbi Rudin well deserves this historic, international honor."

Rudin, of Fort Myers, Florida, is a prominent author and public speaker, and an international leader in interreligious relations. He was born in Pittsburgh and grew up in Alexandria, Virginia. He attended Wesleyan University and graduated from George Washington University with academic distinction. Rudin received his rabbinical ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

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Rabbi A. James Rudin...continued from previous page

(HUC-JIR) and served as a U.S. Air Force chaplain in Japan and Korea.

His most recent book, a memoir published earlier this year, *The People in the Room: Rabbis, Nuns, Pastors, Popes, and Presidents*, tells of his travels and meetings with leaders as well as community members throughout the world.

He was a member of the Camp David Presidential Retreat Chapel Committee and co-founded the National Interreligious Task Forces on Soviet Jewry and Black-Jewish Relations. Rudin met many times with Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI and was the guest of honor at the 1994 Vatican event commemorating the Holocaust.

“The Bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops rejoices that Pope Francis will confer upon Rabbi A. James Rudin the Papal Knighthood of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great,” reads a statement from the USCCB. “We give thanks for the many contributions Rabbi Rudin has made to deepening ties of friendship between Jews and Catholics. It is our hope and prayer that the example of his dedication to dialogue will help to bring Catholics and Jews across the nation even closer together.”

Founding the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies

The importance of that interchange of ideas prompted the formation of Saint Leo University’s Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies in 1998. Rudin

said he first heard of the then-Saint Leo College in the 1970s when his wife Marcia’s stepmother, Dr. Barbara Kaplan, taught music at the college. “She said Saint Leo was a fine small college,” Rudin said of the university that now is one of the largest Catholic universities in the country. “She and my father-in-law, Dr. Max Kaplan, lived in Tampa, and she commuted to the campus. Fast forward to 1998 when I noted that Florida had an increasing population of Jews and Catholics, and that dynamic demographic trend was likely to continue. There was no Christian-Jewish academic center south of Baltimore at that time.”

Rudin met with then-college president Arthur Kirk Jr., who liked the rabbi’s proposal of creating an interreligious center on campus. Kirk, Rudin and Bruce M. Ramer, then-president of the American Jewish Committee, signed a joint statement establishing CCJS.

As the college grew and became a university, the late Bishop Emeritus John J. Nevins of the Catholic Diocese of Venice (FL), and now Bishop Emeritus Robert Lynch of the Diocese of St. Petersburg (FL) became co-founders of CCJS. These leaders recognized the need in the state for an academic center devoted to the biblical and theological study of Catholic-Jewish relations and interreligious dialogue, as emphasized by the Second Vatican Council.

Today, the CCJS is a leading academic center for the study of Catholic-Jewish relations. While it started as a stand-alone, lay-driven and financed

project at Saint Leo, it became fully integrated into the university in 2013 and will celebrate its silver anniversary (25 years) in 2023.

Now, Rudin’s commitment to forging understanding between the two traditions is being recognized by Pope Francis in the awarding of the Papal Knighthood of the Order of St. Gregory. The papal knighthood was created by Pope Gregory XVI (1745-1846) in 1831, and named in honor of St. Greg-

ory the Great, who died in 604, and whose writings greatly influenced the Church.

The Papal Knighthood of the Order of St. Gregory is the highest honor the pope bestows upon individuals, both Catholics and non-Catholics, in recognition of their significant contributions to society. Rudin, through his work building respect and understanding between Catholics and Jews, exemplifies this. 🌍

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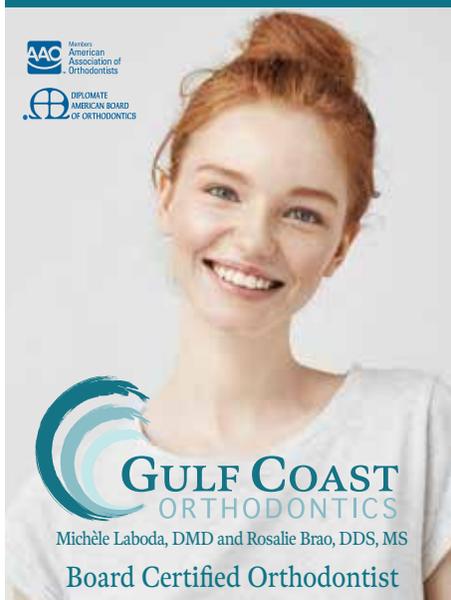
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The Hanukkah miracle of my unusual sufganiya – recipe by Chef Dalia

They're making sufganiyot on the streets of Israel so Hanukkah must be near. It's my favorite time of year. It's sufganiyot time.

Actually, it started feeling like Hanukkah in Israel about two days after Sukkot, when the first vendors started frying the delicious and high-caloric sufganiyot in vats of oil in front of bakeries and on the streets in towns throughout the country.

As malls in America rush the Christmas season by putting up decorations right after Halloween, some vendors in the heart of Jerusalem were making sufganiyot in the middle of Sukkot.

Sufganiyot are yummy, jelly-filled (or these days filled with almost any sweet flavor under the sun) globs of fried dough lovingly sprinkled with a dusting of white sugar.

Seriously, my family waits all year for this. The opportunity to eat the world's best sufganiyot for dinner (yes, we don't feed the kids beforehand, this is not dessert, this is DINNER) is amazing and worthy of excitement.

A sufganiya (doughnut), if you have to delve deeply into its definition, is a "food made from dough fried in deep oil."

Thought you'd seen it all in the over-the-top sufganiyot? Well, think again. Sufganiyot are no longer just the classic ones I ate in kindergarten when I was a little girl, with strawberry jam and powdered sugar.

A tradition is a tradition, and I am not going to break it. Almost. Although they are fried sufganiyot, they are salty



and full of twists, including an offer to fill a layer with fried eggplant (it's still Hanukkah food, it's FRIED), and top it with matbucha salad and tahini.

My version of the sufganiya is actually an incarnation of three different recipes that came together into one upgraded version of a salty (and not dairy) sufganiya.

One of them is the recipe for my "challah bread." The second inspiration comes from "traditional sufganiyot with a twist" – a recipe in which the addition of mashed potatoes enriches the dough and gives it an especially airy and soft texture. Finally, the third recipe came from the sfenj (Moroccan donuts) that has been with me for years.

The dough combines well with salty flavors and brings a change to the traditional sufganiyot and surprising flavors, especially good for those who are not fond of sweet flavors. The sufganiya can also be used to make buns in the spirit of the Hanukkah celebration to serve when entertaining the family.

Salty Sufganiyot

Ingredients:

- 6 cups bread flour
 - 1½ cups water
 - 2 medium potatoes cooked and mashed into cold mashed potatoes
 - 2 eggs
 - 6 tablespoons sugar
 - 2 flat tablespoon dry yeast
 - 1 tablespoon salt
 - ¼ cup vegetable oil
 - vegetable oil (for frying)
 - 1 tablespoon matbucha (tomato salad - optional)
 - 1 tablespoon tahini sauce
 - 2 slices fried eggplant
 - ½ chopped onion
 - handful of parsley
 - ½ cup diced tomato
 - hardboiled egg
- ▶ Mix the flour, sugar and yeast in a bowl. Pour the water, eggs, oil and mashed potatoes into the mixer bowl.
 - ▶ Add the dry ingredients mixture to the mixer bowl on top of the liquids.
 - ▶ Put with a kneading hook at speed 1 for 5 minutes. Stop the mixer and add the salt. Continue kneading at speed 2 for another 5 minutes.
 - ▶ Take the dough out onto the work surface. Transfer the dough to a bowl, cover with a large plastic wrap and let rise for 2 hours
 - ▶ Gently remove the dough from the bowl, stretch it into a square and fold each of the corners to the center. Turn the dough over and roll it out. Allow the dough to rest on



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

the surface for about 10 minutes, covered.

- ▶ Grease baking paper with a thin layer of oil.
- ▶ Divide the dough into 24 pieces. Roll out to ping pong size balls and place neatly at intervals on the greased baking paper. Oil each ball again with a thin layer of oil and cover all the balls with plastic wrap. Let the balls rise for about an hour or until the volume doubles.
- ▶ In a frying pan, heat vegetable oil in a deep layer for "deep" frying to medium-high heat (for those who have a suitable thermometer, heat the oil to 160 degrees). Lift each ball gently, without damaging its round shape, and carefully slide it into the oil with the side that was up in the swelling going into the oil first. Fry 5-6 balls in each round of frying. After 2 minutes in the oil, turn the sufganiya using a spoon to fry evenly for 2 minutes.
- ▶ Remove the sufganiyot to a colander and let them cool. After the sufganiyot have cooled, cut them in half, spread tahini and matbucha on both sides, and insert slices of fried eggplant and slices of hard-boiled egg.
- ▶ Sprinkle with parsley, chopped onion and diced tomato.
- ▶ Close the sufganiyot and sprinkle tahini on top. 🌱

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“Selective breeding” for a perfect race

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

Lebensborn (Fountain of Life) was the name given to the Nazi program of selective breeding for the purpose of creating a superior race.

Nazism embraced the notion of eugenics, a pseudo-scientific idea that humans could be bred to create a purer or more perfect race. The Nazi vision imagined an ideal Aryan who was Nordic, tall and physically beautiful, had perfect features, including blond hair and blue eyes, and was fit and in perfect health. To achieve this refinement of German “blood,” it was deemed necessary to exterminate so-called “impure” races, while encouraging the racially pure to multiply.

In Munich on December 12, 1935, therefore, the SS established the *Lebensborn* program. On September 13, 1936, SS Chief Heinrich Himmler wrote that *Lebensborn* was created to serve the SS through the selection and adoption of qualified children.

Part of the SS Race and Settlement Central Bureau, it was under Himmler’s personal direction. He stated that it was the duty of all SS leaders to become members of the organization, and that they had to apply to join within the next 10 days. In 1939, membership stood at 8,000, of which 3,500 were SS leaders.

Lebensborn thus formed an integral element of the Nazi racial system. The birth rate of Aryan children, it was argued, had to increase. This was to be achieved through the intensive breeding of German women who met stringent physical standards of height, weight, blond hair, blue eyes and athleticism, with SS officers. For this, the couples did not have to be married. Their biological aptitude was all that mattered. The SS officers chosen for this purpose had already asserted their impeccable Aryan ancestry as a condition prior to joining the SS.

The women chosen by *Lebensborn* would become impregnated in SS-run “stud farms.” These were often luxury hotels and spas, where young women and men would meet prior to retiring discreetly to bedrooms, after which they would separate never to meet again. After successful impregnation, the women were sent to special maternity homes where they were cared for until the birth of their children. The *Lebensborn* managers then arranged for the adoption of the children by similarly “racially pure” and healthy families who were known to be thoroughly infused with Nazi ideals.

The Cross of Honor of the German Mother was a medal awarded to women who bore the most Aryan children. Where children were likely to be born with disabilities, the Nazis legalized abortion, though it was strictly punished in the case of healthy pregnancies.

The focus of the program was one of pure racial reproduction with Nazi concepts of racial hygiene in the foreground. The sole object was to create pure blooded Aryans for the Thousand Year Reich.

Lebensborn established facilities in several occupied countries, with its activities centered in Germany, Norway and occupied northeastern Europe. In Norway, children born to Norwegian women and fathered by German soldiers were provided with assistance after they were born. Anywhere between 8,000 and 12,000 children were born in *Lebensborn* homes in Norway.

From 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, the *Lebensborn* program also engaged in the kidnapping and transfer of children, mostly orphans with appropriate “racial” features, to politically and racially suitable families in Germany.

In other parts of Europe beyond Poland, the Nazis also kidnapped children for the *Lebensborn* program – mainly from Yugoslavia, but also Russia, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Estonia and Latvia. Himmler was alleged to have said that Nazism sought to “win over any good blood that we can use for ourselves and give it a place in our people.” He encouraged his troops to kidnap an estimated 200,000 blond, blue-eyed Polish children from their homes or as they walked to school. They were moved to Nazi families and brought up as Germans, with little or no memory of their true ancestry.

The SS tested the racial characteristics of children taken by measuring 62 different parts of their body. If the child passed the test, he or she was sent away to be placed with German families for “Germanization.” By 1942, the

term *Lebensborn* had become a code word for the kidnapping of Polish and other children who met these idealized Nazi racial characteristics.

On May 1, 1945, a day after Hitler’s death, American troops entered Steinhöring, the Munich base for the *Lebensborn* program. Here, they found 300 children, aged six months to six years. Most of the mothers and staff had fled. British and Soviet troops also found children at *Lebensborn* homes near Bremen and Leipzig. Most of these children were either put up for adoption or, if known, sent back to their birth families. Some of the children kidnapped in other countries who were living with families throughout Germany were repatriated to their native countries, but many had been “Germanized” to such a degree that they no longer fit in to their country of birth.

During World War II it had been a matter of honor for a German woman to be carrying the child of an SS officer. After the war this abruptly turned into a matter for shame. The mothers were discouraged from revealing the facts of their wartime activities. Many of the children had been adopted, and their adoptive parents had no desire to divulge to them the truth about their background.

Wartime destruction meant that a large quantity of the records relating to such births and kidnappings were lost. Thus, no actual numbers can be accurately assessed, nor, in an added tragedy, could the family origins of the children ever be traced.

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

Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties Holocaust Education and Programs Department

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties is creating a Holocaust Education department in response to growing antisemitism and a need for education and remembrance. The new department will sponsor outreach programs in the schools and community as well as host speaking, author and film events. We are also in the process of creating a remembrance wall that will highlight local loved ones lost in the Shoah. For naming and other donor opportunities, or to share stories, please contact JFED Holocaust Education Director Ella Naylor at 239-281-7874 or via email at jfedholocaustdirector@gmail.com



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Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Contributing Columnist

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

More Fabelmans

The Fabelmans, a film “sort of” about **STEVEN SPIELBERG**'s teen years, opened wide on November 23. I have to add this to my last column. To my great surprise, Spielberg disclosed the “devastating [Fabelmans] family secret” as it was described in the film's very brief advance publicity. He spilled the beans in an interview (November 6) on CBS's *Sunday Morning*. The interview is posted on YouTube. It's entitled “Steven Spielberg on *The Fabelmans*: A Happy Beginning.”

It's not much of a secret that the Fabelmans' secret was based on a Spielberg family secret. The CBS interview includes an excerpt of an old interview with Spielberg's now-late parents in which they discuss “the secret” or “secrets” (there are really two highly related secrets). **Don't** watch the interview or read detailed critics' reviews if you want to learn the “secret” from a film showing. **Do** watch it afterwards for the whole story.

Since my last column, I also learned that newcomer **GABRIEL LABELLE**, 20, who plays Sammy Fabelman (the Steven-like character), has a Jewish father (no info yet on

Gabriel's mother). Gabriel identifies as Jewish.

Hallmark's Hanukkah miracle

The Hallmark Channel will finally give the Jewish community a “sort of” Hanukkah gift. Yes, Jewish characters have appeared, now and again, in the original Christmas films that Hallmark releases every year. But I believe that this is the first time that Hallmark is releasing a “straight out,” just about Hanukkah original movie. By the way, in 2022, Hallmark will release 39 original new Christmas movies and, well, one Hanukkah movie.

The film is entitled *Hanukkah Rye* and it will be released on the first day of the holiday (Sunday, December 18). Here's the capsule plot: Molly (**LISA LOEB**, 54) and Jacob (**JEREMY JORDAN**, 37) are put together by a matchmaker and things are going great until they find out that they run competing delis. Will there be a Hanukkah miracle that will keep them together?

Loeb is a singer-songwriter best known for her 1994 hit song “Stay.” She has managed to keep her career alive in varied projects even though she has never regained her late '90s popularity. It's nice to note that she

and her Jewish husband have two kids. Jordan's mother is Jewish. He's had a pretty good career as a Broadway musical actor.

Menzel and more

On Friday, December 9, Disney+ will begin streaming a documentary about singer/actress **IDINA MENZEL**, 51. Entitled, *Which Way to the Stage*, the film will cover her life and career. It will end with her headlining a Madison Square Garden concert.

Menzel became a stage star with major roles in the musicals *Rent* (1996) and *Wicked* (2003). Worldwide fame followed as she provided the voice of Elsa in the mega-hit *Frozen* series of animated musical flicks.

I don't particularly like *Yellowstone*, a modern Western series, and its frontier prequel, *1883*. But they found an audience on Paramount+ and, on Monday, December 19, another prequel, entitled *1923*, will premiere. All three series center on the Dutton family. *1923* will follow the family as it deals with Prohibition and the Great Depression. **HARRISON FORD**, 80 (whose mother was Jewish), plays Jacob Dutton, the family's patriarch. Helen Mirren plays Cara, Jacob's wife.

The Whale, which opens in theaters on Friday, December 9, stars Brendan Fraser as Charlie, a man who tries to make contact with his estranged daughter because he fears that he will die soon. Charlie left his

family for another man. The man died and Charlie, guilty about his death, responded by becoming morbidly obese. Advance reviews are mostly positive, but this film is clearly not for everyone.

The film was directed by **DAREN ARONOFSKY**, 53. None of his films are “easy” watches. His hits include *The Wrestler* and *Black Swan*.

Damien Chazelle has had a very good record as a writer and director. His films include *Whiplash* – a modest box office hit which critics loved – and *La La Land*, which everyone loved. He got the best director Oscar for *La La Land* and the film won five more Oscars. (Fun fact: While Chazelle was raised Catholic, he went to a Jewish day school for four years. His parents thought it was the best local school.)

Chazelle is the director and writer of *Babylon*, which opens in theaters on Friday, December 23. The film is about the transition to talking films in the 1920s. It stars Brad Pitt and Margot Robbie. **JEFF GARLIN**, 60, has an important supporting role. **IRVING THALBERG**, the head of MGM film production in the '20s and early '30s, is a character in the film. The film's score is by **JUSTIN HURWITZ**, 37. He won an Oscar for best score for *La La Land*. He and Chazelle were Harvard roommates. 🌐

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Natural wine – what is it, exactly?

By The Wine Whisperer

It's all the rage, mostly due to a demand for eco-friendly foods and drinks. More consumers are asking for it, and more wineries are starting to follow the trend.

Problem is, not all that many people know what constitutes natural wine, or even how to define standards for it. After all, for a wine to be labeled "organic," it has to go through a certification program from a recognized agency. But natural wine is a bit too new, and there's no official definition.

Basically, though, it means that the wine in your glass conforms to the following general standards: the grapes were harvested by hand and grown without the use of any pesticides, fungicides or other chemicals...and no fertilizer. It also means that the wine was made without any additives. It's not generally known that many substances are legally allowed in wine. One is called Mega Purple, made from very red grapes and used to add color to a red wine. Another is powdered tannin, used if a red wine is a bit thin or "flabby." There are more.

There's also a lot of consumer con-

fusion about the difference between natural, organic and so-called biodynamic wines. So let's clear that up.

Certified biodynamic wines are made by following a kind of holistic farming method that, among other things, requires planting and harvesting to be done in accordance with phases of the moon.

Organic wines – the ones that are certified – are made with fruit that hasn't been exposed to any chemicals, but might still contain some permitted additives.

Supposedly, natural winemaking methods help protect the vitality of the soil, and support biodiversity in the vineyard. That means more butterflies, beneficial insects and other forms of wildlife whose habitats might be dwindling.

Otherwise, natural wine seems to age in the same way as wines created with more traditional methods. But whether any wine improves with age is dependent on a lot of factors. Generally, winemakers know that we want to buy it today and drink it tomorrow, and they know that not all of us have wine cellars in our homes where we can lay the bottles down for 10 or 20 years. So most moderately priced wines are made to be enjoyed within a year or two of their production.

But still, within the wine industry

there is no standard definition of the term, and no set of requirements for how the grapes should be cultivated or for practices as the wine is produced. One generally agreed-upon practice is that the juice should ferment only with indigenous yeast and no added lab-grown substances, and that absolutely no additives like color enhancers can be used. There are, however, no official agencies that winemakers can apply to for any sort of official certification. Some growing areas in Europe have adopted local standards and self-regulate wine production, but those requirements are fairly loose.

Still, most winemakers respect the soil and the process even if they don't go after any sort of official certification. They want to make good wine that people enjoy. Like these...

Fortress Cabernet Sauvignon North Coast 2017 (\$23) – A complex blend, with small touches of Malbec and Merlot. The 18 months in oak give it some caramel aromas and flavors around the edges. Mostly fruit-forward, with black cherries and berries, and a touch of spice on the back end. This will drink well young, and can also age a bit. WW 89-90

Cline Mourvèdre Rosé Contra Costa 2018 (\$18) – This rose, made from the heritage Rhone varietal, is an easy-drinking, refreshing summer

sipper. Chill it and enjoy the bright raspberry and watermelon flavors on a frame of crisp acidity. WW 86

Robert Mondavi Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2016 (\$36) – This Bordeaux blend from the iconic Mondavi winery has small touches of Petit Verdot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc to add richness and complexity. Concentrated blackberry flavors predominate, with notes of clove and other spices. Tannins are a bit rustic on the finish. WW 89

Ask the Wine Whisperer
What are the most popular wines in the world? – Judy L., Port Charlotte

The most recent sales figures show that by far, Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay outsell all other varietals.

Jerry Greenfield is The Wine Whisperer, a wine author, educator and consultant. He is an adjunct professor in the wine program at Florida Gulf Coast University. Read his blog at www.winewhisperer.com. Jerry's new book, He Lost it in the Catskills, is available on Amazon, or purchase your personally signed copy at catskillmemories.com.

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JFF2023

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See pages 20-21 for information on all 11 films in the 2023 Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida.

The Newman family in Hollywood: An American dream

By Arlene Stolnitz

I guess I don't pay much attention to the credits while watching movies. But this summer, while watching Emanuel Abramovits' Music Appreciation Series lectures streamed from the Stirling Road Branch Library in Hollywood, Florida, I was introduced to the Newman family. It is a storied "Old Hollywood Family" whose works in musical scores are legendary. We know about Schmuel Gelbfisz, who changed his name to Samuel Goldwyn, and Harry and Jack Warner, Polish cobbler's boys, who made the "big time" in Hollywood. But I had never heard of this incredible Newman family until I viewed that lecture series.

The Newman family is the most nominated Academy Award extended family. Family members have collected 92 Academy Award nominations in various music categories! The Newman family consists of musicians, composers, music directors and songwriters. Their names: Alfred, Emil, Lionel, Randy, Thomas, Maria (the only female) and grandson Joey. To list their accomplishments is astounding: cousins Thomas and Randy nominated in 2020 for an Academy Award for *1917*, Lionel nominated for best score for *Hello Dolly* and Alfred's youngest

son nominated for 15 Oscars, just to name a few.

Their story begins with the patriarch of the family, Alfred Alan Newman, born in 1901 in New Haven, Connecticut, the son of an immigrant Ukrainian fruit peddler. Alfred was the eldest of seven sons and three daughters. As a piano child prodigy, he had a varied career in music. Eventually, he wound up in Hollywood after a prolific career in composing, directing and arranging on Broadway. He was one of the first musicians to work as a composer and conductor during Hollywood's Golden Age of movies. Highly respected in the "industry." He, along with Max Steiner and Dimitri Tiomkin, are known as the "three godfathers of film music."

His career spanned four decades and included over 200 scores which he composed for films. His filmography includes names such *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Anastasia*, *The Song of Bernadette*, *The King and I* and his final score, *Airport*. There are too many others to name here. The list is available on the internet and includes the awards received for each film.

Do you remember the fanfare associated with the 20th Century Fox studio logo at the start of each film? Alfred is best known for composing this fanfare. Before working for 20th Century Fox, he also composed fanfares for productions by Samuel Goldwyn and David O. Selznick. (As an interesting

aside, I was able to view on YouTube the 20th Century Fox logo history from 1933-present, a fascinating six-minute watch. Alfred is credited in the very beginning as the composer of the logo, with others adding to it later.) Alfred died in 1970 after an epic career, greatly influencing those who came after him.

Currently, the patriarch of the family is Randy, age 78, who has made his mark on the industry as well. In 2007, he was honored by the Walt Disney Company as a Disney Legend. He was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2002 and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2013.

I am always looking for how these musicians express themselves Jewishly. Here are some interesting items I discovered about Randy on Wikipedia.

"Newman's parents were non-observant Jews. Newman is an atheist. He has said that religion or any sense of religious identity was completely absent in his childhood. To illustrate this,

he has often recounted in interviews an antisemitic incident that occurred when he was young. He was invited by a classmate to be her date to a cotillion at the Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles. He accepted the invitation but was subsequently disinvited by the girl's father, who told Newman that his daughter should never have invited him because Jews were not allowed at the club. Newman hung up the phone, then went to ask his own father what a Jew was."

Nonetheless, the Jewish Historical Association of New Haven has honored the Newman Family for its accomplishments in the film industry. I recall reading somewhere that the old Newman homestead in New Haven is the location today of the Jewish Historical Association.

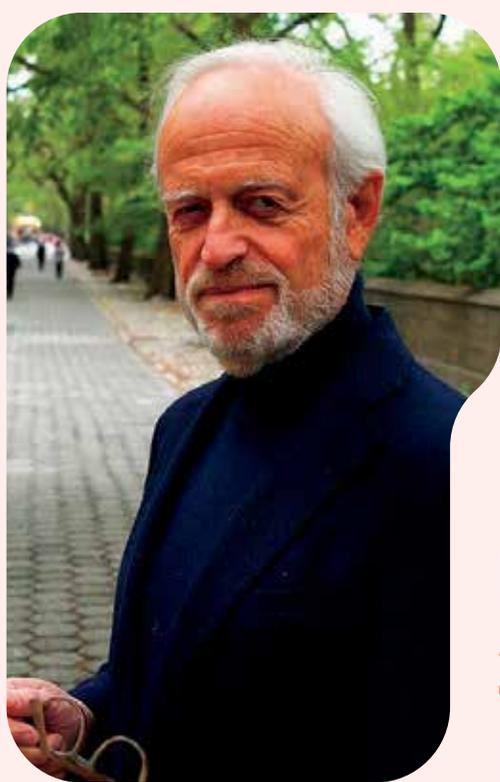
Arlene Stolnitz, a retired educator, is a regular contributor to Federation newspapers in Southwest Florida. Her interest in all kinds of Judaic music has led to her series of articles.



■ Arlene Stolnitz

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That Orchestra with the Broken Instruments

A broken string, fractured echo chamber, rusting valves. One hundred musicians meet for four days of rehearsals. They speak different languages. Their instruments are broken. An orchestra of professional and amateur musicians, young and old, set out on a journey against all odds, to a one-time concert. The film traces the creative process from collecting the instruments, to workshops, to three composers and intensive rehearsals, to the night of the performance. Hidden among the cracks, we discover a lyrical and engaging take on the members of the orchestra, on what is broken and whole, and on the determined attempt, if only for a moment, to create harmony in a discordant city.

Documentary, 1 hour 20 minutes

Tuesday, February 7 at 7:15 p.m.

Rose

Rose is a 78-year-old Parisian who has built a life for herself around two main roles – as a wife and mother (and later, grandmother). When her husband passes away, Rose suddenly finds herself alone, dethroned as the matriarch of a tribe that no longer seems to need her. The protagonist now finds herself in the throes of an emotional crisis with unexpected and cathartic consequences. What is her place within a family which has inevitably lost its glue? How can she impose her presence on a society which places its sole value on youth? The film is a poetic and highly personal

portrait of a woman who decides to take control of her own destiny.

Drama, 1 hour 42 minutes, French with English subtitles

Thursday, February 9 at 7:15 p.m.

Bad Nazi, Good Nazi

Bad Nazi, Good Nazi is the extraordinary story of German officer Wilm Hosenfeld, immortalized in Roman Polanski's film as the Nazi who saved the life of pianist Władysław Szpilman. Hosenfeld's personal diaries record his chilling, gradual disillusionment with the Nazi war machine he belonged to, and that Szpilman, incredibly, is just one of 60 people he saved. A group of supporters are inspired to have Hosenfeld memorialized at the local school he led before enlisting in Hitler's army, but the villagers struggle to come to terms with the complicated legacy of a man they want to forget – a Nazi officer and a serial rescuer.

Drama, 60 minutes, Hebrew & German with English subtitles

Monday, February 13 at 3:00 p.m.

Our Almost Completely True Story



Life in Hollywood has lost its luster for timeless actress Mariette Hartley. Although her reputation precedes her from the peak of her acting career decades prior, meaningful work these days – and a decent date – are hard to find. When she meets Jerry Sroka, a forever-comic who has also been wading through L.A.'s insufferable dating scene, Jerry immediately falls for her stunning elegance and exceptionally dry humor.

As things get serious and unexpected challenges arise, she wonders if it may be too late for love. Written by and starring Hartley and Sroka, the film shares the hilarious, vulnerable realities for aging actors and the search for love as seniors in Hollywood.

Drama, Comedy, 92 minutes, English

Tuesday, February 14 at 7:15 p.m.

One More Story



Yarden Gat is a young and brilliant journalist on a mission: to find true love for her best friend and for herself. She convinces him to go out on a daily date, for a month, each evening with a different woman, until he finds the right one. It's like a reality show, but for her newspaper. Who will get there first? This is Guri Alfi's new romantic comedy.

Drama, Comedy, 91 minutes
Hebrew with English subtitles

Thursday, February 16 at 7:15 p.m.

Here We Are



Aharon has devoted his life to raising his son Uri. They live together in a gentle routine, away from the real world. But Uri is autistic, and now as a young adult it might be time for him to live in a specialized home. While on their way to the institution, Aharon decides to run away with his son and hits the road, knowing that Uri is not ready for this separation. Or is it, in fact, his father who is not ready?

Drama, 92 minutes, Hebrew with English subtitles

Sunday, February 19 at 3:00 p.m.

Shepherd: The Story of a Jewish Dog



The timeless, unbreakable bond between a boy and his faithful dog is put to the ultimate test in 1930s Germany, in this heartwarming family drama. When the Nuremberg Laws are passed, forbidding Jews to own pets, Kaleb, a German Shepherd, is separated from his Jewish family and his beloved 10-year-old master, Joshua. We follow Kaleb as he becomes a street dog and then captured and eventually adopted by an SS dog trainer at a Nazi work camp where the dog has now

been trained to help round up and terrorize Jewish prisoners.

Narrative Feature, 1 hour 35 minutes, English

Tuesday, February 21 at 7:15 p.m.



Neighbours

Set in the 1980s in a small Kurdish village in northeastern Syria, Mano Khalil's masterful film, which was inspired by his personal life story, comes to life through the eyes of its endearing young hero, Sero, a six-year-old whose vivid recollections transport us to a world both sad and beautiful, innocent and full of pain. Determined to eliminate all remnants of Kurdish cultural identity in his students, Sero's new grade-school teacher instills the tenets of Arab Ba'ath Party nationalism. While some of his classmates come to embrace their teacher's enthusiasm for fascist ideology, Sero continues to dream of better ways to spend his time. He would much sooner watch his favorite cartoons or spend time with his uncle helping his Jewish neighbors on the Sabbath. While life at school grows increasingly intolerable for Sero, nothing could prepare him for the pain that was still to come under the new totalitarian leadership.

Drama, 1 hour 45 minutes, Hebrew, Arabic, Kurdish with English subtitles

Tuesday, February 28 at 7:15 p.m.

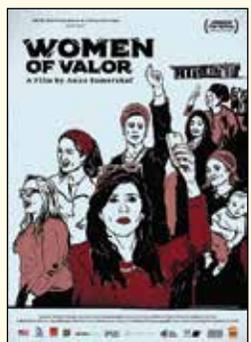


Greener Pastures

Dov, a widower who begrudgingly resides in a nursing home, dreams of buying back his old house where he raised his family. Since his pension fell through, Dov's finances are thin, which he entirely blames on the bureaucracy of the state. One day, to his surprise, he finds out that almost all the residents in the nursing home partake of medical marijuana to help with their aches and pains. Inspired by this realization, he gets a wild idea that he thinks will solve all his problems. What if he sells marijuana to the residents himself? Dov finds himself at a crossroads where he must decide whether he is willing to risk everything he has for what really matters most to him. The film is irresistible, funny and full of hilarious moments that will leave you laughing well into the next scene.

Comedy, 1 hour 30 minutes, Hebrew with English subtitles

Thursday, February 23 at 7:15 p.m.

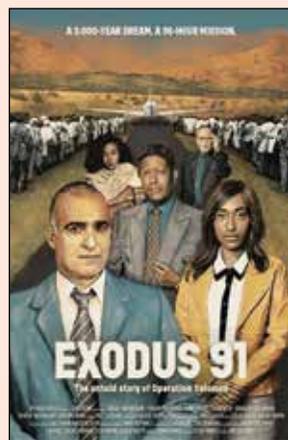


Women of Valor

In the Haredi community, a woman's obligation is to marry and bear children, and serve as primary breadwinner while her husband studies religious texts. Haredi political parties in Israel forbid women to seek public office. Fed up with the status quo, Esty Shushan is fighting to change that. She co-founds a nonprofit calling for representation of Orthodox women in the Knesset, taking their case to the Israeli Supreme Court. To prepare the next generation for leadership roles, her Nivcharot organization establishes a program to mentor young women and get the first female name on the ballot. But change comes with a cost as Esty's activism brings threats, suspicion and online harassment. Ostracized as a "fake Haredi," she must reconcile deep-rooted frustration over ultra-Orthodox life with her efforts to bring the silent voices of women to the center of Israeli discourse.

Documentary, 77 minutes, Hebrew and English

Thursday, March 2 at 7:15 p.m.



Exodus 91

Exodus 91 tells the incredible story of Operation Solomon, Israel's airlift of the Ethiopian Jewish community. Using documentary footage and reenactments, this feature-length film follows Asher Naim, the Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia, as he navigates the treacherous world of bureaucracy and politics in a region racked by civil war. Part historical drama, part documentary, the film blurs the lines between past and present to look beyond the euphoric salvation of Ethiopian Jewry. On a more universal level, the film explores challenging questions surrounding cultural identity, the politics of immigration, and the hardships that remain for these immigrants, and the others that followed, to this day.

Docudrama, 1 hour 30 minutes, Hebrew, Amharic, English

2023 Jewish Film Festival Ticket Information



Regal Belltower Stadium 20 Theaters
SERIES OF 11 FILMS: \$120 (discounted rate)
INDIVIDUAL FILM TICKETS: \$12 each
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FILMS

DATES

That Orchestra with the Broken Instruments – Opening Day	Sunday (Matinee), February 5 3:00 P.M.
Rose	Tuesday, February 7 7:15 P.M.
Bad Nazi, Good Nazi	Thursday, February 9 7:15 P.M.
Our Almost Completely True Story	Monday (Matinee), February 13 3:00 P.M.
One More Story	Tuesday, February 14 7:15 P.M.
Here We Are	Thursday, February 16 7:15 P.M.
Shepard: The Story of a Jewish Dog	Sunday, February 19 3:00 P.M.
Neighbors	Tuesday, February 21 7:15 P.M.
Women of Valor	Thursday, February 23 7:15 P.M.
Greener Pastures	Tuesday, February 28 7:15 P.M.
Exodus 91—Closing Day	Thursday, March 2 7:15 P.M.

To purchase your festival pass and individual tickets visit:

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BRIEFS

ABBAS ASKED WHY THERE IS NO PALESTINIAN STATE. THE ANSWERS WERE IN HIS UN SPEECH

- ◆ PA President Mahmoud Abbas asked the UN General Assembly on Friday, September 23 why the Palestinians do not yet have a state. I found that the answers to Abbas' questions were in his speech as well.
- ◆ He claimed to genuinely want peace with Israel but made clear that he rejects Israel's very legitimacy. He described Israel as a colonizing power for 75 years – that is, since its historic rebirth in 1948. He airbrushed Judaism out of his “eternal” Jerusalem, in which there

are only Muslim and Christian holy sites.

- ◆ There was no mention that Israel dismantled its settlements and withdrew all its soldiers from Gaza in 2005. No hint that Hamas took over and has provoked conflict with Israel ever since with indiscriminate rocket attacks on Israel, teaching Israel that relinquishing adjacent territory merely empowers the forces that seek our destruction.
- ◆ Abbas devoted some of his speech to Nasser Abu Hamid, whom he described as a heroic martyr who was now dying in jail of cancer, failing to note that Abu Hamid is serving multiple life terms for the

murders of seven Israelis and the attempted murders of 12 more. Abbas championed the killers of Israelis – to whom his Palestinian Authority insists on paying salaries, thus nurturing the next generations of murderers.

- ◆ Abbas ignored the “one condition” Prime Minister Yair Lapid set on Thursday, September 22 for the implementation of a two-state solution: “That a future Palestinian state will be a peaceful one. That it will not become another terror base from which to threaten the well-being and the very existence of Israel.”
- ◆ Lapid offered Abbas a one-sentence formula for Palestinian independence: “Put down your weapons, and there will be peace.” (David Horovitz, *Times of Israel*)

GOOGLE, META LAUNCH PROGRAMS AT ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES

Recently, two Israeli universities revealed collaborations with “big five” technology companies.

Google and Reichman University are founding a School of High-Tech that will prepare students for professions that are in high demand in the Israeli high-tech market: programming, software testing, business development, sales, data analysis and more.

Studies will take place at the Google for Startups Campus in Tel Aviv and at Reichman, a private university in Herzliya.

Google has pledged scholarships enabling qualified candidates from populations under-represented in Israeli high-tech – including women, ultra-Orthodox Jews, Arabs, Ethiopian Israelis and people from disadvantaged socio-economic groups – to apply regardless of ability to pay tuition.

“We believe that a variety of voices, opinions and perspectives enriches Israeli high-tech and its developments,” said Barak Regev, Managing Director of Google Israel.

Meta (formerly Facebook) is partnering with Hebrew University's Rachel and Selim Benin School of Computer Science and Engineering and Yissum technology transfer company in a PhD program focused on advanced artificial intelligence (AI) research for the marketplace.

PhD students who are accepted into the program will have the opportunity to merge theory with real work experience, to gain a better understanding of emerging technologies and to develop new ones.

Meta will assign the HU students mentors and scholarships to deepen their understanding in AI and machine learning. These students will have access to Meta's computational infrastructure and facilities.

“This partnership offers our students a unique opportunity to experience the world of research and development from two perspectives: a research perspective that enables experimentation, innovation and breakthroughs; and an implementation perspective, which will give them an understanding of the real-world impact of their research,” said Prof. Sara Cohen, Dean of the Rachel and Selim Benin School of Computer Science and Engineering at the Hebrew University. (Abigail Klein Leichman, ISRAEL21c)

ISRAEL'S MILITARY COOPERATION WITH UAE IS “REVOLUTIONARY”

Dr. Dan Schueftan, who heads the International Graduate Program in National Security Studies at the University of Haifa, called the deployment of Israel's Barak 8 aerial defense system in the UAE “revolutionary.”

“For a long time, the perception of Israel was not only that it was not beneficial for powers to cooperate with Israel, but also that it could be counterproductive because Israel was so hated and isolated in the region. This has now changed in a very fundamental way.”

Israel's burgeoning alliance with several Arab states “makes it much easier for Israel to defend itself because before, Iran had allies on the borders of Israel and Israel had no allies on the borders of Iran. This is now changing.”

While Israel has refused Ukraine's requests for Iron Dome, Schueftan argued that this missile defense technology is not suitable for Ukraine.

“The instruments that Israel developed are for tiny territories. There are not enough Iron Dome systems in the universe to defend a small fraction of Ukraine. Israel does not even have enough projectiles to defend itself from all the existential threats.” (Maya Margit, *Medialine*)

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14 reasons Shira Haas is a superhero on and off screen

How a Facebook message changed the life of Marvel's newest superhero, what she thinks of Natalie Portman and more.

By Marion Fischel, ISRAEL21c, October 18, 2022

Israeli actress Shira Haas is going to play Sabra, an Israeli superhero, in the film *Captain America: New World Order*.

At just 27 years old, Haas already has gained international fame for her roles in productions including the Israeli TV series *Shtisel* and the Netflix series *Unorthodox*.

Here are 14 fascinating facts about this fast-rising star:

1. Haas is the granddaughter of Holocaust survivors from Eastern Europe. During World War II, one of her grandfathers was interned at Auschwitz, the infamous Nazi concentration camp. Haas has a very close relationship with her 86-year-old grandmother.

2. Haas's professional career began at age 14, when she earned herself two theatrical roles at the Cameri, Tel Aviv's prime theater. She appeared in Shakespeare's *Richard III* as well as in Joshua Sonbol's *Ghetto*, while still attending the Thelma Yellin Arts High School in Givatayim, east of Tel Aviv.

3. In 2014, Haas received a surprise Facebook message from Israeli casting director Esther Kling, urging her to audition for the lead role in the Israeli film *Princess*. Haas took the advice, and her acting won her Best Actress at the Jerusalem Film Festival. *Princess* also got her noticed in the U.S. by *The New York Times* and *The Hollywood Reporter*.

4. Haas's first international movie, in 2015, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, was also a director's premiere for Israeli American actress Natalie Portman. Haas told *Ynet* that she found Portman to be a role model, "impressive and humble and real."



Israeli actress Shira Haas (photo by Flash90)

5. In 2017, Haas auditioned and was hired over Skype for her role in the American-made *The Zookeeper's Wife*. Ahead of the film's release, she appeared on *The Today Show*, another first for her.

6. She made the Israeli *Forbes* list of 30 under 30 in February 2019.

7. In order to make sure that her Yiddish was perfect for the dialogue in *Unorthodox*, Haas arrived in Berlin two months before the shooting to take language classes. She also took piano and singing lessons to prepare

for her role in the series.

8. In 2020, she was nominated for a Golden Globe Award and a Primetime Emmy Award for the role of Esty in the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*. She made history by becoming the first Israeli actor nominated for a primetime acting Emmy. For the Israeli film *Asia* in 2020, she won Best International Actress at the Tribeca Film Festival, and in Israel received the coveted Ophir for Best Supporting Actress.

9. Like the superhero she portrays in the upcoming Marvel movie, Haas and her parents are sabras, meaning native-born Israelis. These are compared to the cactus fruit sabra, (*tzabar* in Hebrew), which is prickly on the outside yet soft on the inside, as Israelis are reputed to be.

10. Haas, the youngest of three siblings, was born in 1995 in Tel Aviv, where she currently lives with her husband. The family moved to Hod Hasharon when she was a year old.

11. Haas was diagnosed with kidney cancer at the age of two. Within three years, treatment had saved her life but stunted her growth.

12. Despite having gotten a medical exemption from military service for the above reason, Haas enlisted voluntarily in the Israel Defense Forces Military Band and theater unit.

13. Haas always thanks her parents publicly for their encouragement and support in enabling her to become the best artist she can be.

14. While the Sabra character was first introduced in Marvel comics 40 years ago, the corporation says it is now taking a new approach to the character with Haas. The reaction of anti-Israel elements after the announcement of the film has caused the character to become controversial even before its anticipated release in 2024. Let's see how she handles the challenges. 🌍

For daily news stories related to Israel & the Jewish world, visit the Federation's website at www.JewishFederationLCC.org



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What being Jewish means to me

By David Harris, September 21, 2022

Surveys reveal a disturbingly large number of American Jews who feel disconnected from their Jewish identity. How painfully sad! In response, let me share what being Jewish means to me.

1. It means championing what is arguably the single most revolutionary concept in the annals of human civilization – monotheism – introduced to the world by the Jews, and its corollary, the inherent belief that we are all created in the image of God (in Hebrew, B'tzelem Elohim).

2. It means embracing the deep symbolic meaning the rabbis gave to the story of Adam and Eve. Since all of humanity descend from the “original” couple, each of us, whatever our race, religion or ethnicity, shares the same family tree. No one can claim superiority over anyone else.

3. It means entering into a partnership with the Divine for the repair of our broken world (in Hebrew, Tik-kun Olam), and recognizing that this work is not to be outsourced to a higher authority, or to “fate” or to other

people, but that it's my responsibility during my lifetime.

4. It means affirming life – “I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse, therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live” (Hebrew Bible) – and the moral choice that lies in the hands of each of us to bring a little closer the Jewish prophetic vision of a world at peace and in harmony.

5. It means celebrating the fact that Jews were early dissidents, among the very first to challenge the status quo and insist on the right to worship differently than the majority. Today, we call this pluralism, and it is a bedrock principle of democratic societies. It also ought to be an essential component of Jewish communities everywhere.

6. It means welcoming the pioneering Jewish effort to establish a universal moral code of conduct and seeking to act as if that code of conduct were my daily GPS – to pursue justice, to treat my neighbor as I would wish to be treated, to welcome the stranger in our midst (and, I might add, the newcomer to the Jewish people), to be sensitive to the environment and to seek peace. It's not by accident that America's Founding Fathers chose words from the Hebrew Bible for our nation's Liberty Bell: “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land and unto all the inhabitants thereof.” Or that the Ten Commandments continue to be an ethical guidepost

for so many around the world.

7. It means recognizing that I am an heir and custodian of a civilization that is thousands of years old, and that has within it bountiful riches of theology and faith, philosophy and ethics, music and art, ethnography and history, and so much more – enough for a lifetime of endless exploration and enrichment.

8. It means experiencing the indescribable joy of belonging and community just about anywhere I go in the world; celebrating the extraordinary impact of the Jewish people, barely one-fifth of one percent of the world's population, in advancing the frontiers of world civilization, including winning an estimated 22 percent of all the world's Nobel prizes; embracing the centrality of discussion and debate about life's big questions, informed by a multitude of Jewish teachings over the centuries; and marveling at the almost unimaginable Jewish determination to persevere against all the odds, without ever losing hope for a brighter future. The author Mark Twain, an admirer of the Jewish people, once noted in amazement: “All things are mortal but the Jews; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?”

9. It means having a past to which I am inextricably linked by the generations that preceded me; that prepared their sons and daughters for their Bar and Bat Mitzvah; that blessed

continued on next page

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Jewish Family Services

A division of the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

David Harris...continued from previous page

their children at the Shabbat table; that sat at the Passover Seder and yearned for “Next year in Jerusalem” and the coming of the prophet Elijah; that fasted on Yom Kippur as they underwent their moral inventory, and celebrated joyously at Purim in the knowledge that our enemies had been defeated; and that passed the baton of the Jewish people from generation to generation.

10. It means living in perpetual mourning for all that was lost in the Holocaust, the pogroms, the inquisitions, the forced conversions, the exiles, the blood libels and the other deadly manifestations of antisemitism while, at the same time, living in everlasting gratitude for the gift of life, the blessing of opportunity, and the sacred task set before us of igniting that special spark within each of us.

11. It means the exultation of knowing that, in my lifetime, the prayers of millions of Jews over many centuries have finally been answered – the exhilarating return of the Jewish people to the cradle of our existence and the rebirth of the sovereign state of Israel. As the legendary Winston Churchill, a lifelong Zionist, said in 1947, “The coming into being of a Jewish State in Palestine is an event in world history to be viewed in the perspective not of a generation or a century, but in the perspective of a thousand, two thousand or even three thousand years.” How right he was!

12. It means affirming the inextricable link between Israel and the Jewish people. This land represents not only the physical, or sovereign, symbol

of our nationhood, but also – whether we choose to live there or not – the highest metaphysical expression of our faith, our prayer and our yearning. As the Psalmist wrote, “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.”

13. It means knowing that in fighting against antisemitism and for Israel’s right to live in peace and security, I am striving for a better world that holds promise for all people who aspire to coexistence in peace and mutual respect.

14. It means taking pride in the immense Jewish contribution to the defense of human dignity. Not by accident, the Hebrew Bible – from the exodus from Egypt to the very concept of the Promised Land – has been a source of inspiration for America’s Founding Fathers and for the American civil rights movement (e.g., the African-American spiritual – “When Israel was in Egypt’s land, let my people go!”). And not by accident, either, Jews have been disproportionately represented in the forefront of the global struggle for the advancement of human rights. Strikingly, Jews have never been satisfied with things as they are. If Isaiah and the other prophets returned to earth, as perennial critics of the status quo, they would remind us that, for all that has been achieved, there’s much more work to be done before we can declare success here on earth.

15. And finally, as Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel once said, it means not necessarily seeking to make the world more Jewish, but rather more human.

That is the goal animating our people, through good times and bad, from the very beginning of this extraordinary historical journey to the present day.

May every Jew everywhere feel, or discover, the sense of joy, connection through time and space, shared destiny, collective responsibility and daily inspiration that I’ve had the privilege of experiencing throughout my life.

David Harris was the CEO of American Jewish Committee (AJC) from 1990 through September 2022.

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

COMMENTARY BRIEFS

THE IMPACT OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE ON ISRAEL

- ◆ The war in Ukraine has led the West to wake up to the sudden reality of military threats. The prospect of a major contract for the sale of Israeli missile defense technology to Germany is one part of a broader pattern: enhancing Israel’s position as a significant center of military production and innovation.
- ◆ This is often accompanied by a growing understanding of Israel’s motivations and conduct in a dangerous strategic environment.
- ◆ Meanwhile, Iran’s supply of drones to Russia for attacks on civilian targets in Ukraine makes it easier for Israel to make the case against concessions that would fuel Tehran’s ambitions.
- ◆ Another important gain for Israel is the greatly increased rate of Jewish immigration from both Ukraine and Russia.
- ◆ The growing affinity between the

regime in Iran and Putin’s Russia seems to have led to a Western re-assessment of the Iranian issue as a whole. On this point, Israeli messages, both in terms of intelligence information shared with Western partners and its public diplomacy decrying Iran’s policies, may have helped move the needle.

- ◆ With Iran firmly aligning itself with the anti-Western camp forged by the war, the meaning of a nuclear deal changes. It is no longer a statesmanlike achievement for U.S. diplomacy, but a sign of fatal weakness in the face of a scheming, hostile player.
- ◆ The bottom line is that the global and regional reality created by the war strengthens Israel and enhances its international and regional standing. (Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman, who held senior posts in IDF Military Intelligence for over 20 years, is Vice President of Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security)

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We don't talk about Izzy

By Keith Grossman

Many people are into genealogy and tracing their family tree. There are many resources available for them to do just that with purpose and intentionality. There are also ways to go down that rabbit hole on social media, without design. I have certainly been guilty of that.

I also found an incredible story of my family tree by mere chance – one of those dirty, little family secrets. The skeletons in our closet. I'm sure you have them.

Should this skeleton remain buried keeping my family in the dark? Who knows. But I'm sharing it here.

Mark Twain did not say, "Why shouldn't truth be stranger than fiction? Fiction, after all, has to make sense." What he actually said was, "Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; truth isn't."

But I like the first made-up quote better. It's more succinct.

So, here's the true, stranger-than-fiction story of my cousin, Isadore Joe Sutker.

I went to the Mob Museum (the National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement) in downtown Las Vegas. It is a museum that is housed in a 1930s neoclassical building, which was formerly a U.S. Post Office and Courthouse. The four-story building has been immaculately restored.

The museum has hundreds of artifacts and immersive exhibits about organized crime's history and impact on American society. The exhibits are categorized by events, related topics

and famous people. There are not-so-famous people too.

It was at the museum that I learned about my cousin, affectionately known as Izzy the Rat. And, apparently, like the Disney movie *Encanto*, we don't talk about Izzy. I told this story to my dad and some cousins on the Sutker side of the family, and nobody was familiar with the story.

Another Sutker family member compiled a genealogy study and family tree approximately 10 years ago. I found Izzy within that documented work, although it does not mention his connections with the mob.

Izzy was born on September 15, 1903, in Chicago. As an adult, he became a member of the Chicago mob. He and two other men shook down Chicago speakeasy operators for protection money. Izzy and his associates did not know that these operators were under Al Capone's syndicate. Capone allowed the three men to leave Chicago to avoid being killed.

The three men fled to Detroit and became affiliated with a faction of the Purple Gang, a mob gang that operated gambling, drug distribution, bootlegging and other criminal activity. The men got in trouble with the Purple Gang because they were ignoring their orders.

The Purple Gang called a meeting with the three men at Collingwood Manor Apartments. The men thought it was a meeting to make amends, but at the meeting they were ambushed and killed by the Purple Gang.

Izzy the Rat was killed in the ambush on September 16, 1931, at 28 years old.

The Mob Museum promotes itself as "All the dirt. All in one place." I was stunned to find my family as part of that dirt. 🤔



■ Keith Grossman

Our love affair with dogs

By Brian Simon, Federation Past-President

Newsflash: People aren't good at interpersonal relationships.

A December 2021 report from Cigna found that 57% of American men and 59% of women reported feeling lonely. That same year's American Perspectives Survey reported 12% of respondents said they have no close friends. Zero.



■ Brian Simon

You know who is really good at personal relationships? Dogs. Man's best friend has become men's and women's only friend.

"Dogs have been part of human societies for longer than any other domestic species," write three authors of a conceptual analysis in *Frontiers in Psychology*. "Like no other species, they exemplify the role of companion animals. Relationships with pet dogs are both very widespread and very intense, often leading to strong attachments between owners or caregivers and animals, and to a treatment of these dogs as family members or even children."

While our species' relationship with dogs goes back thousands of years, I sense an evolution even within our generation. I remember one of my first Hebrew School teachers, Mrs. Shapiro, making the case that even a criminal's life was more important than a dog's life because the criminal was human. There was pushback from the 5th graders, including myself.

More evidence of an evolution in thinking about dogs is that serious scientists study them. Here's the bio for Gregory S. Berns, a psychology professor at Emory University: "My current research uses fMRI to study canine cognitive function in awake, unrestrained dogs."

Berns has a bachelor's degree from Princeton, a PhD from UC-Davis and an MD from UC-San Diego. I can imagine a difficult conversation with his parents.

Parents: "Gregory, you've finally

become a doctor. We're so proud! What specialty are you going into?"

Gregory: "I'm going to study dogs' brains."

Parents: "What?! Someone ought to study your brain!"

Berns has written two books about dogs, *How Dogs Love Us* and *What It's Like to Be a Dog*.

I'll have to take his word for what's it like to be a dog because I can't read an MRI.

Scientists from Australia to Europe to Japan are also studying dogs and their relationships with humans. Takefumi Kikusui at Azabu University led an experiment which found that when dogs and their owners stared into each other's eyes it increased oxytocin levels by 130% in the dogs and 300% in humans. Oxytocin is the "hug hormone" that helps humans bond with our own babies. (I can imagine a similar discussion with Kikusui's parents, only in Japanese.)

This may explain why we like our dogs more than we like our children. Or maybe it's because dogs don't stay out late with the car or talk back to us or ask for money.

Our long history with dogs "may indicate that there are unmet needs by interpersonal relationships in the best of times," says Rabbi Marc Sack. "There's a need for deeply appreciated love – the way the dog looks at you when you come in the door. He's so happy to see you. There's this great need and we don't get it from our personal relationships."

Ironically, dogs get lonely too. More than 2 million dogs are estimated to suffer from separation anxiety.

The relationship between humans and dogs is symbiotic, where one needs attention and companionship and the other needs someone to take them out to pee.

Perhaps the solution for our lonely and fraying society is to take walks with each other. 🐾

Brian Simon is a former president of the Federation. His views are not necessarily those of the Federation or its board.



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Modern Maccabees

What is the truth about the spirit of the Jewish people today? An American couple touring Israel went to visit Modin, where the Maccabean revolt began and where the Maccabees are buried. As they approached the area, they came to a sign marked “The graves of the Maccabees.” They searched for the exact location but could not find it. By chance, there was an encampment of Israeli soldiers across the road. A squad was resting under some trees near the sign.

The Americans asked, “Fellows, where are the graves of the Maccabees?” The soldiers shrugged and one said, “I don’t know.”

They then asked with some exasperation, “How is it you don’t know

the exact spot when you are so close to Jewish history?” The sergeant replied, “Mister, why do you bother to look for the dead Maccabees? We are living Maccabees and we are here!”

We are the Maccabees. Their genes are ours. We are bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. We are alive and we intend to keep Israel and the Jewish people alive. We have a Jewish conscience. We are determined that every Jew shall have a decent life wherever he or she lives. We care not the cost, we are not deterred by the enormity of the challenge, we know who we are – we are the Jewish people.

We the Jewish people will not die. We will live to proclaim the wonders of God. For the fact is that we are not a people of heroes, but simply human beings, people who do heroic things.

A joyous Hanukkah to all. 🌟
Rabbi Solomon Agin serves at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte.



■ Rabbi Solomon Agin

Faith that our spirit will sustain us

Lighting the Hanukkah menorah is not straightforward. You put the candles in right to left but light them left to right. You say the blessing first then light, unlike the Shabbat candles when you light first and then bless. You put the menorah by a window unless you live on the upper floor, then you put it in an interior doorway.

Elon Gold, a Jewish comic, does a hilarious stand-up routine about how it’s a good thing Christmas trees are not part of our tradition because we’d spend the whole holiday arguing over what kind of tree it can be, who can cut the tree and where you put the tree. Lighting the menorah is complicated enough for us.

Judaism is a religion with multiple rituals for every holiday and for every day. Each mitzvah, each commandment, is an opportunity to come closer to God and the Jewish people. But it can feel overwhelming and embarrassing when you’re not sure how to get it right, whether you’re lighting the Hanukkah menorah or saying the Torah blessings for an aliyah.

Franz Rosenzweig, a 20th century Jewish philosopher, when asked if he performed the commandment of wrapping tefillin, famously replied, “not yet.” Not yet, but maybe in the future, maybe soon, maybe tomorrow. “Not

yet,” but maybe with time and dedication, we can overcome our feelings of uncertainty and take on a new aspect of our Jewish tradition, a new commandment.

As we celebrate Hanukkah on the cusp of a new secular year, now is the time when we ask: What happens next? What new rituals will you explore? What learning will you engage in that will impact your personal interactions? What closeness to God will unfold?

It doesn’t have to be perfect.

Author Carla Naumburg shared a story about how she completely blanked on the words of the Hanukkah blessings while lighting the menorah and at first felt the guilt and embarrassment of messing up. But then she realized that in the story of Hanukkah, the Maccabees faced an imperfect situation – not enough oil – but they lit the menorah anyway.

It’s okay to try something and not have it be perfect. What is the ritual that intimidates you, that seems beyond your ability, that you’ve always wanted to try? Perhaps it’s saying a Hebrew prayer, baking challah or doing Havdalah.

The story of Hanukkah is about the faith that our oil, our own spirit, will sustain us. May this Hanukkah inspire you to try something new, learn something new and do something new that will enhance your Judaism and enrich your life. 🌟

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



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

The Chanukah miracle we must create

If you ask most Jews about Chanukah, beginning this year on Sunday evening, December 18, 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.



■ Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

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 Jews 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 Judaea 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 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 of Sukkot.

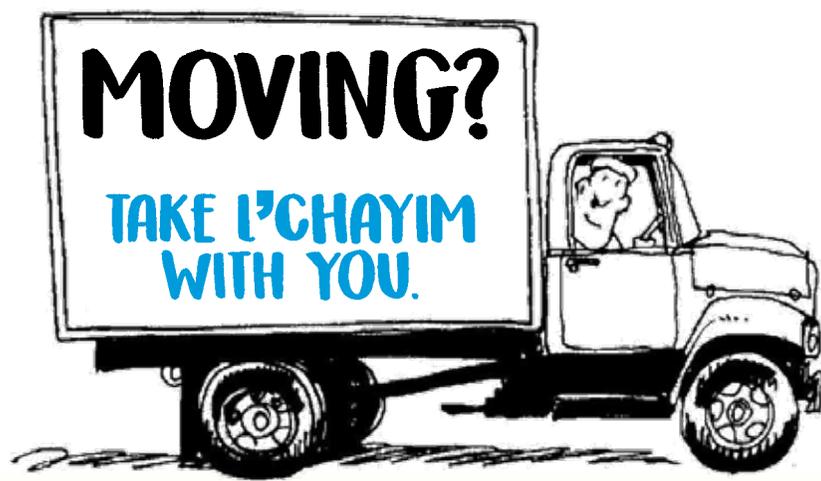
The real message of Chanukah, then, is a message about values. We almost lost the right to be Jewish 2,200 years ago, not because of a Syrian oppressor but because of our own apathy. Such religious apathy is rampant today.

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 are the forces that almost destroyed us 2,000+ years ago. They are the very forces we need a Chanukah miracle to thwart today. 🌟
Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs serves at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel Island.

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Chanukah in America

This is a fascinating time and place in Jewish history. American culture, politics, academia and businesses give greater embrace of, and acceptance to, Jews and Judaism than at any other time or place in Diaspora history. For most Jews, the sense of being an outsider, a stranger in our own land, has greatly dissipated in the past two generations – and for many disappeared almost altogether.

■ Cantor Barry Butensky

The slight awkwardness I remember feeling as a child at Chanukah time in that we did not share in the customs, rituals, ceremonies and celebrations of the majority of our neighbors, school friends and communities, is not, to my awareness, shared by my children. America's pluralistic embrace of Jewish life, rituals and customs such as Chanukah makes for a comfort level in our celebrations that continues to mark America as the country in which we have known more rights, more freedoms, more acceptance and more opportunities than we had known for 2,000 years.

And yet... I remember I once made a conscious decision to extend our holiday with our then elementary school-aged children with friends in a highly populated Jewish community, through Chanukah and Christmas, to give them the experience away from the secular town we lived in – of what it felt like to live in a thoroughly Jewish environment, with Chanukiot (menorahs) in windows in almost every house; no Christmas carols in stores and on the streets; little of the commercialism that permeates America's celebration of these winter holidays.

It is an experience that few Jews in this remarkable land of ours have, save a handful of self-isolated communities among Orthodox Jews. There was a spiritual calmness to that time and it left a lasting impression.

Even the intensity of the Christmas celebrations of the Christian community in the surrounding area had a dignity and solemnity that is so often missing here. And something else. With all the acceptance of Chanukah in American life, it is not the Chanukah that we would like our children or American culture to embrace. Much of the watered down, lowest common denominator, commercialized aspects

that have impacted Christmas in America have impacted Chanukah. I remember a rabbi once wrote an article as to why Jews should not have Christmas trees, or what were then called by some Chanukah bushes, in their homes. Not only did it dilute the authenticity of Chanukah, but it belittled the meaning of Christmas to arrogate another's religious symbol by turning a tree representing essential aspects of the Christmas holiday into a secular commercial, let alone a Jewish, symbol.

In the midst of the gift-giving, song singing, menorah lighting, miracle story of the one day of oil in the menorah of the re-consecrated Temple in Jerusalem lasting for eight days, much of the essential meaning of Chanukah is lost.

Without judgment on the veracity of the legend of the oil, it is a story that first appears in Jewish texts centuries after the events. But the events themselves and the meaning given by the rabbis speak across the centuries to us today: the risks and gains inherent in the struggle for freedom against tyranny; the human passion for religious liberty; the dangers of struggles for freedom spilling over into new forms of extremism; the divisiveness between those who seek multiculturalism and syncretism of attractive aspects of the various cultures in which we live and those who seek cultural purity; and the effort never to let militarism, as necessary as it may be, to become an end in itself and define our character or identity. ("Not by might, not by power but my strength says the Eternal God." Zachariah 4:6)

Let's hope in the coming years, the more authentic religious and historical aspects of Chanukah – and Christmas – will engage the moral imagination of the American people. 🌍

Cantor Barry Butensky serves at Temple Beth Shalom in Cape Coral.

To light up the world is our mission

The story of Chanukah recounts the Jewish victory of the Maccabees over the Greek-Syrian ruler Antiochus over 2,000 years ago. The Greeks were determined to defile



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

the Temple and extinguish the light of Judaism. Following the battle, the Jews found only enough oil to light the menorah for one day. The flame was lit and it miraculously burned for eight days. The Maccabees fought a battle for freedom and religious tolerance, and that battle continues today in many places across the globe.

We live in times of uncertainty and fear, and our solidarity with those who stand for tolerance, and personal and religious freedom is vital. In these times of darkness, we all look for the light.

In China, Russia, Iran, Syria, North Korea and many countries in the Middle East and across the globe, we watch as oppressive governments desperately cling to power. As Jews, it is our mission to be *Or Ha Goyim*, a light unto the nations, a people whose absolute faith in G-d has enabled us to rise above our fear; a people ever ready to work together with our partners for peace in fighting for equality, human rights and dignity. Even the smallest light will illuminate a vast darkness, and with this idea as our guiding principle, we can bring healing and peace to our troubled world.

We look to our ancient texts to find the hope and inspiration to persevere. The rabbis of the Talmud recounted the Chanukah story about a jar of oil that should have been enough for only one night but miraculously burned for eight days. Hillel teaches us why we light the Chanukah candles the way we do today. He said that you start with one light, then two, three and so on with the message, "*D'ma'alin b'kodesh v'ein moridin* – in matters of holiness we do not decrease, only increase."

As we light the Chanukah candles this year, during what seems like a darker time in our world, let us commit to increasing hope, faith and action. We celebrate Chanukah as the Festival of Lights and this miracle serves as a symbol to remind us that with a little faith in G-d, hope is possible.

With this story of light, the focus was shifted from the battlefield to Divine power, to that spark of hope that one day the light of freedom and tolerance will illuminate the entire world. In each and every age, we are challenged by those who wish to use their power to subjugate, control and enslave the week, those who seek to stand against G-d and the nation of Israel.

Throughout history, light has always defeated the darkness. May the beauty of this year's Chanukah lights remind us that history will repeat itself once more, and the light of hope, love, compassion and tolerance will prevail! 🌍

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

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Pull for the positives

In social work school (a degree I got while also attending rabbinical school), they taught us to “pull for the positives.” I was doing a rotation of hospital social work and I learned that when encouraging a patient to make a difficult life choice, I should emphasize all the good things that could come out of this choice. It was good advice. The words, “pull for the positives” stuck with me and I try to see life that way.

■ Rabbi Marc Sack

Mai Chanukah?

What is Chanukah, the Talmud asks? It is our holiday when we light lights at the darkest time of the year and watch the light grow. This is not a passive process. We light the candles each night, adding candle after candle throughout the holiday.

Rabbi Michael Strassfeld wrote that it took ‘faith’ for the Maccabees to light the menorah, knowing that there was only enough oil to last one day.

I prefer the language of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, who taught that hope is different from optimism. Optimism is the belief that things will get better. Hope is the belief that we can make things better. Judaism is much more a religion of hope: we are activists; we believe it is our job to make things better. Had he written about Chanukah, Rabbi Sacks might have said that the Maccabees lighting the first candle was an insistence in creating however

much light they could. It was saying, “We are here!”

The last few months have seen an alarming rise in antisemitic expression and activity. We are rightfully concerned. We should respond in several ways. We must make sure our institutions are safe. We must also actively reach out to and build strong relations with our neighbors. And we must hold our heads high. We are good citizens. We contribute to our community. We lend our skills to making life better for humankind. If there is darkness, then we must create light with outreach to our neighbors and take active roles in our community.

There are positives here. Most importantly, we have many friends. Neighboring churches and mosques want to be in relationships with us. And they are horrified by the expressions of antisemitism. So too is law enforcement on the local and federal levels. These institutions, and the individuals next to whom we live and work, like us. These relationships are a strong foundation on which we can build.

Chanukah is a holiday on which we say, at the darkest time of the year, that light will prevail. And then we make that happen. We are living in difficult times – for us Jews and others. But we have the ability to make things much better. Our relations with our neighbors should be on the front burner of the Jewish community. Our neighbors will be receptive to our call.🌍

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.

Chanukah

The Rebbe Rayatz, the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, once said, “We have to listen to the Chanukah candles.”

The flickering flames of these lights communicate a message: Our



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

souls do not want to be contained. Just as the fire seems to desire to leave the wick even though that will cause it to be extinguished, so too, we each possess an aspect in our souls that seeks to rise from the body even though

were it to do so, we would no longer continue living. Why does the soul desire that? Because it is an actual part of G d, and the material world in which we live is so foreign to it. Money, physical pleasures, even friendship and love cannot satisfy it. It seeks to return and be united with its G dly source.

This is the natural tendency of our souls. But Judaism teaches us to control this natural tendency. Just because the soul wants to leave the body does not mean it should. That would be spiritual escapism. G d implanted the soul in the body and sent it to this material world so that it would shine forth and illuminate the darkness of material existence. Our souls are charged with a mission: to make this world a dwelling for Him: to reveal the G dliness latent in every material entity.

Like a flame rises and falls, so too, our souls surge upward in yearning for G d and then return earthward in a commitment to fulfill His will. This is implied by our Sages’ teaching: “Against your will, you live, and against your will, you die.”

We should appreciate how our lives run contrary to the fundamental desire of the soul to cling to its G dly source. Its natural tendency is to seek a higher, more refined existence, not to be involved in matters of this world. Nevertheless, after it accepts the mission with which G d entrusts it, it learns to appreciate the good in this world and understands how everything in this world has a positive purpose and can be employed for a Divine intent. Once this lesson is internalized, the soul does not want to leave the world. On the contrary, it comprehends the beauty and meaning that each moment of life holds.

In essence, the challenge is to create

wicks to hold the soul’s flame, to give it footholds in this world to which its light can be attached and, in that way, burn in a steady manner.

These concepts are relevant throughout the year, but receive special emphasis on Chanukah, when there is a mitzvah to kindle lights. The Chanukah candles we light recall the miraculous victory of the Jews over the Greeks. What was the core of that conflict? The Greeks wanted to contaminate the light of the Jews’ souls. That’s why when they entered the Temple, they did not destroy the oil there. They made it impure. They were not opposed to having the Jews kindle lights; they just wanted to be sure that the light had a Greek touch.

The Jews refused to accept that. They understood that the light of their soul had to be pure, and they were willing to sacrifice their very lives for that purpose. When G d saw the completeness of their devotion, He responded with a miracle, granting them a victory over the strongest military power of the world. Then to emphasize that their success was not the result of their own prowess, He performed a further miracle, causing the light of the Menorah to burn for eight days and thus revealing that it was G d’s hand that had brought them success.

The candles of the Chanukah menorah commemorate the candles lit on the Menorah in the Temple. Nevertheless, there are eight Chanukah candles, whereas in the Temple there were only seven candles.

Our Sages explain that the seven candles of the Temple represent the natural order like the seven days of the week. In contrast, the eight lights of Chanukah refer to transcendent spirituality. In a similar way, they explain that the harp that was played in the Temple had seven strands, but in the era of Mashiach, they will use a harp of eight strands.

What’s the difference between seven and eight? Seven is a complete natural cycle. Nothing is lacking. Eight is seven plus one. It contributes a oneness that enriches all the elements of the seven. Similarly, the intent is not to obliterate the seven with the light of eight’s infinity, but rather to combine seven with one, and express G d’s transcendence within the limits of the world.🌍

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.

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PJ Library offers families everything necessary for a lively, entertaining and enriching Hanukkah

Family-friendly resources for the eight-day festival of lights (December 18-26) include an updated Hanukkah Hub featuring hands-on activities, seasonal recipes, new podcasts for kids and unique books.

As fall moves toward winter, Jewish families begin to look toward Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights. Celebrating the rededication of the Jewish Temple after it was taken back from the Greeks in the 2nd century BCE, it's a fun and festive holiday spanning eight days and is best known for menorahs, latkes and dreidels. This year, families are invited to turn to PJ Library for a treasure trove of free resources created to ensure Hanukkah 2022 is a memorable one. Included is an updated Hanukkah Hub featuring printable recipes and activity ideas, book lists, a new story-based podcast and so much more!

PJ Library is a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation which delivers more than 680,000 free Jewish story books to kids around the world each month. Now in its 17th year, the program hit a milestone in 2022 by shipping its 50 millionth book. Jewish families of all backgrounds at all levels of Jewish knowledge and observance – including interfaith households – may subscribe every child in their home to receive a new, age-appropriate book each month. PJ Library's team of experts and educators curate the book list to provide the best children's stories that celebrate Jewish values, traditions and culture to engage all Jewish families. What could be a better Hanukkah

gift than to receive a beautifully illustrated book arriving in the mailbox each month? This year, for example, younger readers (ages 3-5) will receive Varda Livney's delightful picture book, *Hanukkah at Monica's*, a new and original release from PJ Publishing, the program's in-house imprint.

Beyond the books, PJ Library will update its resource-packed Hanukkah Hub. One new offering is a lively Hanukkah-themed lava lamp activity, where children will test the density of different types of oil while creating calming faux "lava lamps" with recycled materials. This funky craft is a great addition to a night of enjoying foods fried in oil while embracing the Jewish values of curiosity and learning.

On the award-winning podcast front, a new *Afternoons with Mimi* episode arrives on November 22 – just in time for the holiday! Perfect for children ages 2-5, "Kiddo Lights the Hanukkah Candles" has wise Grandma Mimi detailing the all-important lighting of the menorah, what it means and how to do it.

Also check out the new picture book, *Hanukkah at Monica's*, now on the PJ Library Amazon store at amazon.com/pjlibrary. Synopsis: No one loves Hanukkah more than Monica. And celebrating the Festival of Lights – lighting candles, singing blessings,

eating delicious fried foods and playing dreidel – is even more fun with friends. Luckily, Monica has lots of friends, including a robot, a pirate, even a jellyfish! Who's going to arrive at her party next?

Long a valuable resource for interfaith families, PJ Library also offers guidance this year, including its list of Hanukkah Books for Interfaith Families. Interfaith families who choose to celebrate Hanukkah can turn to Jessica Keith's helpful blog post *No, We Don't Celebrate Both*.

Finally, for those seeking creative gift-giving options, PJ Library has set up shop at amazon.com/pjlibrary. There, families can find colorful aprons for cooking and crafting, and books from the PJ Library imprint, PJ Pub-

lishing, including recent additions *My Hands Make the World*, *Havdalah Sky* and *Laila Tov, Moon*. The PJ Library Amazon store also offers a perpetual Jewish calendar kit, making it simple for families to personalize and track Jewish holidays month after month.

About PJ Library

A free program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, PJ Library sends engaging storybooks and activities that provide fun and easy ways for families to connect with Jewish life. PJ Library's high-quality books have become everyday favorites of kids through age 12, whether the stories serve as first introductions to Jewish values and culture or inspire families to create new Jewish traditions at home. To find out more, visit pjlibrary.org.



RECEIVE THE GIFT OF EDUCATION WITH FREE JEWISH CHILDREN'S BOOKS

www.pjlibrary.org

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The Roth Family Foundation
 Barbara Siegel, Mike & Marsha Kistler,
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Bring Jewish stories home

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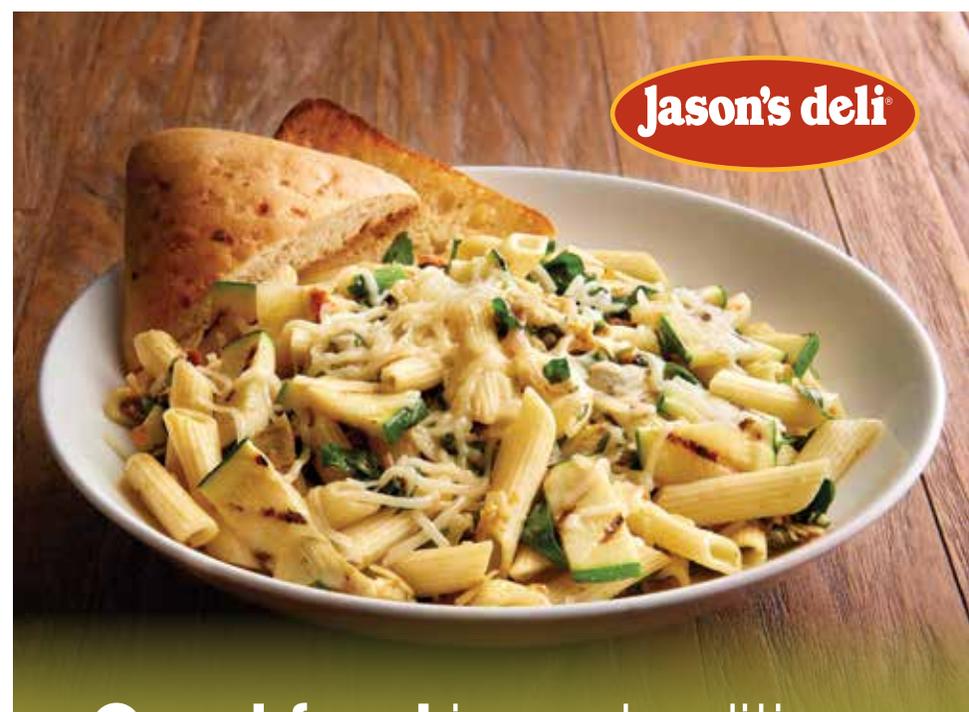
Hanukkah BBQ Bonanza

FOOD, GAMES MUSIC

Sunday, December 11th, 12-1:30pm
 Backyard at Temple Beth El
 16225 Winkler Rd, FM 33908

RSVP WITH THE NUMBER OF GUESTS TO:
DEBBIESANFORD@JFEDLCC.ORG OR
 239.481.4449 X6



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Fort Myers - Reflections Pkwy, @ Cypress Lake
 Gulf Coast Landings - Alico Road and Ben Hill Griffin
 Cape Coral - Santa Barbara near Veterans
 Naples - Immokalee near Airport Pulling

More Information, contact Dena Corkhill

(239) 481- 4449 (ext.4)
denacorkhill@jfedlcc.org





Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

JOSEPH HOROWITZ ISRAEL TRAVEL GRANT

is available through TOP Jewish Foundation of Lee & Charlotte Counties and may be used for travel to Israel to participate in programs that are volunteer or educational in nature.

OUR HOPE

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

THIS GRANT

2 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.

TOP JEWISH FOUNDATION

3 is proud to offer the Stevan & Marilyn Simon Family Scholarship. This scholarship is open to those at least high school age who demonstrate leadership qualities and will be participating in a 2-week or longer program in Israel. A short essay is required.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
JEWISHFEDERATIONLCC.ORG/SCHOLARSHIPS

Chabad at FGCU update

By Rabbi Mendel Gordon

This semester for Jewish students at FGCU has been amazing. We had services on campus for Rosh Hashana, and despite the campus being evacuated in the middle of Rosh



■ Rabbi
Mendel
Gordon

Hashana, many students delayed leaving town to join for an inspiring and special Rosh Hashana dinner at Chabad. We stick together and are there for each other in all circumstances. During the hurricane, students stayed over at Chabad. And following the hurricane, we continued to have food for the students until things got back to normal.

For Sukkot, FGCU was one of the most Jewish schools in the country. We had three sukkot set up on campus – one on the main campus and one near

each dorm – making being Jewish as accessible as possible.

For Simchas Torah we joined Chabad of Bonita Springs for the dancing and celebration with the Torah. The students had an amazing time.

Following the holiday season, we are back in full swing with Torah classes, Shabbats and social events. Our main event was a Shabbaton in New York City in November where 14 FGJews joined 1,300 Jewish students from around the world for a Shabbat of a lifetime. I will share more about this event in next month's article.

For the first time ever in Fort Myers, in preparation for Chanukah we are planning a menorah car parade around campus.

Chabad at FGCU services Jewish students at FGCU and surrounding colleges. For more information, please contact me at 347.452.0489 or chabadfgcu@gmail.com.

Candle lighting times:



December 2: 5:17

December 9: 5:18

December 16: 5:20

December 23: 5:23

December 30: 5:27

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.



Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

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

TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS
Fort Myers

Temple Judea Religious School
Tab Scribner,
Director of Congregational Learning
Smiles and laughter and dancing are in the air once again at the Temple Judea Religious School. We have settled into our “new normal” with our new classroom spaces.

Perhaps the most exciting change has been the blessing of having our friends with the Israeli Dancing Group share the building with us on Sundays.

Even though our kids are not dancing every week, to see and hear the Israeli Dancing Group has been

a great treat for us. Our December Tot Shabbat is scheduled for Friday, December 9 at 5:00 p.m. Our schoolwide Chanukah program will happen on Sunday December 18. The family program will be announced soon.

For more information about our religious school, Tot Shabbat or other programming, please contact me at 239.433.0201 or tjswfledu@gmail.com.

TEMPLE BETH EL SCHOOLS
Fort Myers

Temple Beth El Religious School
Allison Fego,
Religious School Coordinator
During October our students were still learning about B'tzelem Elohim. Our students were excited to share a Shabbat dinner with the congregation of Temple Judea during our Shabbat of Solidarity. Due to Hurricane Ian, our school unfortunately did not get a chance to build and decorate our own sukkah and have a Sukkah party.

During our Shabbat of Solidarity, Tab Scribner, Temple Judea School Director, was kind enough to build a sukkah inside our Dubin Center so the kids could have the experience of being in the sukkah. Our students decorated the sukkah with drawings and paper fruit cutouts, and made paper chains. They also had the opportunity to shake the lulav and etrog. They had so much fun dancing around the sukkah and learning about the significance of the lulav and etrog.

After celebrating Sukkot, our students got the chance to participate in Simchat Torah celebrations. They sang songs, said prayers and saw the Torah completely unrolled. The congregation along with our students got to walk around, carrying the Torahs while singing songs. It was an amazing sight to see how excited the students and their families were to be a part of the celebration.

Ending the month, we learned about Parshat Noach and how Noah saved the animals. With that in mind, we had our students bring to their pets to school for a pet blessing. We had many dogs and a

pet guinea pig. Our families talked about their animals and why they are so special. We said a

special blessing for our pets and sang a barnyard song.

We are now preparing for the upcoming Hanukkah events in December and will be learning more Jewish studies and Hebrew letters.



Hannah Shraiar carrying a Torah



Morgan Dunkelgrun holding a Torah at the Simchat Torah celebration



Pet Blessing celebration

Michael Shapiro
PHOTOGRAPHY

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90% of PJ Library families say that they are very likely to recommend PJ Library to their family and friends.



Results of a recent national survey of 25,000 families conducted by PJ Library

91% of PJ Library families say that PJ Library has been a valuable parenting tool.



Parents in Lee and Charlotte counties whose children are enrolled in PJ Library participated in the survey.

95% of PJ Library families read at least one PJ Library book each month.



PJ Library is making a difference in the lives of families raising Jewish children.

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)



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 566-1771

Marina Berkovich

I promised to share a couple stories from my European trip. I visited old Jewish Ghettos in every Italian town on this trip. They are each unique and important. I'll just mention two. Ferrara is home not only to Renaissance magnificence, but a Jewish one as well. Isacco Lampronti, rabbi, physician and author of the rabbinical encyclopedia *Pachad Yitzchak*, lived here in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The Ghetto in Ferrara is filled with Jewish prayer on Shabbat. Padua is home to the fifth-oldest surviving university in the world, where Galileo taught, and where the first ever female university graduate got her education and degree. Padua has 1,305 Giotto frescoes in Scovegni Chapel.

There is also Palazzo Zucker-

mann, a museum gifted to his city by a wealthy Jewish industrialist the early 20th century. With international travel back in style, hopefully you'll

visit there, too.

There are many reasons why we all need to return to normal, and the primary of them, in my book, is that prolonged cloistering shortens lives. I miss the freedom to socialize without restrictions we practiced in pre-Covid days. I am looking forward to returning to that feeling, especially for our elderly members. Not all of them came through these trying times unscathed and some of them are now gone forever. On September 16, 2022, we lost Eugene Goodman, a dear friend of The Society, who passed away at the glorious age of 106. May we all be as blessed as Eugene.

We will repeat our Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers original production, *The Song Meister*, a half-hour

documentary film on Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

On Thursday, January 19 at 4:30 p.m., in partnership with Collier County South Regional Library, we will present *Jack Nortman, Boxcar Education Champion*, the next film in the series. Refreshments will be served. Sign-up information will be available as soon as possible. The format and particulars of this event had to be changed to accommodate scheduling conflicts, but Mr. Nortman's story remains unchanged and his pioneering input to the Holocaust education of the region is as invaluable as ever.

On Sunday, February 5 at 4:00 p.m. at Chabad of Naples, we will premiere a film to familiarize SWFL residents with Edison College (presently, Southwestern) Naples Campus' first Jewish student, Mitch Spaiser. With his family in town since the late 1960s, Mitch's recollections of days gone by are unlike any other of our eyewitnesses – he was the youngest of them all.

Our active fundraising efforts were halted since the start of Covid and once more by Hurricane Ian, so we will not be holding a true fundraiser in 2023, but we appeal to your gracious generosity and kindness to step up your memberships and donations that help preserve local Jewish history and bring the next round of stories to you – live and online.

You may now purchase JHSSWF memberships online or mail us a check. Family Membership \$54; Individual Membership \$36, Student Membership \$18, Corporate Sponsorship \$300. The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida
8805 Tamiami Trail North,
Suite # 255, Naples FL 34108
833.547.7935 (833.JHS.SWFL)
www.jhsswf.org ~ office@jhsswf.org
Virtual Museum of SWFL
Jewish History http://
jewishhistorysouthwestflorida.org/

GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 263-9200

GenShoah SWFL welcomes all
Second Generation, new and old
members to participate

Shelley Lieb and Ida Margolis

Many of you may have gone to summer camp or were a camp counselor. One of the camp songs that many people who attended remember after many years is "Make new friends and keep the old, one is silver and the other gold." That lovely little song relates to GenShoah SWFL because we are so pleased that we have heard from many individuals who are now interested in

joining this group. We welcome them to become friends with our wonderful earlier members. We hope that new and "old" members will participate

in upcoming GenShoah activities, Museum events and related community programs. We welcome suggestions for new programs and ways to make a difference

Second Generation (2g) groups have many purposes and that is why GenShoah SWFL has a multi-faceted mission: Promotion of Holocaust Education and Human Rights; Preservation of the history and memory of the Holocaust; Connection of the Second Generation with one another; and Support-

ing the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center. One does not have to be a 2g to be a member. You just need to be interested in some aspect of the mission. And only a few programs are limited to 2gs only.

Coming soon is the Annual GenShoah SWFL Pot Luck. This has been a very popular event hosted often by Shirley Besikof in her lovely social hall. This year, because of Hurricane Ian, her social hall is unavailable and the pot luck will be held at the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center on Sunday, December 18 from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. With this change in venue, the number of attendees will have to be limited and the menu will have to be altered, but this event promises to give people the opportunity to see old friends and make new ones – "silver and gold." If you are interested in attending, email shirleybesikof@gmail.com and let her know what ready-to-eat finger food or dessert you would like to bring. In addition, at the pot luck there will be a brief discussion of the book *By The Grace of the Game*,

by Dan Grunfeld. You don't have to read the book to come, but you can read about the book online or watch one of Grunfeld's videos on YouTube. Grunfeld's book is a different kind of Holocaust story. It is also a fascinating story about basketball, a family story and a story about the American Dream.

Another book that will be of great interest to Second Generation is *The Letters Project* by Eleanor Reissa. Reissa, a 2g, will be in Fort Myers on Sunday, December 4 at the Federation's Community Breakfast. To register for the event, go to JewishFederationLCC.org/calendar.

GenShoah SWFL has been collecting stories that local 2gs have written about their parent(s) who were survivors. If you would like to read these stories, go to hmcec.org. If you would like to contribute a story, email Shelley at liebro@gmail.com.

If you would like to receive the GenShoah eNewsletter or if you have questions, please email genshoah@hmcec.org.

Israeli Folk Dancing



For dates and times and to RSVP contact

Marsha Kistler at

marshatemple2012@gmail.com

All ages and levels of experience are
welcome!



VICTIMS & WITNESSES OF ANTISEMITISM

Please report incidents to the Jewish
Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties.

Call 239.481.4449 x6



Due to recent incidents, the
Jewish Federation is collecting
reports for tracking patterns.

CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

chavuratshalom@gmail.com

Cheryl Fulmer, Ellen Feingold and Marcia Rudin

Since many of us are still dealing with the after-effects of Hurricane Ian, the joyous eight-day celebration of the Festival of Lights coming in December is eagerly welcomed. The first candle of Hanukkah is lit on Sunday night, December 18, and the last candle is lit on Sunday, December 25.

Because we had to postpone our plans for in-person activities for our membership due to the destruction caused by the hurricane, we are thankful we can continue to meet several

times a week via Zoom. Our Friday night Shabbat services throughout the year begin at 7:30 p.m. and are led by volunteers. Len Minsky Current Events on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. is also moderated by volunteers.

Our Thursday Speakers Series and discussions at 11:00 a.m. for December are:

- ◆ Dec. 8 – Dr. Matthew Tapie – “The Challenge and Promise of Catholic-Jewish Relations Today”
- ◆ Dec. 15 – Torah Talk, a discussion of Parshat Vayishlach led by Ellen Feingold
- ◆ Dec. 22 – Rabbi Danny Schiff – “Why the Maccabees Would be Horrified by Chanukah”

In order to better keep in touch when we cannot gather together in person, we have added a “Schmooze” session on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The next one will be on December 13.

To assist with the crisis facing thousands in the Fort Myers area because of Hurricane Ian, the Chavurat Shalom Tzedakah Committee, headed by Dr. Ellen Feingold, expedited its appeal from Passover to October in order to donate funds to assist local people in need of immediate help.

Because the Sanibel Post Office remains inaccessible, the mailing address for Chavurat Shalom has been temporarily changed to 20031 Sanibel View Circle, Unit 202, Fort Myers, FL 33908.

To find out more details about these events or about our weekly Shabbat services, email chavuratshalom@gmail.com or visit chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org.

Email the above address to obtain Zoom links for our events. All our activities are open to anyone with an interest in learning together.

Chavurat Shalom (Fellowship of Peace) is an informal group from every Jewish religious tradition that meets to worship and learn together. People of all faiths and localities are welcome.

It is not affiliated with any organized movement and is community-led. Shabbat services are a blend of English and Hebrew, English readings and poems, Hebrew prayers recited or chanted, and songs.

HADASSAH Collier/Lee Chapter

(732) 539-4011

Joyce Toub

Living in Naples as well as Saratoga, New York, can bring a host of benefits and confusion. Beginning a new Jewish year, 5783, and soon completing our secular year, 2022, invites introspection. We try to take responsibility for what has occurred and think about what we can do better. We may feel guilty in not doing our very best all the time.

Hurricane Ian struck during the High Holy Days, bringing an un-

expected immediacy to the liturgy of “who shall live and who shall die.” I paraphrase Patricia Levinson, Chair of Hadassah International Communications and a member of Hadassah International Board of Directors. She had to evacuate her home in St. Petersburg, Florida, during the storm and was fortunate to return to minimal damage. She writes that there is nothing like a hurricane to make you aware of the fragility of life. The entire concept of life and death becomes extremely poignant and relevant.

My mixed emotions of feeling blessed and guilty simultaneously

were confusing. I have two homes, so God forbid if one was damaged, I still have a roof over my head. My home in Naples was unscathed. We didn't even lose power! When I arrived in Naples, I scouted the area that was decimated by the storm and I had this nagging feeling, wondering how I could make a bad situation better. However and whatever we contribute can help us improve the lives of other people and make us better people.

The same is true about Hadassah. Whatever you can do to promote healing, be it emotional, medical, educational, etc., helps you grow as a person as well. Please take an active interest in all we do in Collier and Lee counties and join us in our upcoming events. By joining in you enrich our lives

as well as your own!

- ◆ December 4: Collier/Lee Hadassah honors our Major Donors and Keepers of the Gate
- ◆ January 29: Collier/Lee Hadassah Installation and Fashion Show
- ◆ February 26: Collier/Lee Hadassah honors three outstanding personalities at our “Inspiring Women” event

I must close with a counter to the antisemitism that seems all too pervasive around us these days. Regardless of any affiliation, we must condemn and castigate hatred and bigotry whenever and wherever encountered. We must celebrate diversity. Diversity awakens new ideas and growth, while hate and discrimination inhibit new ideas and growth.

Community Relations Council
Lee & Charlotte



CRC Mission Statement:

The mission of the CRC of Lee & Charlotte is to proactively advocate for and ensure the rights, interests, and values of our Jewish community.

We Advocate. Educate. Act.

For more information or to join, contact
Debbie Sanford at 239.481.4449 ext. 6
debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

MAHJONG, BRIDGE & CANASTA AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION



Mahjong - Tuesday Afternoons 12pm-3pm

Canasta & Bridge - Wednesday Mornings 10am-1pm

If you are interested in leading either of these groups, please contact Dena at denacorkhill@jfedlcc.org or call 239.481.4449 x4



Starting December 6th



For more info visit: JewishFederationLCC.org

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

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

December is a very exciting month

at Shalom Life Center. We invite the entire community to join us on Friday, December 23 at 7:30 p.m. when we will "Light Up the World" with our epic community menorah

lighting, musical Shabbat service and lots of delicious, gourmet latkes, jelly doughnuts and other Chanukah treats. Remember to bring your menorah so we can celebrate Chanukah and light up the world together!

Shabbat evening services are held every Friday at 7:30 p.m. both in person and on Livestream. SLC welcomes

everyone to experience joyful, meaningful and inspiring services, special events, activities and clubs, dinners, concerts and more all year long.

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

SLC offers individualized Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation, weekly Torah study, Café Kabbalah, The Neshama Mamas Women's Wisdom and Wellness Group, Book Club, The Shalom

Shmoozers Social Club, special events, concerts, dinners and so much more. If you'd like to learn more, please send us an email or give us a call.

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

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

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

Amidst the repairing and reconstruction taking place throughout the Charlotte County community, Temple Shalom moved ahead with its programs. On November 16, there was a wonderful Klezmer Concert with Seth Kibel from Baltimore. On Tuesday, November 29, Rabbi Agin will continue his "Lunch

and Learn" program that deals with Jewish current events and Jewish life issues.

December is a very special time at Temple Shalom. On Tuesday, December 6 at 2:00 p.m., Jane Galler will present a music program, "The Music of Debbie Friedman and More." The Hershkowitz Memorial Fund is a sponsor of this program. There is no charge to attend.

On Friday, December 9, David Bernstein, Past President and CEO of

the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and Former Director of the American Jewish Committee in Washington, D.C., and now President of the Jewish Institute for Liberal Values, will be our guest speaker. A brief Shabbat service will precede his presentation.

Temple Shalom's film series will resume on Tuesday, December 13 with the Academy Award-nominated film *Broadway Danny Rose*. The film features Woody Allen, Mia Farrow and Nick Forte. Refreshments will be served. Open to all.

On Sunday, December 18 at 4:00

p.m. we will celebrate the first night of Hanukkah with the outdoor lighting of our giant menorah. This will be followed with a Hanukkah Concert performed by the North Port High School Choral Group under the direction of David Sommer. Latkes and other treats will be served following the concert. The Shelly and Marc Friedman Memorial Fund sponsors this event.

Temple Shalom is the only Affiliated Reform Congregation in all of Charlotte County. For information, call the temple office at 941.625.2116.

A joyous Hanukkah to all.



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CHABAD LUBAVITCH**Fort Myers****(239) 433-7708****www.chabadswf.org**

Please join us for prayers:

Monday thru Thursday:

6:30 a.m. Kabbalah Class

7:00 a.m. Morning Prayers

5:15 p.m. Afternoon & Evening Prayers

Friday:

5:15 p.m. Welcome Shabbat Prayers

Saturday:

9:00 a.m. Kabbalah Class

10:00 a.m. Prayers

12:15 p.m. Kiddush & Farbrengen

5:15 p.m. Afternoon & Evening Prayers

Grand Chanukah Party

3:00 p.m. on Sun., Dec.

18 at Castle Golf, 7400

Gladiolus Drive, Fort

Myers; lighting of first

candle

Chanukah Lightings at Chabad Meditation Gardens, 11881 McGregor Boulevard, Fort Myers:

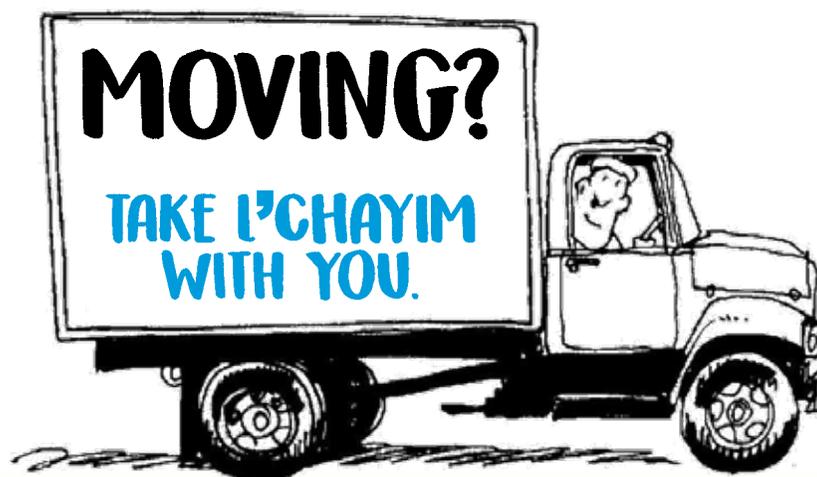
5:45 p.m. for candles 2-5, Mon., Dec. 19 to Thu., Dec. 22

4:15 p.m. for candle 6 on Fri., Dec. 23

6:30 p.m. for candle 7 on Sat., Dec. 24

5:45 p.m. for candle 8 on Sun., Dec. 25

Happy Chanukah!

**MOVING?****TAKE L'CHAYIM WITH YOU.**

Jewishfederationlcc.org

Don't forget to contact us with your change of address to continue receiving L'CHAYIM.

**Send address changes to
loriramos@jfedlcc.org**

**TEMPLE BETH EL
Fort Myers**

**(239) 433-0018
www.templebethel.com**

Thank you volunteers, local and from out of the area, who have been working to bring back some kind of normalcy to Sanibel Island, Pine Island, Fort Myers Beach and all over Lee County. We have all learned lessons about taking these storms seriously. Storms seem to be getting stronger. However, each day brings more recovery. Our temple has been lucky in terms of damage, but we will see a claim go beyond our high deductible. Our preschool playground was destroyed. There are roof issues throughout the building. We will figure it out. The building is open. The Learning Tree created programs for older children while public schools were closed to help relieve parents throughout the county. Thank you, Amy Amon, our Learning Tree Preschool Director, for your creative and helpful efforts and for moving quickly, considering the disaster.

Morgan Dunkelgrun becomes a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, December 10 in the sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. Congratulations, Morgan, on what you have achieved and on becoming a responsible adult in your Jewish community. Thank you to the Dunkelgrun family for sponsoring the Oneg in Morgan's honor on December 9.

Chanukah season approaches. Our Preschool is having a Book Fair from Sunday, December 4 through Friday, December 9. Books can be a great Chanukah gift! Our Sisterhood Gift Shop's Chanukah Bazaar is on Sunday, December 11 and 18. The gift shop will be open both days from 9:00 a.m. until noon. Our beautiful Judaica make great gifts. Sisterhood, the Men's Club and our Religious School are hosting a Chanukah celebration on December 18 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. with delicious food, latkes and a klezmer band for all to enjoy. For more details, call the office at 239.433.0018.

Mark your calendar for Temple Beth El's Mitzvah Day, a community-

wide event on Sunday, January 29. We come together as a community on Mitzvah Day with activities for all ages.

Recurring Temple Beth El programs include:

- ◆ Donations of non-perishable food items and feminine hygiene supplies, critical to those in need right here in our community, can now be dropped off in the temple lobby shopping cart whenever the building is open.
- ◆ All are welcome Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. for Torah Study with the Rabbi on Zoom.
- ◆ Book club: On Tuesday, December 20 at 2:45 p.m. on Zoom, *Last Summer at the Golden Hotel* by Elyssa Friedland will be discussed.
- ◆ Tot Shabbat, a kid-friendly service, takes place on Friday, December 2 at 6:00 p.m. Come for the fellowship, the pizza and the fun. To ensure we have enough food, RSVP at 239.433.0018.
- ◆ The Jewish History & Heritage Series is held the third Tuesday of every month. Join us on December 20 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.
- ◆ Shabbat Services, open to all, are

on Fridays at 7:30 p.m. live in the sanctuary, on Zoom and streaming on Facebook.

- ◆ 12-Step Recovery Group: Join us every Saturday at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom. Experience the Twelve Steps from a Jewish perspective, seeking a path to recovery through Judaic spiritual principles. We are a fellowship of people who are recovering from alcohol, drugs and other addictions such as food, gambling, sex, shopping, etc. The book we use is *Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery* by Rabbi Kerry Olitzky & Stuart Copans, M.D., second edition.

To learn more about Temple Beth El and our special events, Shabbat services and recurring programs, visit our website at templebethel.com. There's always something happening here: Current Events, Coffee & Chat, Theology & Life, Francophone Group, Hispanophone Group, Environmental Group, Solo Travelers and more. Follow us on Facebook @TempleBethElFortMyers and on Instagram @templebethelfortmyers. You can always contact the office at 239.433.0018.

**TEMPLE JUDEA
Fort Myers**

**(239) 433-0201
www.tjswfl.org**

We are busy working together to provide services and activities. Tab Scribner, Director of Congregational Learning, continues Temple Judea Religious School with Sunday classes and weekday Hebrew on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Tot Shabbat service will return Friday, December 9 at 5:00 p.m. with an interactive program of music, stories and crafts. Contact Tab at 239.433.0201 for more information.

Religious School Chanukah celebration and congregational Chanukah celebration details will be announced. Check with the office for the continuation of Rabbi Marc Sack's Introduction to Judaism class on Mondays. The

class is a must for anyone interested in conversion to Judaism but is open to all who have an interest in learning. Our full adult education programming will return soon.

The next lunchtime Torah study, taught by Rabbi Sack, will be on Thursday, December 1. Classes are held at noon on Zoom. All levels of Jewish background are welcome. For login information, please call the office at 239.433.0201.

Temple Judea is supporting the Heights Center with a book drive to replenish its charter school library hurt by Hurricane Ian. We will gather books and help sort them in early December.

Temple Judea, in collaboration with Quality Life Center, is resuming Christmas Breakfast on Christmas morning. Donations and volunteers are welcome.

Hazak plans an outing to Punta Gorda at 9:30 a.m. on December 11.

Chaverot, our women's group, is offering two sessions, December 12 and 14 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., of pour painting with Reeva Shaffer. Sessions are limited to six people. The \$25 fee covers all materials. Reserve with your check to the office and indicate the session date.

We can begin reading *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick for our next book club meeting on January 12.

Temple Judea continues to accept food donations for The Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry at Jewish Federation, and feminine hygiene products for Cycle Forward, which distribute products to women in need. There is a barrel outside for food donations and a basket in the lobby for Cycle Forward. There are collection envelopes near the front door for contactless monetary or gift card contributions. Contributions

may be mailed. Please call the office to ensure your contribution has been received.

Temple Judea is conducting in-person services with an online Zoom option. Synagogue members can use the Zoom ID and password as published in our weekly *Megillah*. Non-local residents may contact the synagogue for information.

Regularly scheduled events:

- Friday Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday Shabbat Services at 9:30 a.m. Kiddush luncheons will be served every Shabbat. To sponsor, contact JoAnn Lewin.
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m. in person and on Zoom.
- Rabbi Marc Sack's lunchtime Torah study, the first Thursday of each month on Zoom.



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

What a month we just experienced! Hurricane Ian changed our lives in many ways. Homes were heavily damaged or completely destroyed, and many had to find safe places to relocate. Nancy Greenberg, one of our valued members, quoted a famous line: "it was the worst of times, and the best of times." She added a meaningful comment: "No one was lost or badly injured...exhausted and emotionally drained, yes, but we are intact and looking to the future. Our congregation has been dispersed like the wind...hither and yon, but we are together in spirit and are standing strong."

On the flip side of this horrific storm was the outpouring of organizations and volunteers who helped, and are still helping those in need, such as members Howard Lorsch and

Melissa & Scot Congress, whose efforts resulted in our Torahs, including the Holocaust Torah, finding temporary homes in Fort Myers and Naples.

Our thanks to David Waks, Alan Lessack and Janice & Ron Chaddock. Dave came to the UCC church to examine our space and assess the damage. Unfortunately, all our electronic equipment is gone. The ark in Fellowship Hall was not harmed although the portable ark, donated by Peter & Jocelyn Saltz and used in the sanctuary during high season, sustained some damage. Many of our prayer books and shelving were ruined as were items in the Bat Yam closet. Alan, Ron and Janice packed the prayer books in large plastic cases. They emptied the closets of religious items and everything else salvageable, and added them to the boxes, which will be taken to an offsite storage facility.

Alan and I worked at The Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry at Federation, putting together bags of toiletries, cleaning supplies and food to distribute

to people in need. Temple Shalom in Naples, which houses one of our Torahs, has also reached out. The temple will help us find a storage facility for our books and related items. Equally important, Temple Shalom members would like to spend a Shabbat with Bat Yam members shortly after the first of the year (date to be decided). We are all looking forward to that.

Another blessing: Thanks to the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties, we have another home until such time as we can return to Sanibel. On November 4, we began meeting in the Community Room of its building at 9701 Commerce Center Court, Fort Myers. Services were on Zoom on the 4th and 11th. Beginning November 18, when we formally welcome Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer and his wife Yaffa, people are invited to participate in person or on Zoom. Also, Federation has kindly offered to provide our Oneg snacks. Many thanks to Federation Executive Director Debbie Sanford and her staff.

Rabbi Sunny is a dynamic, warm and inviting individual who attracts



Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

people. He believes that singing together builds community and that "a song is a prayer prayed twice." What a marvelous attitude to bring to our congregation!

As always, both members and guests are welcome to attend our services and events. For more information, find us on our website or email us at batyamsanibel@gmail.com. In the meantime, we look forward to worshipping with you every Friday at 7:00 p.m. from our temporary home at the Federation.

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM**Cape Coral****(239) 772-4555****www.templebethshalomcc.org**

Hurricane Ian stirred things up here, but it didn't take us down. To say that Yom Kippur started out the Jewish New Year with a bang is an understatement of biblical proportions. What the hurricane could not do is break our spirit. It is many weeks since the hurricane and although we are still putting things back together, and probably will be for a long time to come, we are still celebrating Shabbat together, still getting

together for dinners and other fun activities, and along with our cantor, planning out our future.

We are rebuilding our religious school, trying out different services

like Saturday morning Torah Service/Study and family Shabbat, and planning different and exciting activities through June 2023. Our first Torah Service/Study was like none we had ever had before. What was a traditional service somehow morphed into a discussion of the parsha and then seamlessly slid back into returning the Torah to the ark and the Aleinu. Cantor Barry and his wife Ilsia spon-

sored a beautiful Kiddush afterwards.

Our building withstood the punishing storm with minimal damage, so we were honored to host the Jewish Federation's Lunch Bunch and pop-up food pantry. Although we had short notice that we would be hosting the event, plenty of members turned out to welcome everyone to our spiritual home. The pop-up food pantry in our parking lot afterwards was also a first, and a fun and gratifying experience.

We invite the community to join us on Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. for our Chanukah latke and candle lighting party. Chanukah feels even more relevant after going through days and weeks without water, electricity,

telephone and internet. It will be delicious, fun and meaningful.

Temple Beth Shalom is a congregation on the move. Rather than enumerate all our activities in this article, we invite you to check out our website at www.templebethshalomcc.org, look at our calendar of events, read our weekly announcements and enjoy our pictures and *Shofar*. You will also find our membership forms, ways to make a donation and directions to come visit us.

We believe that we are a congregation like none other and we hope you will come and find out why.

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

We stand with our friends Baron and Kim Cohen as they mourn Baron's son Sean, who was lost at the end of October.

Marv Goetz died in October. He was a wonderful man, a gifted educator, longtime head of Lee County School District Substitutes Association, and he knew his way around a kitchen!

The annual Community Free First Night Celebration begins at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 18 with the sunset lighting of the outdoor Metro Menorah followed

by a traditional Hanukkah dinner catered by Cohen and Cohen and a sing-along at 6:00 p.m. The meal is free and open to all, but reservations are a must! To receive your Hanukkah letter with more information, email synfree@comcast.net or call 239.247.4556.

The congregation gathers at the Southwest Florida Masonic Center (10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers) for a Sabbath Eve meal every Friday at 6:30 p.m. It is free and all are welcome (please do not bring dairy dishes). Qabbalat Shabbat continues at 7:30 p.m. followed by a social hour.

Rabbi Bruce Diamond offers Sabbath morning Torah Study starting at 9:30 a.m. from his home at 7210 Falcon Crest Court in The Forest Country Club. Participants are invited to attend in person. It is also zoomed from the C.F.S. Zoom room

via the synagogue website at www.fortmyerssynagogue.com.

Weekly Adult Education is offered only via Zoom on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. For topics and reading assignments, email synfree@comcast.net.

Now in its 17th year, The Community Free Synagogue is an independent and valued open community religious resource. All its events and programs, including youth and adult Jewish education, are open to all and always free. It is an alternative to the private mem-

bership model and is sustained only by voluntary unsolicited donations by participants. While its modes of worship and religious observances lean toward the traditional, the synagogue's values are progressive and inclusive.

It is led by Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D., who holds his ordination from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati and has served our local Jewish community for 25 years.



The Community Free Synagogue's Metro Menorah

Stay in touch throughout the month. Sign up for the Federation's e-blasts.



Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

Get the latest information on upcoming community events and cultural activities, breaking news, updates from Israel and lots more.

Send an email to debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS REFORM

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

CHABAD OF BONITA SPRINGS/ESTERO ORTHODOX

24611 S. Tamiami Trail
Bonita Springs, FL 34135-7024
Rabbi Mendy Greenberg
Phone: 239-949-6900
Web site: www.JewishBonita.com
Services: Saturday at 10:00 a.m.
followed by a Kiddush

CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF CAPE CORAL ORTHODOX

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

CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY ORTHODOX

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

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ORTHODOX

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

SYNAGOGUES & JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

www.JewishFederationLCC.org

COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE

CONTEMPORARY TRADITIONAL
10868 Metro Parkway
(The S.W. Florida Masonic Center)
Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Bruce Diamond
Phone: 239-466-6671
E-mail: synfree@comcast.net
Web site: www.fortmyerssynagogue.com
Free Friday dinner each week at 6:30 PM
open to all followed by worship at 7:30 PM
Weekly Torah Study, Sabbath worship and
Adult Education visit
www.fortmyerssynagogue.com for the
schedule of events and Zoom logon
Information.
All events are free and open to all
239-247-4556

SHALOM LIFE CENTER

TRANS DENOMINATIONAL
19691 Cypress View Drive
Fort Myers, FL 339067
Rabbi Lawrence Dermer
Phone: 239-218-3433
E-mail: info@shalomlifecenter.org
Web site: www.shalomlifecenter.org
Shabbat Evening Services
7:30 p.m. (Oct-Apr)
7:00 p.m. (May-Sept)
Saturday Torah & Kabbalah Study
10:00 a.m.

TEMPLE BETH EL REFORM

16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Nicole Luna
E-mail: info@templebethel.com
Learning Tree Preschool Director:
Amy Amon
Email: LearningTree15@yahoo.com
President: Reina Schlager
Email: reinaschlager@aol.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
President: Peter Simenauer
Phone: 239-772-4555 • Fax: 239-772-4625
Email: templebethshalomcommunications@gmail.com
Web site: www.templebethshalomcc.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Enrichment night every Wednesday at 7:00
p.m. via Zoom
Shabbat 10:30 a.m.

CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SWFL CHAVURA

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

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: Suki Kelly
templejudeapreschool@gmail.com
Phone: 239-433-0201 • Fax: 239-433-3371
E-mail: tjswfl@gmail.com
Web site: www.tjswfl.org
Services: 6:15 p.m. Friday and 9:30 a.m.
Saturday Minyan: 9:00 a.m. Monday
Religious School: Sun. 9:30 a.m. - noon;
Wed. 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Early childhood education: Preschool, M-F,
ages 18 months-5 years;
"Mommy & Me," 12 months-2 years
*Affiliated: United Synagogue of
Conservative Judaism*

TEMPLE SHALOM CHARLOTTE HARBOR AND THE GULF ISLANDS REFORM

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

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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

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