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Events attended in large numbers

By Brian Simon, Federation President

This has been a very good season for programming. We filled the room for our Community Breakfast in December. The Jewish Film Festival has grown even larger, and our “Read the Book, Skype the Author” events have been a real breakthrough. Let me take the time to publicly thank Program Director Debbie Sanford for her terrific work. She has picked up right from where Leni Sack left off. Jewish cultural events are one of our three core services, and we’re very proud of our programming.

■ Brian Simon

I also want to thank you for attending these events. Our staff can create great programs and get the word out, but your attendance is what gives the events energy.

Let me also take a moment to ask you for your continued attendance for the upcoming events. On Tuesday, February 26, bestselling author Alyson Richman will appear live to discuss her new book, *The Secret of Clouds*. The event will take place at Lakes Regional Library in South Fort Myers. I’m also excited about two big events in March.

Our new Purim party, Queen Esther’s Masquerade Ball, is Saturday, March 16 at Miromar Outlets. The following day, Temple Beth El will host a special presentation of the play *Refugee*, thanks to Federation Friends of Florida Repertory Theatre.

These events are so much better than some of the ideas my fellow board member Keith Grossman and I suggested. All of the following were (wisely) declined:

- ◆ **Dick Clark’s Rockin’ Rosh Hashanah**, complete with a ball drop and countdown to when the third star appears in the evening sky.
- ◆ **Passover Under the Overpass**. After four glasses of Manischewitz, you’re sure to see Elijah appear near the Daniels Parkway entrance to I-75.
- ◆ **Tu B’Shvat or Not Tu B’Shvat**. Shakespeare in Yiddish. “Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to spend a fortune on slings and arrows (outrageous!) or just plant a tree.”
- ◆ **Iyyar**. Medical drama that takes place between the months of Nisan and Sivan.

◆ **Dog B’Omer**. Bring your puppies to the park to celebrate the 33rd day of counting the Omer.

◆ **The Amazing Technicolor Dream Sukkot**, featuring the **Shake Your Lulav Dance Contest**. DJ Joseph will be spinning your favorite hits, including “True Religion,” “Good Vibrations” and “Purple Haze.”

All kidding aside, I keep coming back to these questions: What is Federation for in this community?

Who would miss us if we were gone? Are we doing what we need to be doing to earn your support?

The board has identified three core services that we provide: Jewish cultural events, Jewish Family Services and Israel advocacy. I hope that you continue to enjoy the cultural programming we’re providing. Family services are the fastest growing part of our budget. The need is growing, and we’re serving both Jews and non-Jews. We are continuing to expand our work on advocacy for Israel.

Thank you again for your support, and please feel welcome to let me know how we’re doing. ▲



Federation’s Senior Lunch Bunch update



Federation’s Community Breakfast a musical delight



Chef Dalia Hemed’s personal culinary trip to Israel



Locals visit synagogue in Cuba

Jewish Federation
Lee & Charlotte Counties

cordially invites you to our

QUEEN ESTHER MASQUERADE BALL

- entertainment & dance music provided by Frefless Rock
- costumes not required....but encouraged!
- best costume wins \$100 gift card to Miromar Outlets
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MARCH 16 6-9 PM

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For more information contact Debbie Sanford 239.481.4449 ext. 4

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



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JewishFederationLCC.org

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.

OUR VISION

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

L'CHAYIM

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

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

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MARCH ISSUE
EDITORIAL DEADLINE:
Tuesday, February 5

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Program notes

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

Hi everyone! Let me start by saying thank you to all those who supported our 23rd Annual Jewish Film Festival. As I write this article, we have sold just over 2,300 tickets and are sold out of five films. When you read this, we should be just through half the films, and I hope you are enjoying them all. Our film committee worked hard and I thank them.



Debbie Sanford

I would also like to thank our generous sponsors. Please take a look at the back page of this newspaper to see the list of sponsors. And please frequent their establishments if you can, and support their businesses.

On to our next lineup of great programming and what you can look forward to this month and next:

On Tuesday, February 26, the Jewish Federation, in conjunction with Lakes Regional Library, welcomes bestselling author Alyson Richman to our first Traveling Authors Event of 2019. Alyson will discuss her new book, *The Secret of Clouds*. We invite everyone to the library at 2:00 p.m. to listen to and meet Alyson. Books do not go on sale until February 19, but don't worry. We will have plenty available for sale at the library (at a discounted rate), and Alyson will be happy to autograph them at the conclusion of the event. The event is free and open to the entire community. I encourage you to attend, as Alyson is a great speaker. Registration is required.

Now you may have heard a rumor. The Federation is hosting an ADULTS ONLY Purim Party!

The rumor is true! And you don't want to miss it. I promise you it will be amazing. If you have never heard of the group, Fretless Rock, please check them out. That is the entertainment for the evening, along

with their DJ for some good old-fashion dance music. These ladies rock the house with custom, handmade electric violins and cellos, dressed up in costume. Have you ever heard a Queen song, or the "Hora" for that matter, on an electric violin? No? Great! You have a perfect reason to attend our Queen Esther Masquerade Ball. It will be held on Saturday, March 16 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. in a decked-out suite at the Miromar Outlets. In addition to the music and dancing, there will be cocktails, food, a costume contest with a great prize, a photo booth, and just a really great reason to get into a costume (optional) and come have some fun!

The next day, the Federation is proud to partner with "Friends of the Florida Rep" to bring you a performance of *Refugee*, a play based on the *New York Times* bestselling novel by Alan Gratz. Directed by Kody C. Jones of the Florida Rep, this interfaith performance will be held at Temple Beth El in Fort Myers on Sunday, March 17 at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are only \$5 and are available online at www.jewishfederationlcc.org/travelingauthors.

If you are a Lion of Judah, you're invited to a special event on Tuesday, March 5. Keep an eye out for your invitation to an entertaining and tasty event!

Rounding out the fun-filled month of March is another Traveling Author Event. The Federation and the Alliance for the Arts welcomes B.A. Shapiro to Fort Myers. Her book, *The Collector's Apprentice*, is an exhilarating tale of shifting identities, desire and intrigue set between 1920s Paris and Philadelphia. Tickets are just \$10 and are available through the Alliance's website at www.artinlee.org/authorshapiro. Refreshments will be served and books will be available (at a discounted rate) for purchase and autographs.

I look forward to seeing you at our next event!▲

Jewish Family Services update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

Years ago, I remember talking to a close friend about all of the transitions I was facing in the major categories of life: work, housing, love, location. At one point my friend said, "Ah, it sounds like you are in between trapezes." I love that phrase. I was fortunate that while I was in the middle of these transitions, I was never without food, warm clothes, a place to live, and the support of friends and family.

Jewish Family Services continues to receive weekly requests for assistance from clients who are also in between trapezes due to a variety of circumstances such as illness, disability and unemployment, and who are reaching out to the Federation for support. In December we were able to help clients with financial assistance toward phone bills, security deposits, utility and water bills. The food pantry distributed food to 92 people, serving 22 households – the largest number of clients in Federation history for a one-month period. We had nine clients on the Wednesday before Christmas who came to get food

for their families.

Most of the food from the High Holiday food drives is gone, so your regular contributions of protein, fruit and toiletries are appreciated. I'd like to thank food pantry volunteers Judith Yevick, Karen Whitman, Suzanne Orkin, Laurie McConville and Donna Cotler for their ongoing support. Our food pantry is small, yet requires ongoing attention and maintenance. If you would like to volunteer to help out on a regular or as-needed basis, please contact me at jodicohen@jfedlcc.org or 239.481.4449 x2.

We encourage everyone to purchase raffle tickets for the Boston Red Sox vs. Yankees game, as the proceeds are going to the Jewish Federation's Indigent Fund so the Federation can continue to provide resources for the community and fulfill its vision of the Jewish values of *Tzedakah* (benevolence), *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and *K'lal Yisrael* (taking responsibility for one another).▲

Boston Red Sox

Chance Drawing

1 chance
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FEBRUARY 23RD, 2019

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Call or email Debbie Sanford at
239.481.4449 or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

All proceeds benefit the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties Indigent Fund

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

Senior Lunch Bunch update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

January's senior lunch was held on a chilly day, and the 70 people who attended warmed each other up with friendship, laughter, delicious food from the Federation's community partner, Jason's Deli, and a spirited welcome from Rabbi Bruce Diamond and members of the Community Free Synagogue. After lunch, Rabbi Diamond led the group in his version of Jeopardy called "Jewpardy," and prizes were awarded for all correct answers. There were 11 newcomers at the lunch, which is a record! Due to our dedicated and amazing volunteers, we were able to arrange for the newbies to have "lunch buddies" so they had people there to greet them and sit with them.

The free monthly senior luncheon has blossomed into a regular event for all Jewish seniors to get together for food, friendship and frolic, whether they live on their own, in a senior living facility, are new in town or have lived here for years. There is such generosity of spirit from the moment you

walk in the door, and there is always a place at the table for you.

A heartfelt thank you to the 37 – count 'em 37 – people who volunteered for the lunch this month. It takes a volunteer village to help make the lunch go smoothly. If you're interested in volunteering for the lunch by making calls, driving seniors who need rides, setting up at the lunch, bringing a dessert, helping with cleanup, or spending time with seniors during the lunch, contact me at jodicohen@jfedlcc.org or 239.481.4449 x2. ▲



Jodi Cohen



Photos courtesy Helene Glocer



NEXT SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH:
Thursday, February 7 at noon
Temple Beth Shalom, 702 SE 24th Ave., Cape Coral
RSVP by Monday, February 4 to
Jodi Cohen at 239.481.4449 x2 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org

Our Federation's 2018 accomplishments

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Alan Isaacs



There are certain times of the year that call to mind the special nature of what our Federation and our supporters do. While our programming, social services and Israel advocacy extend throughout the year, the calendar denotes particular occasions for reflection. The end of our budget and campaign year is one such occasion.

Over the course of 2018, with a budget barely larger than 2017 and operating in the black as always, we were able to provide more programming and services to our community than ever before. Attendance increased substantially at both established and new programs and services – all of which you have read about in L'CHAYIM and in our weekly email newsletter and, perhaps, participated in or utilized. As a reminder, please refer to page 4 in this

issue for a comprehensive list of "How the Jewish Federation ... Serves."

Any assessment of what the Federation does is impossible without considering the involvement of the Jewish community at large. While success must be measured in terms of participation from the community – and participation numbers are up – the quality and relevance of the programs and services must be measured too. And the measure of these is in participation and, as indicated, the numbers are up.

These accomplishments are a result of the dedicated work of volunteers and staff in all areas of our operation – beginning with our Board of Directors, the generous contributions of our supporters, and the efficient use of all of these resources. It is with this in mind that I thank our financial supporters, our volunteers and our staff.

Our Federation is here for you in all our programs and services. Join us. Support us. Promote us. Sustain us. ▲



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UPCOMING FEDERATION EVENTS 2019

- FEB. 26** Author Event - Alyson Richman, Lakes Library
- MAR. 5** Lion of Judah - Program and Speaker, Seltzertopia
- MAR. 13** Read the Book; Skype the Author - Matt Goldman *Gone to Dust* Free and open to the community. A light dairy dinner will be served.
- MAR. 16** Queen Esther (Adults Only) Masquerade Ball - Miromar Outlets
- MAR. 17** REFUGEE Play - Temple Beth El
- MAR. 28** Author Event - B.A. Shapiro, *The Collector's Apprentice*
The Alliance for the Arts
- APR. 28** Yom HaShoah Event
- MAY 8** Annual Meeting



AN
A NOVEL OF ISRAEL
MARTIN FLETCHER

PETER GOLDEN

MISSOURY

OUR VISION

Jewish Community that is based on Jewish values such as Tzedakah (benevolence), Tikkun Olam (repairing the world).

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



YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN

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

TRIBUTES

In memory of George Grossman
from Mae Folb

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

The Jewish Federation Board and Staff want to extend a

Heartfelt 
THANKS
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Read the current and recent issues of L'CHAYIM
online at www.JewishFederationLCC.org.

The Jewish Federation thanks our GENEROUS DONORS

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Together we **CAN** Make a Difference!

HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES SERVES



Local Jewish Education and Culture

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



Overseas

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



Local Seniors Services

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



Local Case Management Services

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

Local Emergency Services

- ✧ Food Pantry.
- ✧ Emergency financial assistance.
- ✧ Education and aid associated with natural disasters.



Local Community Services

- ✧ Support families of children with special needs.
- ✧ SAT preparatory classes for high school students.
- ✧ Volunteerism.
- ✧ Organizational Collaboration.
- ✧ Assessment and Planning.



Jewish Community Foundation

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

Joseph Horowitz Israel Travel Grants Available

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

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

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

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



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

Community Breakfast was a musical delight

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

On Sunday, December 9, more than 150 people filled the ballroom at The Landings for the annual Jewish Federation Community Breakfast. With a music theme for the event, the very talented Anton Duran played his keyboard and sang some of the greatest hits from Jewish composers and artists we all love. Among others, we sampled some Billy Joel, Paul Simon and Neil Diamond – definitely a favorite in the crowd with people hitting the dance floor.

The food was delicious with various brunch items, and the latkes were

flowing. The atmosphere was contagious, and people were smiling, clapping and having a great time.

During the Breakfast, Executive Director Alan Isaacs presented a special framed certificate to Leni Sack, my predecessor, to acknowledge the many years of dedicated service to our Federation and the Jewish community in general. We all wish Leni good luck in her future endeavors, plenty of fun vacations, and enjoying spending time with her family while retired.

I think it is nice to mix it up a bit and try to bring a little something dif-

ferent each year. If you have any ideas or suggestions for next year's theme, please email me at debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org.

Thank you to those who attended and thank you to our wonderful volunteers and Federation staff who helped design, assemble and set out the musical instrument menorahs.

For those who missed it, we hope to see you next time! ▲



Alan Isaacs presents award to Leni Sack for her devoted service to the Federation

Photos courtesy Mike Shapiro



(Standing:) Lani Laboda, Michele Laboda, Eric Dochinger, (seated:) Sheila Laboda, Amy Marz



Carolyn Gora and Sherri Zucker

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Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

Greetings from the Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center. It has been a busy New Year so far with school visits, public programs and special events at the Museum. The Museum was also the sponsor of the January monthly breakfast meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, "Wake Up Naples." The Museum hosts this event each January as part of recognition of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The Museum also presented a special afternoon program on International Holocaust Remembrance Day featuring Docent Ellaine Rosen's "Witness to Goodness" presentation, followed



■ Susan Suarez

by a short musical program featuring the restored violin on special loan to the Museum from the Violins of Hope Project.

This month, the Museum is again a proud sponsor of Holocaust-themed author presentations at a Greater Naples Jewish Book Festival event. The presentations will take place on Monday, February 18 from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. at the Naples Conference Center, 1455 Pine Ridge Road. Author Ariel Burger will discuss his book *Witness*, which chronicles his conversations with Elie Wiesel, which began when Burger was 17. Author Rebecca Erbelding will present her book, *Rescue Board*. It highlights the relatively unknown WWII War Refugee Board, which was established in January 1944 to try and save the remaining Jews in Europe. It eventually did save tens of thousands through undercover operations across

four continents.

Our new exhibit, *Marching in America: Fascists, Nazis and White Nationalists Past and Present*, is an overview of the hate groups which developed in the U.S. in the 20th century and continue to exist in our country today. While the names and leaders of these hate groups may change over time, they continue to attract disaffected people who feel they are under attack by groups they deem a threat to their way of life. The exhibit also includes examples of how the plans of several hate groups were thwarted by concerned citizens who saw the threats the hate groups posed to their communities.

On Monday evening, March 4, we will hold our annual fundraiser, Triumph 2019, at Grey Oaks Country Club in Naples. Christian Picciolini, the founder of Life after Hate and the Goldmill Group LLC, will be our featured speaker. A former violent extremist who was a participant for many years in the white power movement, Christian has become an award-winning public speaker, author and peace advocate. Christian had joined a hate group as a teenager and was a member of the "white power" punk band, White American Youth. Their songs promoted hate for, and violence against, those groups targeted by the white power movement. As an adult, an encounter with a former teacher profoundly challenged his extremist beliefs and prompted him to turn away from hate. Christian is proof there is "life after hate," and he is now dedicating his life to providing a way out to those members of extremist groups who want to change their lives and re-enter society.

Christian's work and ours is more important than ever. The disturbing trend of an increase in hate crimes is not just limited to the U.S., but is being seen around the world. The most effective way to counter this behavior is on



Christian Picciolini (photo credit Dennis Sevilla, Hachette Book Group)

a person-to-person level with education programs like the ones we offer. Locally, we are working with students and teachers in six counties to inform young people of the importance of respectful interactions, and the growing dangers our families and communities face without it.

Invitations to Triumph 2019 will be sent out shortly. Event sponsorships, Patron opportunities and program advertising are available. For tickets and more information, contact the Museum at 239.263.9200 or Donor@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org.

Work on our new home continues, and we are still anticipating a Summer 2019 move. We will keep you updated.

For information on the many ways you can support the Museum's mission to teach the lessons of the Holocaust to inspire action against bigotry, hatred and violence, please contact me at Susan@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org or 239.263.9200. Hope to see you at the Museum soon!▲

Jewish Federation
Lee and Charlotte Counties

Presented by: The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties & Federation Friends of the Florida Repertory Theatre

REFUGEE

ADAPTED BY ERIC COBLE

A play based on the New York Times bestseller by Alan Gratz.

Sunday, March 17, 2019
2:00 P.M.

Tickets \$5.00

To purchase tickets visit:
www.jewishfederationlcc.org/travelingauthors

For more info call:
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The Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center

Presents TRIUMPH 2019

Monday Evening, March 4, 2019
at Grey Oaks Country Club in Naples

There Is Life After Hate



Guest Speaker – Christian Picciolini

Christian Picciolini is an award-winning public speaker, author, peace advocate, and a former violent extremist. Christian's involvement in, and exit from, the early American white power movement is chronicled in his memoir *White American Youth: My Descent Into America's Most Violent Hate Movement – And How I Got Out* (Hachette, 2018).

Event Sponsorships, Patron opportunities and Program advertising are available. For tickets and more information, please contact Membership & Development Specialist Tim Morrison at 239-263-9200 or donor@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org.

Speaker Sponsor:



4760 Tamiami Trail North, Suite 7, Naples, FL 34103
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ArtFest Fort Myers – Let art elevate your everyday

ArtFest Fort Myers is the place to be on February 2 and 3 with an Opening Night featuring 65 festival artists on Friday night, February 1.

“This exceptional fine art festival is a true community-based event that showcases over 200 fabulous professional artists. It’s a perfect blend of fine art, family activities and unique art installations,” explains Judy Weiner, Board Chairman of ArtFest Fort Myers. “ArtFest Fort Myers artists represent the best of the best, and you won’t see more exciting and diverse artwork anywhere else in Southwest Florida!”

All new in 2019, ArtFest Fort Myers is harnessing the power of art to increase awareness and challenge behavior inspiring the recycle, re-use, upcycling movement and conserving our natural resources. Be sure to visit We Are Overflowing, a professional sculpture created from re-purposed, discarded and cast-off materials recycling. It will spark your imagination and, perhaps, begin a conversation about rethinking waste.

Combine health & fitness with art & culture on Sunday morning, with the Publix Run to the Arts, a fun 5K race that will begin and end in the heart of ArtFest Fort Myers. Join us as we run/walk through scenic downtown, over the Edison Bridge and back. Enjoy an artful experience, vie for great prizes and get healthy with friends and family over festival weekend. For race details, visit RunToTheArts.com.

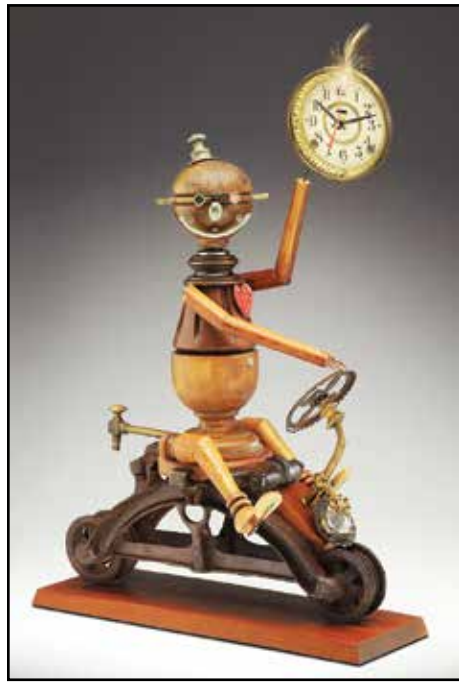
Your \$125 per person membership in the VIP Experience means reserved weekend parking, admission to the Friday Night Opening VIP Tent with delicious food and drinks, plus unlimited access to the VIP Experience Tent with breakfast treats, a delightful lunch, and beverages all weekend long.

Meet a few of the couples who

work together to create beautiful art and will be exhibiting at ArtFest Fort Myers the first weekend in February:

Patti and Bob Stern

Bringing their unique touch of whimsy to the often crazy world we live in, the Sterns find inspiration in history and architectural artifacts. Their works often mimic the human form while giving a second life to vintage windows, reclaimed wood and hardware. Their



appreciation of the craftsmanship of an earlier time is coupled with a one-of-a-kind vision guaranteed to make you smile!

Joan Michlin and Skip Ennis

Joan Michlin is a prominent New York artist and goldsmith who has been creating exciting and trendsetting gold jewelry for 20 years. Her one-of-a-kind wearable sculptures often perch upon an exquisite art box – adding another design/display element to her pieces. “My goal is to create future heirlooms

– timeless designs in precious materials that will withstand the test of time,



both physically and stylistically,” affirms the artist.

Donna Gilbert and Gregory Johnson

Donna Gilbert and Greg Johnson had successful careers in corporate America, but when Greg began making pots as a way to combat the tensions of



his working world, they realized that change was possible. Donna, an interior designer, used her eye to create the design elements, glazes and textures on their ceramics. It took several years of “moonlighting” in the studio before

the choice of self-expression and self-direction became too inviting to ignore and Pottery for Living was born.

For more information, please visit ArtFestFortMyers.com - Like Us on Facebook - Connect with us on LinkedIn - Tag us #artfestfm

Fast Festival Facts:

- ▶ **WHAT:** A juried fine arts festival featuring over 200 national artists, high school art competition, high school sidewalk chalk competition, interactive arts, children’s crafts, fine food and entertainment.
- ▶ **WHEN:** ArtFest Fort Myers, February 1, 2 & 3; Friday Opening Night, 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- ▶ **WHERE:** Downtown Fort Myers on Edwards Drive in the River District
- ▶ **COST:** Free admission
- ▶ **PARKING:** Adjacent parking lots, street parking and City Garages are open. Look for our directional signs and flags.▲



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Acknowledgments will continue in subsequent issues for those contributions that arrive after this issue's deadline.

New JLI course: Crime and Consequence

This February, Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz of Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida will offer Crime and Consequence, a new six-session course by the acclaimed Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) exploring 3,000 years of Jewish perspective on conviction, sentencing and criminal rehabilitation.

Beginning Thursday, February 7 at 12:30 p.m. (day course) and 7:30 p.m. (evening course), participants will challenge their thinking, ponder the implications of ancient Talmudic wisdom for complex modern cases, and get to the heart of the most pressing injustices facing our criminal justice system today.

“DNA testing is proving that we’ve been convicting innocent people. When we incarcerate first-time offenders, we’re turning them into hardened criminals. Known murderers are able to walk free on a technicality. How can we stand by and remain silent to

these serious flaws in our criminal justice system?” said Rabbi Minkowicz. “I believe the first step is for us, as a community, to acknowledge the issues and explore possible solutions. And can you think of a better place to look for guidance than Judaism’s wisdom of the ages?”

Participants in the course will ponder foundational questions: What is the goal of criminal punishment – to gain retribution for the victim, to keep criminals off the streets and safeguard from future crime, to set an example and instill the fear of law, or to rehabilitate the criminal and reintroduce him to society? Should we consider testimonies given in exchange for a reduced sentence as reliable evidence?

The course also boldly addresses society’s most serious sentencing questions: Is life-without-parole a justifiable penalty? May we sentence a person to death? When would these options be warranted? Is there a better way?

“Crime and Consequence is for people who care deeply about humanity, who are enraged at injustice, and who are fascinated by real-life catch-22 scenarios,” remarked Rabbi Zalman Abraham of JLI’s Brooklyn, New York, headquarters. “Participants will uncover the humanity within all people – including criminals – question judicial practices that seem unethical and unfair, and explore effective crime deterrents.”

“It is a profound irony that the United States is a true beacon of democracy, freedom and the rule of law while it imprisons more of its own citizenry than any other country,” wrote Professor Alan Dershowitz, Professor Emeritus at Harvard Law School, in his endorsement of the course. “Crime and Consequence... brings rigorous legal analysis, statistical data on incarceration and rehabilitation, and case studies into a uniquely profound dialogue with the values undergirding our entire political tradition.”

Scott Turow, attorney and author

of *Presumed Innocent* and 13 other bestselling novels on criminal law, commented that this course “...shows that this is a subject that involves our oldest and most treasured ideas of right and wrong.”

Crime and Consequence is accredited in the State of Florida for attorneys and other law professionals to earn continuing education credits. Like all JLI programs, this course is designed for people at all levels of knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple or other house of worship.

Interested students may call 239.433.7708 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and other course-related information. JLI courses are presented in Fort Myers in conjunction with Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida and sponsored by Dr. Gary & Marlene Price.▲

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and meet new faces



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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

SENIOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

LUNCH BUNCH





Come out for lunch, see familiar faces and meet new friends at our free monthly senior lunches

**Thursday, February 7th
12:00 PM**
Temple Beth Shalom
702 SE 24th Ave.
Cape Coral, FL 33990
RSVP by Feb. 4th

**Thursday, March 14th
12:00 PM**
Temple Judea
14886 A and W Bulb Rd.
Fort Myers, FL 33908
RSVP by March 11th

Let us know if you will be driving or if you would like a volunteer to pick you up.

RSVP—Jodi Cohen
239-481-4449, ext. 2 or
jodicohen@jfedlcc.org

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February 1, 6pm

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Overlooking the downtown waterfront and glorious sunset
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– Wine and Beer / Music by Silver Sneakers Band
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– Wine, beer and more all day
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BIRTH

Mazel Tov to Community Free Synagogue participants **Seth and Simone Monaco** on the birth of their son **Noah Langston Monaco**, whom Rabbi Bruce Diamond helped bring into the Covenant of Abraham on his 8th day early in January. Welcome Noah Levi!

Each month, *L'CHAYIM* will list your Life Cycle events – births, B'nai Mitzvah, engagements, weddings, anniversaries and obituaries. For B'nai Mitzvah, please include up to 150 words about your child. Submit your events to LChayim36@gmail.com. Photos are appreciated; please e-mail as JPGs at 300dpi.



VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

PESACH

To help us pack Passover Gift Bags to be delivered to our **Adult Community!**

Tuesday, April 2nd at 10:00 A.M.

Deliverers are also needed. Bags will be ready for pick-up 4/3 - 4/5 from 9am to 5 pm

Please contact Debbie Sanford to volunteer at 239.481.4449 ext. 4

or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

Thank you!

Leslie Luzar Memorial Cantorial Shabbat Series at Temple Beth El

The Leslie Luzar Memorial Cantorial Shabbat Series at Temple Beth El kicked off with a special performance by Cantor Jamie Marx from Temple Shalom of Broomall, Pennsylvania.

Cantor Marx sang old favorite tunes and taught the congregation some new tunes, as well. His sermon on contemporary Jewish congregational music was delightful. Exuding enthusiasm from each note of his worship music, he chanted and translated the Torah *parsha* for a rapt audience.

Temple Beth El is excited to host this cantorial series and grateful to our beloved member of blessed memory,

Leslie Jean Luzar, and her family for providing such an interesting and inspirational program.

Our next guest cantor will be the famous Cantor Marshall Portnoy. We sing the lovely “Y’hu L’ratzon/Oseh Shalom,” which he composed, during festival and Shabbat worship. This special service takes place on Friday, February 8 at 7:30 p.m. in the TBE sanctuary.

We are so fortunate to experience the rare talents of the vocalists in this series. The worship team of TBE is proud to bring these enriching cantorial performances to the community. ▲

Community Free Synagogue events and programs

C.F.S. Pre-Purim Photo Shoot Open to All

The first photo shoot for the Community Free Synagogue’s “PowerPoint Purim 4.0” will take place at the synagogue starting at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 17. Participants will pose for several scenes from the story of Purim which will be shown along with the

It’s loads of fun and just the right way to get on track for Purim!

Community Free Synagogue Movie Night

Join us at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 14 for a screening of *Annie Hall*. Often considered one of the screen’s finest romantic comedies, Woody Allen’s classic is the perfect choice for



Haman (Phillip Bain) admonishes Mordecai (Rabbi Thomas Miess) in a scene from the C.F.S. 2016 “PowerPoint Purim 3.0”

Megillah reading during the March festival. The photo shoot is open to all; costumes and props will be provided.

Be a king and queen, a banished queen, a hero or villain, a royal guard or steward, a Persian harem girl, or just part of the throng in Shushan. No prior acting experience is required but the ability to schmaltz it up is a real plus.

The Community Free Synagogue’s Valentine’s Day installment of its “Brown Bag Movie Night,” the county’s longest-running movie series.

While romance often involves eroticism, neuroticism is Allen’s version of Jews in love. It’s not only hilarious, but also a sweet and charming exploration of what happens

when cultural worlds collide, in this case, *famisch* New York Jewish and quirky Wisconsin WASP. The film won the Academy Awards 1977 Best Picture of the Year.

Pack and dinner; soft drinks and snacks are free. The event takes place in the C.F.S. Community Hall, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers. ▲



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Sundays at 4:00 P.M.

2/3, 2/10, 2/17 & 2/24



Jewish Federation Community Room
9701 Commerce Center Ct., Fort Myers 33908

All ages & levels of dance experience are welcome.

Wear comfortable shoes, bring a water bottle
AND A FRIEND!

RSVP a MUST to Marsha Kistler
marshatemple2012@gmail.com

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.

TV/Streaming Viewing: Catch-Up and Look Ahead

Fam is a sit-com that premiered on CBS on January 10. Nina Dobrev stars as Clem, a woman who seems to have a perfect life. But perfection ends when her out-of-control, 16-year-old half-sister Shannon (**ODESSA ADLON**, 17) shows up unannounced in need of a place to stay. This is the first big role for Adlon, who is the daughter of actress/writer/director **PAMELA ADLON**, 52. Pamela Adlon's hit FX series, *Better Things*, features her as the single mother of three daughters. In real life, she is the single mother of three daughters. However, she didn't use her real daughters to play her TV daughter. (The pilot episode can be viewed free online or via on-demand.)

Passage, a sci-fi drama, started on Fox on January 14. Mark-Paul Gosseelaar, who had a Jewish grandfather, stars as Brad Wolgast, a Federal agent tasked with bringing Amy, a young girl, to a super-secret medical base where she will be a test subject for a dangerous virus that has the potential to end all disease. The downside is things could go very wrong and the virus could end all life on Earth. Wolgast bonds with Amy, becoming her surrogate father. While trying to protect her, he becomes aware of a lot of other really weird and dangerous things going on at the base. He turns to his ex-wife, Dr. Lilia Kyle, for help. Kyle is played by **EMMANUELLE CHRIQUI**, 43 (*Entourage*). (The pilot

episode can be viewed free online or via on-demand.)

The PBS celebrity ancestry series, *Finding Your Roots*, began a new season on January 8. PBS posts already-aired episodes for free viewing on its website for about a month after their first broadcast. After that, you have to be a "Passport" member to "unlock" the episodes (requires a minimum \$5 monthly donation to your PBS station). The January 8 episode featured **ANDY SAMBERG**, 40, and George R.R. Martin, the author of the *Game of Thrones* books. Partial spoiler: Andy's (Jewish) mother was adopted and he learns all about his biological grandmother and grandfather. Martin finds out that he had a Jewish biological grandfather (his other "grands" weren't Jewish).

Episode 4, which first airs on January 29, features **SHERYL SANDBERG**, 49, the chief operating officer of Facebook. Episode 5, first airing on February 5, will feature former House Speaker Paul Ryan. It's already been made public that Ryan was surprised when he learned, on air, that he had about 3% Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry. Episode 7, airing first on February 19, features comedian **SARAH SILVERMAN**, 48.

The original Netflix black comedy series, *Russian Doll*, premieres on February 1. It has kind of a *Groundhog Day* premise. **NATASHA LYONNE**, 39 (who co-created the series), stars as a woman, Nadia, who is the guest of honor at a party. Her problem is

Interested in Your Family's History?

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

So here's the deal:

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

that she keeps dying at the party only to be mysteriously revived. She finds herself, time and time again, going to this same party, dying and doing it all again the next day.

Miracle Workers, a comedy, starts on February 12 on TBS. **DANIEL RADCLIFFE**, 29 (*Harry Potter*), stars as Craig, a low-level angel responsible for handling all of humanity's prayers. His boss, God (Steve Buscemi), spends most of his time on his hobbies, rather than attending to mankind's problems. The series is based on a novel by **SIMON RICH**, 34, the son of **FRANK RICH**, 69, the former *New York Times* theater critic and opinion columnist. Radcliffe's mother is Jewish and he identifies as Jewish, although he isn't religious.

Starting on February 15 is the legal drama *Proven Innocent*. It stars **RACHELLE LEFEVRE**, 39, as Madeline Scott, a fierce attorney who leads a team to exonerate the wrongly convicted. The back story is that Scott

was the defendant in a high-profile case, was wrongly convicted and eventually was proved innocent. Lefevre's background is just like Radcliffe's: her mother is Jewish and, while she's secular, she identifies as Jewish. Her stepfather is a Canadian rabbi.

Oscars Note

The Oscars ceremony will be on February 24. Sadly, this column must go to print before the Oscar nominations have been announced. So, I can't give you a Jewish nominee list. However, it's almost certain that the only Jewish acting nominees (if they are nominated at all) are going to be **RACHEL WEISZ**, 48, and **TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET**, 24, for supporting roles in, respectively, *The Favourite* and *Beautiful Boy*. By the way, Amazon helped fund *Beautiful Boy*, and it's been playing on the Amazon Prime streaming service since early January (free for Prime members).▲

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Join us for a free educational workshop on how to age in place. Adam Corcoran from Golden Care will be presenting information on how to stay in an independent living environment as long as possible!

No Place Like Home: Things to Know About Aging In Place

Tuesday, March 19th at 10:00 a.m.

**Jewish Federation of Greater Naples
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February 10th 2:30-4:30pm

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How can you prepare?

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Jewish Rituals at the End of Life
by Rabbi Nicole Luna of Temple Beth El

Definition Of & Planning For Chevra Kadisha
by Toni Kaufman-Goodman

*Services Offered by the
Temple Beth El Shiva Committee*
by Dottie Ruberto

Advance Directives
by Sueann Brinkman MSW

*Real Life Stories of Those Who
Did and Did Not Plan*
by financial advisor Reina Schlager CPA/PFS

Light refreshments provided by
The Cemetery Committee



Join us in the Temple Beth El Dubin Center
16225 Winkler Road, Ft Myers FL 33908

The women's Führer

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

In February 1934 – 85 years ago this month – a woman named Gertrud Scholtz-Klink was appointed by the Nazi Party to be leader of the National Socialist Women's League (*NS-Frauenschaft*). As such, she became the most senior woman in Third Reich.

She was born Gertrud Emma Treusch on February 9, 1902, into an anti-Semitic Christian family in Adelsheim, Baden, where her father was the district surveyor. Her father died when she was eight, leaving her mother to raise Gertrud and her two brothers. Leaving school in 1918, she worked as a nurse in Berlin during the last days of World War I. At the age of 18, she married an elementary school teacher, Eugen Klink, with whom she had six children, one of whom died in infancy. In the early 1920s, they joined the Nazi Party, and Eugen Klink became a Nazi district officer. He died of a heart attack at a rally in 1930.

During their time together, Gertrud Klink saw her role as one of helping her husband in his Party activities – looking after the organization of Party kitchens during events, sewing, or organizing daycare for the children of the Party's female members. In 1929, she became leader of the NSDAP women's section in Baden.

In 1932, she married a country doctor, Günther Scholtz, taking the surname "Scholtz-Klink." They divorced in 1938 because he did not share her passion for Nazi politics.

Adolf Hitler appointed Scholtz-Klink as *Reichsführerin* (Women's Leader) and head of the National Socialist Women's League (*NS-Frauenschaft*). She then established one of the largest women's organizations in history. Its fundamental concern was with issues relating to the family, particularly motherhood. A woman's role in Nazi Germany was to be considered sacrosanct. It would be her selfless duty to give birth to as many children as possible, to take care of her body to ensure maximum fertility, and to make a good German home. Presenting a child to the Führer was the greatest form of contribution a German woman could make to the Fatherland.

In July 1936, Scholtz-Klink was promoted to lead the Women's Bureau in the German Labor Front (*Deutsche Arbeitsfront*), responsible for persuading women to work to the advantage of the Nazi government. In 1938, she argued that "the German woman must work and work, physically and mentally she must renounce luxury and pleasure." Just as the SS under Heinrich Himmler oversaw the separation of Jews from mainstream German life, so Scholtz-Klink directed the disconnect between women and the daily life of Nazi-dominated male society. She spoke often against women participating in government or public life, saying, "Anyone who has seen the Communist and Social Democratic women scream on the street and in the parliament, will realize that such an activity is not something which is done by a true woman." Elsewhere, she alerted her members that they had to "deny

the Liberal-Jew-Bolshevik theory of 'women's equality,'" as any acceptance of it "dishonors them."

Run under the close supervision of Heinrich Himmler, Scholtz-Klink supervised the running of six-week training programs for young women known as "Nazi bride schools." The course of instruction ensured that women learned how to become good wives in service to the Nazi state. An important part of the course saw to it that women would acquire detailed knowledge of race and genetics, and instruction was also given on how young women could become perfect partners for SS soldiers.

The *NS-Frauenschaft* was thus the breeding ground for the master race. The private sphere of women became inextricably bound up with masculinist Nazi ideology. The Nazi state sought strict control over female reproduction, as women's bodies provided the means for engineering racial purity.

Many years later, American scholar Claudia Koonz interviewed Scholtz-Klink about the situation in Nazi Germany regarding the Jews. As this fitted into the male sphere, however, Scholtz-Klink denied any involvement. She knew that Jewish women were denied access to *Frauenschaft* activities, but she did not go out of her way to help any Jews seeking assistance because, she said, she "did not know any." At the same time, she considered the treatment of Jews to be legal, and therefore beyond the realm of judgement – particularly by women.

Scholtz-Klink led the *NS-Frauenschaft* from February 1934 to 1945. She divorced Günther Scholtz in 1938, and in 1940 married her third husband, *SS-Obergruppenführer* August Heissmeyer. They combined their families. She had five surviving children, and Heissmeyer had five from a previous marriage. Later, they had another child together. In 1944, the Nazi Party advertised Scholtz-Klink and her 11 children as a "fertility model" for the Third Reich. What it did not add was that Scholtz-Klink and Heissmeyer made frequent trips to visit prisoners in women's concentration camps in line with Heissmeyer's role as Inspector of Concentration Camps.

After World War II, Scholtz-Klink and Heissmeyer fled Berlin. Captured in the summer of 1945 and imprisoned in a Soviet prisoner of war camp near Magdeburg, they managed to escape and then lived quietly in the village of Bebenhausen, Germany, where Scholtz-Klink spent the next three years under the alias of Maria Stuckebrock. On February 28, 1948, however, she was identified and arrested. A French military court sentenced her to 18 months in prison on the charge of forging documents, and in May 1950, a reevaluation of her sentence penalized her with an additional 30 months.

After her release from prison in 1953, Scholtz-Klink settled back in Bebenhausen. She later confirmed her ongoing support for Nazism, beliefs she held through to her death at age 97, on March 24, 1999.▲

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



■ Dr. Paul Bartrop

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Who gets to decide what it means to be a Jew? And for how long?

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

The Jewish American Paradox: Embracing Choice in a Changing World, by Robert Mnookin.
PublicAffairs. 330 pages.
Hardcover. \$28.00

In *The Jewish American Paradox*, Robert Mnookin puts effective lawyerly reasoning and compelling personal experience to work in service of sketching the situation of 21st-century American Jews. He plays and wrestles with large questions regarding the elements of Jewish identity and how the power of these elements has changed over time.

The author launches his discussion with an attention-getting overview of "identity" illustrated by the life and work of identity's master theorist, Jewish-born Erik Erikson. This strategy proves to be intellectually stimulating and colorful. Having grabbed the reader's attention, Mnookin holds onto it with an accessible presentation about how to make both the "American Jewish community" and the various American Jewish communities thrive.

Among the many traditional components of Jewish identity probed by Mnookin are identification through matriarchal lineage, religious commitment and the racial – or "Jewish blood" – concept. He probes deeply into each, testing its utility for a vibrant Jewish future.

The context here is the declining Jewish population. Can changes in the

dynamics of Jewish identity stabilize or reverse the downward trend in the identified Jewish population?

Mnookin finds most of the identity elements restrictive and therefore limiting. Can one have a Jewish life without Jewish knowledge? Without Jewish DNA (if there is such a thing)? Without ascribing to behaviors (both dos and don'ts) provided in holy scripture and authoritative commentaries?

Mnookin argues for inclusiveness, and his arguments are well shaped and compelling. He is more comfortable with notions like nationhood or peoplehood, in part because such concepts have malleable borders.

Though Mnookin, in some ways, respects Orthodoxy, he sees its insularity as a problem. He is not fond of gatekeepers and doesn't want negative assessments or litmus tests on the model of "she's not really Jewish because (of one shortcoming or another)."

In the 20th century, an important component of Jewish identity became identification with Israel. Undoubtedly, this factor continues to have great importance. However, as Mnookin points out, the overwhelming power of Orthodox political parties and government officials is anti-inclusive. Life-cycle events that reflect Jewish identity are under strict control. Religious streams other than the Orthodox are not sanctioned as truly Jewish. Israelis, for the most part, are either Orthodox or secular.

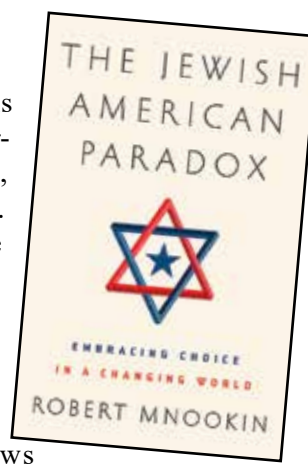
This, for Mnookin, is not a model to be encouraged. America, at its best, is built on inclusiveness. Israel, for more and more Jews (and others), does not measure up. Identification with Israel is threatened by the Orthodox stranglehold on defining who is a Jew.

Moreover, many Jews who are otherwise committed to Israel cannot accept the country's policies regarding settlements. They see Israel as the villain undermining a two-state solution – or any solution.

It is difficult to imagine Israel changing its policies to satisfy diaspora Jewish communities, but some measure of accommodation would seem necessary to assure this crucial identity factor. Key chapters in the book include those that ask such questions as: "Who Is a Jew in [21st-century] America?" and "Can We Survive Acceptance?"

As he turns toward his conclusions, Mnookin explores "The Challenge of Inter-marriage" and the connected topic of "Raising a Jewish Child."

Each chapter continues to underscore the necessity of fostering and achieving inclusiveness. Mnookin provides a lot of information and opinion derived



from surveys that attempt to measure the pulse of Jewish identity. His analyses and projections based on these surveys are particularly useful in gauging trends that Jewish leaders need to understand and build upon.

Indeed, on all the issues that he pursues, the author goes far beyond the stage of worrying. His pages are filled with common-sense suggestions, and the extensive chapter notes open windows for further contemplation.

Mnookin's presentation of his personal Jewish journey is a significant aspect of this book. He gives firsthand accounts of how severe criteria for tribal membership undermine a desired sense of Jewish cohesiveness. Why does an individual have to touch all the bases to have a home-run Jewish life? He also explores the power of the potentially fruitful criterion of Jewish self-anointment.

Perhaps individual Jews and branded Jewish communities (of faith and other bonding elements) need to stop grading one another. Such authenticity rankings only serve the end of exclusion. Though many will deny it, there is a richness, a vibrancy, in picking and choosing what speaks to you as a Jew, sharing your enthusiasm, and respecting/accepting those who grow their Jewish identities differently.

continued on next page

■ Phil Jason



Robert Mnookin

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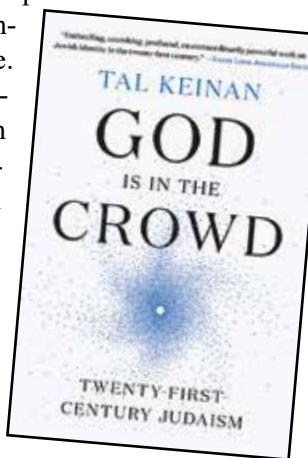
God is in the Crowd: Twenty-First Century Judaism, by Tal Keinan. Spiegel & Grau. 352 pages. Hardcover. \$28.00

Even more urgently cast is Tal Keinan's argument. This interdisciplinary, game-changing exploration of the possible path for a Jewish future is both alarming and founded in hope. Most of the news that Keinan reports about Jewish population trends, weakening Jewish identity, and the costs of exclusivity in Jewish movements and organizations is heartbreaking even while undoubtedly accurate. His most frightening observation is that his book, and the understandings and arguments it offers, may be 90 years too late. Keinan is pointing the way toward a revolution, a last-ditch effort to combat and counter the forces that, if not checked, will, in a few generations or less, make Judaism extinct.

This author will not allow us to keep betting on God's love for his favorite people to save the day. God's love has always been conditional. If She is anywhere, She is in the hard-won consensus about Jewish identity and values that those who care will bring about. In this way, and in ways depending on modern technology and calculations, She is in the crowd.

For a long time, the mathematical phrase "lowest common denominator" has had a negative connotation when applied metaphorically to cultural rankings. Designing tests

to insure the success of the most marginal students is a problematic concept. However, in a situation that cries for inclusivity, reaching out to the lowest common denominator – the standards, practices and goals that approach universal acceptance in the worldwide Jewish Community – is likely to turn the tide and insure a Jewish future. To get there, educational patterns and priorities must change, and steadfast commitment needs to go viral.



Keinan carefully examines the strengths and weaknesses of the two dominant centers of Jewish life: the U.S. and Israel. He diagnoses the shortcomings of each: the ways in which societal segments exclude and undermine one another,

the established conditions funneling Jewish history, wisdom and creativity into a death-spiral. He offers challenging solutions that require buying in to a master plan. Or inventing a better one.

The plan includes the reinvigoration of "the wisdom machine" that maintained and shaped Jewish communality during the Diaspora epoch. It includes as well a "Jewish World Endowment" of values and resources. It requires a technological platform to organize the future Jewish government and authorize an administrative head. Keinan's candidate for this position involves a re-tasking of Israel's mostly symbolic office: its presidency. The new task for this office would



Tal Keinan

be to become "the convening point for Jews around the world to debate fundamental questions of Peoplehood. It would be the global administrator of

the Jewish People.

Tal Keinan expects and encourages responses to his impassioned plea for Jews worldwide to end their march toward suicide. The power of the book is as much in the abundance of precise details as in its overall vision, which is clarifying and magnetic.

Woven through the tapestry of facts and ideas is the compelling strand of Keinan's own life as an American student, an officer and fighter pilot in Israel's Air Force, a successful entrepreneur shuttling between the United States and Israel, and a concerned parent. He asks, as did the great Jewish thinker Hillel, "If not now, when?" ▲

The Jewish American Paradox

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

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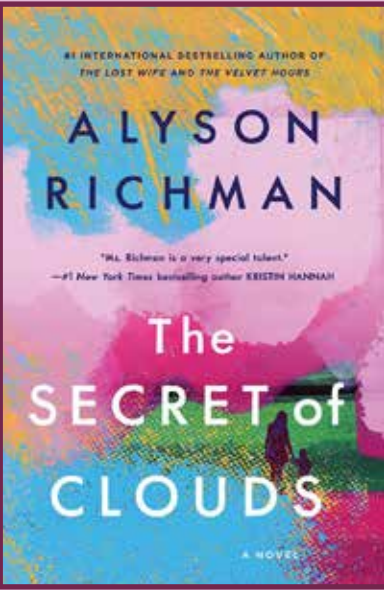
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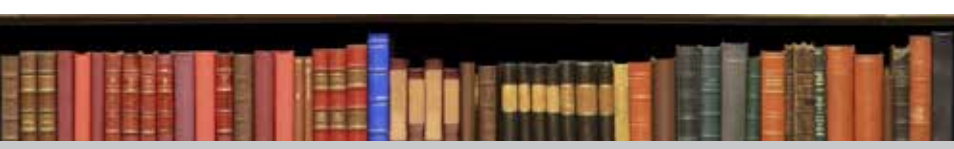
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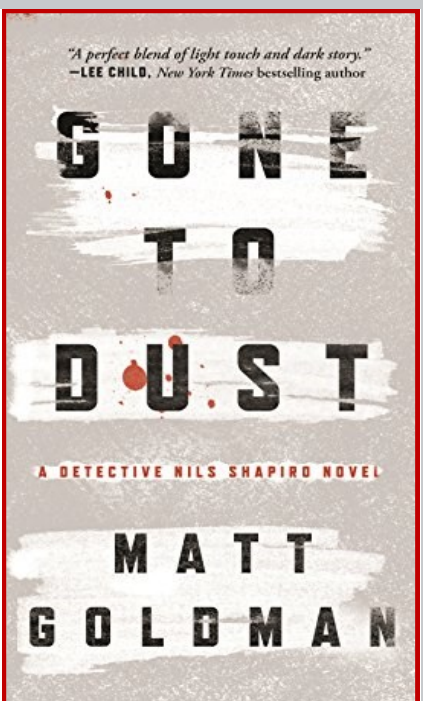
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Matt Goldman is an author and television writer for *Seinfeld* and *Ellen* amongst others. He has been nominated for a Writers Guild Award and has won an Emmy.

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My personal culinary trip to Israel

If you like to eat, Israel is the best place to be. The secret is out that the flavors of Israel are trending as a top cuisine. Israeli food is on the tables of the top chefs and is making waves around the world. Recently, I ate my way through the best restaurants of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Northern Israel. I had the opportunity to travel to Israel for the first time in 11 years. As I packed my suitcase, I thought the trip would mostly be focused on my nephew's wedding and visiting family and friends. While there, however, I was blown away to discover Israel's flourishing culinary scene. The food there is incredible – it's fresh, it's flavorful and it's innovative.

I tried malabi and kanafeh, bourekas, pita, zaatar and even well-known foods like hummus and falafel. My kids had shawarma almost daily. Israeli food has so much more flavor and crunch compared to what we have in the States. I think we ate about every hour or so in the 14 days we spent in Israel, and while my jeans may have been uncomfortably tight, my stomach grumbled happily along.

Israeli cuisine is famous among tourists for falafels, shawarma and hummus. True, these are some of Israel's finest street food options, but there is one dish that every single Israeli loves



Dalia Hemed in front of Dr Shakshuka in Tel Aviv and is worth all the trouble of traveling to Israel. The one dish you need to try before leaving Israel is shakshuka: tomatoes, poached eggs, a few peppers and a little garlic. Need I say more? Shakshuka, the famous Israeli dish, comes in many shapes and forms, but they all share a common (and delicious) core rooted in the local cuisine that has spread across the world.

Today, shakshuka and shakshuka-like dishes are taking Europe and America by storm, recently being billed as a healthy foodie bowl. It is served everywhere in Israel, and many Tel Aviv restaurants offer this staple dish on their



Dalia Hemed with Bino Gabso in the Dr Shakshuka kitchen

menus. I've enjoyed shakshuka several times in Israel, most recently at a famous restaurant called Dr. Shakshuka.

Bino Gabso, better known as Dr. Shakshuka, has the prescription for what ails Tel Aviv's fast-food customers. His restaurant is internationally known as the spot to try all varieties of this popular dish.

Shakshuka, is one of the easiest dishes to make, and one of the most pleasurable to eat, especially at Dr Shakshuka. Shakshuka is a messy dish that allows total creativity. Its ingredients are cheap and available, and it's a dish that is suitable to the Israeli personality. You stir everything in a pan and somehow it meshes. You have to make sure that it's hot but doesn't burn, and at some point, you always start sweating and become red yourself. It's especially fun to eat shakshuka at Bino's without any caution. You just dip the fresh bread into the pan. The eggs swim in tomatoes and paprika and everything is red hot, spicy and wonderful. Bino himself is big, fun and generous, like his shakshuka. And he's the only man in the world who has a PhD in "shakshukology."

Bino Gabso is a celebrity chef known for his North African home-cooking style. His Jaffa restaurant, located in the Jaffa Flea Market, includes dishes like couscous, mafroum (stuffed potatoes), chraimeh (spicy fish), and lamb or chicken shawarma, as well

as the signature dish that earned Bino his nickname. His trademark is the personal frying pan in which he serves each shakshuka. "That's my invention," he boasted. His establishment has been feeding Israelis and tourists for decades.

At Dr Shakshuka, you can order your shakshuka hot or mild. He starts by frying strips of green pepper, adds garlic, then after two or three minutes, he puts in the tomatoes and doesn't stir, and just adds a bit of salt. "Sometimes friends want to annoy me. So I wait another two to three minutes and stir." Then he adds sweet paprika, "for the taste and also for the color – people eat with their eyes, too," he said. Then he adds crushed red peppers, stirs, waits a few minutes, and in go the eggs. After about a minute, he stirs around the eggs, mixing only the egg white with the rest of the dish, leaving the yolks whole.

Bino's shakshuka is served with bread – never sliced – and small salads on the side, like a Libyan pumpkin dip, for instance. He takes great pride in his shakshuka. When you eat his shakshuka



you get a little bit of both weight gain and tears in your eyes, from the spiciness as well as the emotion.

Even though Bino is sure his shakshuka is the best, he still encourages people to make it at home, like he does, for his five children and 12



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

grandchildren. He doesn't have a problem telling everyone his recipe or even showing them how to make it! So here is his recipe:

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup canola oil
- 10 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 chili pepper, seeded and chopped
- 8 ripe diced tomatoes
- 1 tbsp paprika
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 6 eggs
- ▶ Heat a deep, large skillet or sauté pan on medium. Slowly warm the oil in the pan.
- ▶ Add garlic and continue to sauté till mixture is fragrant.
- ▶ Add the diced chili pepper, sauté for 5-7 minutes over medium until softened.
- ▶ Add tomatoes to pan, stir until blended. Add spices and stir, and allow mixture to simmer over medium heat for 5-7 minutes until it starts to reduce.
- ▶ At this point, you can taste the mixture, and spice it according to your preferences.
- ▶ Add salt and pepper to taste.
- ▶ Crack the eggs, one at a time, placing them directly over the tomato mixture, making sure to space them evenly over the sauce. I usually place 5 eggs around the outer edge and 1 in the center. The eggs will cook "over easy" style on top of the tomato sauce.
- ▶ Cover the pan. Allow mixture to simmer for 10 minutes.
- ▶ Enjoy!▲



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King David – the world premiere of a failed musical

By Arlene Stolnitz

I am a packrat as you might imagine! Recently, going through some papers I had been unable to discard, I came across a rare discovery of a long-forgotten CD.

Several years ago, knowing my interest in music of Judaica, Rabbi Mark Blazer, a family friend from Temple Beth Ami in Santa Clarita, California, had given me a little known and obscure CD of the musical *King David* by legendary composers Tim Rice and Alan Menken, well known in Broadway musical circles for productions such as *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Lion King*.

Menken and Rice had been commissioned to write a musical to be performed at the Sultan's Pool, outside the walled city of Jerusalem. It was originally conceived to commemorate the 3,000th anniversary of the city of Jerusalem and was to be performed as an outdoor event. According to Rice, "When it proved logistically and financially impossible to do it and Disney took an interest, we changed gears... we felt we'd been commissioned to write it as an oratorio, and still hoped it would be performed as such in Israel... we should have emphasized that more, to avoid being judged primarily as a Broadway show."

With music by Alan Menken and lyrics and book by Tim Rice, it is the biblical story of King David based on stories from the Books of Samuel, 1 Chronicles, and includes the Psalms of David. It was produced on Broadway in 1997 to a lukewarm audience. At

the time, it was thought to be of too serious a nature for a Broadway performance.

Sometimes called a modern oratorio or opera, it is mainly sung and contains little dialogue. The music swings from jazz and pop to grand choral arrangements. A large orchestra and choir are included in the production.

It was staged in May 1997 in a concert version by Disney Theater Company and premiered in the newly renovated New Amsterdam Theater in New York City. Subsequent performances were held at the Hollywood Bowl, in Atlanta, Georgia, and Irving, Texas. But it never quite achieved the recognition it might have deserved. Critical reviews called it "sober and respectful... with enough information for a month of Bible study classes." The show, lasting two hours and forty-five minutes, was called a "Goliath of a yawn," even though kudos were given to outstanding performances by cast members and musical arrangements. The cast album, which is the one I have, has been praised.

The cast of characters included biblical figures such as Jonathan, Joab, Absalom, Michal, Bathsheba, Saul and Goliath, as well as a full ensemble of singers who trace the life of David until his final days ending with the reprise "This New Jerusalem," sung by Solomon and company. Numbers include songs such as "Israel and Saul," "Samuel Anoints David," "Goliath of Goth," "Death of Saul," "The Ark Brought to Jerusalem" and "When in Love."

The lush music is gorgeous and expressive, making one wonder why this work failed when, in later years, a production like *Hamilton* has had such success. Could it have been the timing?

Those interested in hearing excerpts from the production can find selected songs by principal players from the show on YouTube by typing in the title of the show.

My dream is to have a full stage production performed, but unfortunately, at this point, the idea seems to be out of reach.▲

Arlene Stolnitz, founder of the Sara-

sota Jewish Chorale, has sung in choral groups for over 25 years. A retired educator, she is a graduate of the Gulf Coast Community Leadership Foundation. A member of the Jewish Congregation of Venice, the Venice Chorale and the Sarasota Jewish Chorale, her interest in choral music has led to this series of articles on Jewish Folk Music in the Diaspora.



Arlene Stolnitz



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Spanish wines...they speak our language

By The Wine Whisperer

When I lived in Madrid in the early '70s, I'd buy my wine at the little shop on the corner. They dispensed it from big barrels along the wall, so I had to bring my own container. Large Nescafe instant coffee jars were the best. The bodega clerk would fill it up, then calculate the price according to some arcane formula that's comprehensible only to Druids and Basque separatists. Was the wine any good? I have no idea.

One step up from the fill-it place was the wine sold in supermarkets,

which came in real bottles. One I particularly enjoyed was called CASA (the initials stood for something), which cost about 25 cents a liter and was sealed with a little plastic stopper. No cork. Then someone told me that the stuff in the bottle had never seen a grape: it was water and alcohol with some sugar and flavoring. I went back to the Nescafe jar.

Of course, on special occasions we'd splurge on a real bottle with a cork: Marques de Riscal for around \$3, which came with this luxurious gold wire netting around the bottle. Most of the other wines we tried were harsh, rustic and headache-inducing, but I wasn't much of a wine geek at the time. And besides, I was making \$325 a month.

My, how times have changed.

Today, Spain is right up there with the rest of the world in terms of winemaking technology, philosophy, vineyard management and just about every other standard you can think of. There are basically two reasons for this.

One, the fathers and grandfathers learned winemaking from their forebears, who learned it from theirs, so what was good enough for grandpa was good enough for them. The barrels were supposed to smell like the floor of a chicken coop. But the sons and daughters learned their winemaking skills from the University of Bordeaux or UC Davis or Fresno State. Big difference.

Two, every aspect of winemaking technology has come a long way in the last 25-30 years. The kids understand it. The dads don't.

The fruit-forward style mentioned above comes from the fact that Spanish winemakers have (mostly) gotten away from keeping their wine in oak barrels for decades. While some still put up the juice for 20 or 30 years, most wines are now much fresher right out of the bottle.

And don't overlook the whites, which are mostly made in a fruity, refreshing style. Spain is making Sauvignon Blanc, but there's plenty to enjoy from native grapes like Verdejo and Albariño. There's also *cava*, a sparkler that combines Chardonnay and Macabeo. It's made by the Champagne process, and often represents Champagne-style quality at a more agreeable price.

I have a little homework assignment for you. When you raise that glass of Rioja or Monsant, you have to propose a toast, so memorize this: *Salud, amor, y dinero, y el tiempo para gustarlos*. Health, love and money... and the time to enjoy them. Like these

new favorites:

Bartolomé Vernet Primitiu de Bellmunt Priorat 2014 (\$50) – A Spanish blend of Grenache and Samsó (Carignan), this is a full-bodied, rich, opaque treat with well-balanced flavors of black fruit, smoke, chocolate and caramel. WW 91

Vinas del Vero La Miranda Garnacha Blanca Secastilla 2013 (\$13) – From the foothills of the Pyrenees, where it's nice and cool, this Grenache Blanc has a rich deep amber color and a nose of honey, almonds and herbs. The flavors follow through with peach, a bit of citrus acidity and spice. WW 87

Las Moradas Grenache Senda 2013 (\$11) – This is a lot of wine for the money. Rich concentrated and inky purple in the glass, with scents of smoke and cedar from the 10 months it spends in French oak. There's plenty of tannic structure supporting flavors of plum, blackberry and earth. WW 89

Correction

In a past article about South Africa I noted that the Pinotage grape is a "hybrid." This was not correct. It is, in fact, a cross between two grapes of the same genus, Pinot Noir and Cinsault. I regret the error. Thanks to Peter May of pinotage.org for pointing this out. ▲

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

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The collage shows several pages from the L'CHAYIM newspaper. Key features include:

- Jewish Film Festival:** Announcement for the 23rd Annual Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida, held at the Regal Balltower Stadium on December 20th.
- Stars of David:** A feature on a local Jewish family.
- Interested in Your Family's History?** An advertisement for genealogy services.
- Senior Lunch Bunch:** Information about a community meal for seniors.
- Queen Esther Masquerade Ball:** Announcement for a fundraising event on March 16, 2019.
- Community Calendar:** A list of upcoming events and services.

Amid tension along northern border, FIDF delivers personal care packages to Israeli soldiers

Metulla, Israel, December 18 – Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers stationed along Israel's northern border – the scene of heightened tension in recent weeks – on December 14 received 200 packages of personal care products on their bases, thanks to continuing support from the

Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF).

With IDF's Operation Northern Shield ongoing, FIDF's team in Israel brought personal care packages to the brave men and women of the IDF serving near the Lebanon border. This follows another delivery on December

7, when FIDF supplied sweet packages containing chocolate and other treats to more than 600 soldiers participating in the border operation.

Earlier this month, during Hanukkah, FIDF's team brought messages of hope and light – and *sufganiyot* (jelly-filled doughnuts traditionally eaten on

Hanukkah) – to IDF units throughout Israel as part of the FIDF Adopt-A-Battalion and Adopt-A-Brigade Programs.

About Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF)

FIDF was established in 1981 by a group of Holocaust survivors as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with the mission of offering educational, cultural, recreational and social programs and facilities that provide hope, purpose and life-changing support for the soldiers who protect Israel and Jews worldwide. Today, FIDF has more than 150,000 loyal supporters and 20 chapters throughout the United States and Panama. FIDF proudly supports IDF soldiers, families of fallen soldiers, and wounded veterans through a variety of innovative programs that reinforce the vital bond between the communities in the United States, the soldiers of the IDF and the State of Israel. For more information, visit www.fidf.org.



IDF soldiers stationed along Israel's northern border receiving sweet packages on the sixth night of Hanukkah

Our Cuba trip

By Helene Glocer

Last summer, as we planned our trip to Cuba, many of our friends were eager to tell us of their experiences visiting the island. A few people mentioned that there is a vibrant Jewish community in Havana and a Jewish presence throughout the island. They have the equivalent of a Jewish Federation, called the Patronato, which supports Jews all over Cuba, an Ashkenazi synagogue called Templo Beth Shalom, and a Sephardic synagogue called Centro Sefaradi Yehuda Ha Levi de Cuba.

We received a warm welcome from the staff at the Centro Sefaradi and they were eager to tell us about their activities. To our surprise, there was a gym as you entered the building. The staff explained that it was to help the seniors with their physical therapy. Many seniors also participate in a crafts program, making products to sell in order to support the program. They are then given lunch before going home.

Everyone we spoke to insisted that there is no anti-Semitism in Cuba. For many years, they were not able to practice their religion. However, that was true for all religions and the Jews were not singled out. They are now allowed to worship freely.

Many Jews left Cuba after the revolution, but they tell us that their numbers are now growing, as they have many converts.

David Prinstein, President of the Patronato, took the time to tell us how they work with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to get supplies which they distribute to Jews throughout Cuba. However, despite the generous support of the JDC, they still have a great need for basic items.

Before traveling to Havana, I called to ask what we could bring them. The list was long. Baby Tylenol, children's cough medicine, vitamins, ibuprofen, eye drops, sun screen, adult diapers and, of course, money. We were told not to try to bring suitcases full of stuff, but rather backpacks or large purses. There was no problem going through customs and the staff at the Patronato were very grateful for the donations.

I am writing this not to start any kind of organized giving, but rather to encourage anyone traveling to Havana to bring some of those items the Jewish community needs so badly and to visit the Jewish community there. You can find all of the addresses and contact information on the web. You won't regret it. ▲



Friends from Temple Beth Shalom in Cape Coral visit Templo Beth Shalom in Havana, Cuba

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BRIEFS

**ISRAEL'S POPULATION
8.972 MILLION ON EVE
OF 2019**

On December 31, the population of Israel was 8.972 million, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported.

This number includes 6.668 million Jews (74.3%), 1.878 million Arabs (20.9%) and 426,000 "others" (4.8%).

185,000 babies were born during the year (74.4% Jews, 22.8% Arabs, and 2.8% others). (*Globes*)

**ISRAELI EXPORTS AT
RECORD \$110 BILLION
IN 2018**

Israeli exports hit a record high of \$110 billion in 2018, up 8% from \$103 billion in 2017.

The export of high-tech services reached \$51 billion, a 14% increase.

Exports to Asia grew by 20% in 2018, reaching \$10 billion. (Eran Bar-Tal, *Israel Hayom*)

**RECORD 4 MILLION
TOURISTS VISIT ISRAEL
IN 2018**

Israel expects a record-breaking 4 million tourists by the end of 2018.

There were 13% more tourist entries in 2018 than in 2017 and 38% more than in 2016.

61% of tourists were Christians and 22% were Jews. 40% had visited Israel before.

There were 813,500 tourists from the U.S., 320,000 from France, 303,200 from Russia, 259,500 from Germany, 200,000 from Britain and 100,000 from China. (Yvette J. Deane, *Jerusalem Post*)

**ISRAEL BOOMS WITH
BABIES AS DEVELOPED
WORLD'S BIRTH RATES
PLUMMET**

Israel is having a sustained baby boom, and now has the highest per capita rate of population growth in the developed world, experts say. Families here have an average of 3.1 children, compared with 1.7 in other developed countries.

In the country's Jewish sector there is a lingering post-Holocaust imperative to replace the six million who were murdered. Driving this focus, argues sociologist Orna Donath, "is the collective fear of annihilation. It continues to haunt us, and children are seen as symbolizing a continuance of life, of survival." Even among secular Jews, three children is the norm.

"In America you are an individual who is not necessarily going to live close to your parents. But in Israel, the whole basis of society is familial," says Dr. Elly Teman, a medical anthropologist

and senior lecturer at Ruppin College. Moreover, "We hear that if we don't have enough citizens, we don't have enough soldiers. And people are acting on those messages [whether] they are aware they are or not."

She points to the immigrants who came to Israel from the former Soviet Union. Those who came as adults usually had one child. By contrast, those who came as teenagers and absorbed the societal message have gone on to have two to three children. (Dina Kraft, *Christian Science Monitor*)

**ISRAEL RANKS AS
WORLD'S THIRD MOST
EDUCATED COUNTRY**

Israel is the third most educated country, according to 2017 data compiled by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

OECD calculated the percentage of each country's population between the ages of 25 and 64 who have completed a two- or four-year degree beyond high school – including both academic and vocational programs.

The data shows that 50.9% of Israelis in the target age bracket have a higher-education degree. The report noted that Jewish Israelis enter college at a later age than most Western counterparts because most serve in the military for at least two years after high school.

The United States came in at No. 5, with only 46.4% of its population in the target age group having completed a higher-education program – even though half of the world's top-ranking universities are American.

South Korea came in at No. 4, with 47.7% having completed a higher-education program, but it tops the list of most educated people aged 25-34 (66.6%).

Japan is No. 2 (51.4%) and the most educated country in the world is Canada (56.7%) – although Canada faces an overeducation, underemployment problem. (Abigail Klein Leichman, *Israel21c*)

**THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION
OF ARAB WOMEN IN
ISRAEL**

The status of Arab women in Israel is improving significantly. Hadas Fuchs, a researcher at the Taub Institute, published a study in 2018 on the integration of Arab women in the labor market in Israel. The most striking detail of her research relates to a revolution in the education of Arab women: 15% of students in higher education are Arab women, even though the proportion of Arab women among the general popu-

lation is only 10%. In fact, the number of female Arab students in higher education has doubled since the beginning of 2000. As a result, women in Arab society are much more educated than men.

Female students at Arab high schools comprise 52% of students studying computer programming and sciences, 55% in electronics, 59% in mathematics and 70% in chemistry. The employment rate of Arab women jumped from 35% to 40% in the past year alone. (Meirav Arlosoroff, *The Marker*)

**JEWISH AGENCY FIGURES
REVEAL 5% RISE IN
ALIYAH DURING 2018,
INCLUDING 45%
INCREASE FROM RUSSIA**

Jerusalem, December 27, 2018 — The Jewish Agency for Israel today published its official year-end data on Aliyah during 2018. According to the figures, more than 29,600 people immigrated to Israel from around the world this year, compared with 28,220 new immigrants in 2017, a 5% increase year over year.

The country with the largest number of olim (immigrants to Israel) in 2018 was Russia, with approximately 10,500 immigrants, representing a 45% increase from last year. Also within the former Soviet Union, more than 6,500 people made Aliyah from Ukraine, a 9% decrease from 2017.

A total of 3,550 individuals immigrated to Israel from North America (U.S. and Canada), similar to last

year's figure, according to data coordinated with Nefesh B'Nefesh.

As many as 2,660 made Aliyah from France, a 25% decline. Elsewhere, 660 immigrants came from Brazil and 330 arrived from the United Kingdom, both decreases of 4%. The 330 new immigrants from Argentina in 2018 marked a 17% rise from last year, and the 320 from South Africa represented a 2% increase.

"I welcome this year's increase in the number of immigrants to Israel," said Jewish Agency Chairman of the Executive Isaac Herzog. "Every Jew who comes to Israel and establishes a home here completes another piece of the wonderful mosaic of the Jewish people in their historic homeland. After 70 years of the state's independence and the tremendous number of olim who have already made it to Israel, the potential for even greater Aliyah remains significant, and The Jewish Agency will continue to work to achieve that goal."

(The Jewish Agency emphasizes that the figures released today comprise the official statistics on Aliyah during 2018 through the end of November as well as the temporary data through December, in addition to estimates of the expected arrival of more immigrants in the remaining days of this month.)

**ISRAEL'S VERSION
OF DEMOCRACY
IS IN GOOD HEALTH**

Israel now ranks 30th out of 167 countries in the Economist Intelligence

continued on next page

**Wonder
Woman**

Girls get a
positive new
role model



Widely praised by critics, Israeli actress Gal Gadot is giving girls all over the world a positive new role model, with her portrayal of Wonder Woman in the Warner Brothers movie *Batman v. Superman*. This model-actress-mom who served in the Israeli army, and started on a law career before turning to Hollywood, creates a superhero that is all about compassion, love, truth, justice and equality. And she's pretty tough, too.

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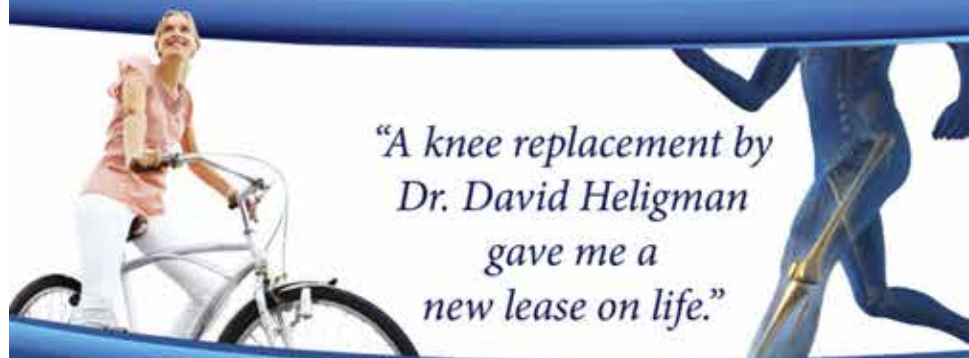


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BRIEFS

continued from previous page

Unit's annual survey of national democracies. It is sandwiched between France and Belgium.

The Economist calls these "flawed democracies," a designation that also includes the United States.

Since 2009, Israel has moved up seven places in the Economist Intelligence Unit's ranking of democracies.

This is something to be proud of. Israel is not the most purely democratic nation in the world, and it never will be. History, ideology and security challenges preclude that. But the hybrid democracy it does practice is very much alive and well. (Zev Chafets, Bloomberg)

THE DISCOVERY OF HIZBULLAH'S INVASION TUNNELS

◆ The discovery of Hizbullah's invasion tunnels has removed a critical component of its and Iran's plan for war against Israel. The discovery robbed them of the ability to surprise Israel through an offensive (under)ground assault into Israeli territory, which was to be a central element in challenging the country's security.

◆ In addition, it has again embarrassed Iran because it exhibits Israel's superior level of intelligence once more, following the exposure of Iran's nuclear archive, which was brought to Israel.

◆ Lebanon and the international arena need to understand that Hizbullah, as an Iranian proxy, is not the "shield of Lebanon," but is a huge danger to that country. Hizbullah is developing strong offensive capabilities against Israel from within Lebanese civilian facilities to serve

Iranian interests only.

◆ Its actions beyond the international border – inside Israeli territory – justify a sharp Israeli response that will cause harm to Lebanon and its citizens.

◆ Any attempt to differentiate between the military wing and the political wing of Hizbullah is ridiculous. Does anyone really believe that a handful of rebellious Hizbullah terrorists decided independently to dig a complex system of tunnels which demanded so many resources?

◆ It is amazing to see how the Europeans have confirmed the existence of the tunnels and have expressed their support of Israel's right to destroy them, yet they refuse to blame Hizbullah. UNIFIL has confirmed the existence of a tunnel, but it has refrained from asserting that Hizbullah has thereby significantly violated Israel's sovereignty. (Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs)

NO ARAB DEMOGRAPHIC TIME BOMB

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the Jewish state is not facing an Arab demographic time bomb. It benefits from a robust Jewish demographic tailwind of births and net immigration. From 1995 to 2017, the number of Israeli Jewish births surged by 74%, from 80,400 to 140,000, while the number of Israeli Arab births grew by 19%, from 36,000 to 43,000. Moreover, the trend of Israeli emigration has slowed down.

In 1898, Simon Dubnov, a leading Jewish historian and demographer, projected 500,000 Jews in the Land of Israel by 1998, defining Theodor Herzl's Zionist vision as "messianic wishful thinking." In 1944, the founder

of Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, Prof. Roberto Bachi, projected 2.3 million Jews in Israel in 2001. In 2018 there are seven million Jews in Israel.

In 2000, the CBS projected a decline in the Jewish fertility rate from 2.6 births per woman to 2.4 in 2025. However, by 2017, the Jewish fertility rate had risen to 3.16, and 76.5% of all Israeli births were Jewish, compared to 69% in 1995. The rise of Jewish fertility reflects enhanced optimism, patriotism, attachment to roots, and communal responsibility among Israel's secular population.

In 2018 there are 1.85 million Arabs in Judea and Samaria (West Bank) – and not 3 million as claimed by the Palestinians – 1.6 million Israeli Muslim Arabs, 130,000 Israeli Druze, 130,000 Israeli Christian Arabs and seven million Jews. This constitutes a 65.5% Jewish majority in the combined area of pre-1967 Israel, Judea and Samaria. (Amb. Yoram Ettinger, *Jewish Political Studies Review*)

EVANGELICAL VOTERS THROW THEIR SUPPORT TO A PRO-ISRAEL PRESIDENT - IN BRAZIL

◆ Shortly after Jair Bolsonaro's victory in the Brazilian presidential election, he said he would follow through on his campaign promise to move Brazil's embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

◆ Bolsonaro – himself a Catholic but married to an evangelical Protestant pastor – owes his political success in large part to support from evangelical voters.

◆ As recently as the 1970s, Brazil was almost uniformly Catholic. But the largest country in Latin America is today nearly as evangelical as the U.S.: 25% of Brazilians identify as evangelical Christians, compared

with 26% of Americans, according to the Joshua Project. As in the U.S., many evangelical and Pentecostal Christians instinctively support Israel.

◆ The rise of evangelical and Pentecostal Christian support for Judaism and Israel in much of the world is a heartening sign.

◆ Based on a literal approach to the Bible and a covenantal theology that attributes a continuing religious significance to the Jewish people and their state, these two rapidly spreading forms of Protestant Christianity tend to promote a climate of respect for individual Jews as well as support for Zionism.

◆ Guatemala, which is now about 40% Protestant, opened an embassy in Jerusalem two days after the U.S. did. (Walter Russell Mead, *Wall Street Journal*)

ANCIENT JERUSALEM ATTRACTS GROWING CHINESE TOURISM

Jerusalem has seen growing tourism by Chinese tourists in recent years.

Doron Spielman, vice president of the City of David Foundation in Jerusalem's Old City, said Chinese people love coming here and seeing a wall which was built by Jews at the same time as the Great Wall of China.

The City of David park has translated its popular nighttime sound and light show into Mandarin, so that biblical characters now speak Chinese to tell the ancient story on the walls of Jerusalem's Old City.

"There aren't too many places in the world that the Chinese people can come and find another group of people that go back thousands of years as they do," Spielman stressed.

Israel has launched initiatives to

continued on next page

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BRIEFS

continued from previous page

better cater to the needs of Chinese tourists, such as inviting Chinese chefs to teach how to cook the Chinese cuisine.

Direct flights between China and Israel further increased in frequency in 2018, with now dozens of weekly direct flights between the two countries. (Keren Setton, *Xinhua* - China)

ISRAELI-JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP: A POTENTIAL YET TO BE REALIZED

Although relations between Jerusalem and Tokyo have improved significantly since the end of Japan's participation in the Arab League boycott, the two countries have yet to develop a close relationship to the extent that Israel has with its Western allies and even China.

Because of Jerusalem's improved relations with the Arab states and Japan's declining reliance on Middle Eastern oil supplies, Tokyo will not need to be as cautious in improving political relations with Jerusalem or fear pressure from its other Middle Eastern partners.

As geopolitical obstacles from other Middle Eastern countries decline in significance and the economic benefits

of technological cooperation become clear, there is little reason for Israel and Japan not to increase their cooperation. (Shaun Ho, Institute for Contemporary Affairs - Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs)

MIDDLE EAST'S JEWS WERE VICTIMS OF ETHNIC CLEANSING

I live in an area of Jerusalem's Katamonim neighborhood fondly referred to as the "Kurdish enclave" thanks to the Kurdish and Iraqi Jews who compose the bulk of the local population. Further down the road is a large pocket of Moroccan and Tunisian Jewish families. Anyone who thinks that Israel is some kind of Yiddish-dominated culture planted in the Middle East is in for a surprise. The descendants of Jews from Arab lands now make up more than 50% of the Jewish Israeli population.

After the creation of the state in 1948, more than 800,000 Jews were expelled from Arab lands and came to Israel (compared to 711,000 Palestinian refugees). The Arab world took revenge on the Jews living among them with devastating riots and anti-Jewish measures. According to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, "259,000 Jews fled from Morocco, 140,000 from Algeria, 100,000 from Tunisia, 75,000 from

Egypt and another 38,000 from Libya.... 135,000 Jews were exiled from Iraq, 55,000 from Yemen, 34,000 from Turkey, 20,000 from Lebanon and 18,000 from Syria."

Jews had first settled in what became Arab lands following the Babylonian conquest of the Kingdom of Judea, more than 2,500 years ago, and their communities predated Islam by 1,000 years. Today, only 4,000 Jews remain in Arab countries. In other words, the Jews are the victims of

ethnic cleansing.

I recently asked veteran Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi about Jews from Arab lands who had moved to Israel as a result of persecution. Ashrawi responded, "They can't be refugees in their own homeland." She refused to answer how Palestinians could be considered refugees in what she calls the State of Palestine. (But at least she acknowledged Israel as the Jewish homeland.) (Liat Collins, *Jerusalem Post*) ▲

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



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Our lives are made to fly and return to their Source

There is a wonderful teaching that life is like a butterfly. If you hold your life too tightly, you will crush it. And if you hold your life too loosely, it will slip away. What a dilemma for us! As much as we love butterflies, we need to allow them to fly and fly away. No matter how beautiful they may be, we all shrink from caging them.

And so it is, similarly, with our lives. Many of us have heard that life is the ultimate Jewish value. We wish each other a long life and a happy life. The toast we make over a glass of schnapps is "L'chayim - To Life!" Well, that might make a great song, but it is not quite true. Life is a great value but it is not the ultimate value. Serving Hashem, or God, is the highest value. Indeed, there are several instances in our tradition where our lives must be sacrificed if we are asked to denigrate God's Holy Name.

As more of us come face to face with dying in hospitals, we need to confront these questions. When is enough, enough? Modern medicine can do an awful lot to keep someone's heart beating and lungs breathing, but it can't make the person jump out of bed and resume their life. So, in this new period, where medicine can do so much, and often heal, we also need to realize its limitations.

If we could keep a butterfly alive under glass, would we really want to?

So, what I am asking you today is to begin a conversation. Medical Ethics, and especially Jewish Medical Ethics, should be important to each and every one of us. Think about it and discuss it with those you love. When is enough, enough? Whether it is our parents or grandparents, our spouses or ourselves, or even more tragically, the lives of our children, each of us may be called upon to make these decisions for ourselves and for those who are most dear to us. In just a few weeks, the Fort Myers Board of Rabbis is hosting an event on Jewish Medical Ethics. Join us on Sunday, February 3 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Federation Building. I promise that we will all have time to get home prior to the beginning of the Super Bowl!

There are many areas to be discussed: advance directives, power of attorney decisions plus what Judaism has to say about all of this. These are not easy topics, but they will help you sleep better at night, knowing what your loved one's desires and wishes might be. Come join in the discussion!

One of the most dynamic rabbis of the early 20th century was Rabbi Milton Steinberg (1903-1950). As part of his rabbinic, he vastly increased the numbers and prestige of the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York City. And his writings were so popular that he often got asked to deliver talks all around the country. No matter how much he might have enjoyed all of these activities, his life was difficult and exhausting. After his first heart attack, in 1943, he wrote an essay entitled "To Hold

with Open Arms." He suggested that we all should appreciate the morning breeze, the smiles of our friends and neighbors, and the love of those we are close to. But most of all, he reminded us there will always be a time to give back our lives, as well. Sadly, he did just that a few years later, after his sec-

ond heart attack. Both butterflies, and our lives, are made to fly and return to their Source.▲

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



■ **Rabbi Michael J. Schorin**

A matter of timing

Has it ever occurred to you that every 24 hours in the natural state of living you accomplish prodigious feats?



■ **Rabbi Solomon Agin**

Your heart beats 103,689 times.
Your blood travels 163,000,000 miles.
You breathe 23,240 times.
You eat 3-1/2 lbs. of food.

You turn in your sleep 25-35 times.
You speak 4,800 words.

You exercise 7,000,000 brain cells. If within each of us there is so much potential power, then each of us must ask: What am I doing with my physical and emotional energy? Am I letting it remain idle and unproductive? Am I discharging it wastefully or even harmfully? Or, am I channeling it to its greatest possible effect?

Now, consider this: It just takes one heartbeat to perform an act of compas-

sion. It takes just one breath to say "I love you." It takes less than one ounce of food to energize an act of courage. It just takes a few words to speak a commitment. It takes a fraction of our brain cell capacity to think purposefully about social problems. Any of these acts can convert this day into the greatest day of your life. For, after all, what is greater than love, what is stronger than hope, what is more powerful than an idea whose time has come? We can experience all of these any day of our life that we choose to. The important thing is to realize our potential and then to act upon it. All of it is really a matter of timing.

A great pianist was once questioned by a reporter about the difficulty of playing the piano. He replied: "It is quite simple. All you have to do is put the right finger on the right note at the right time. That's all."▲

Rabbi Solomon Agin serves at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte.

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

TEMPLE BETH EL REFORM

16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Nicole Luna
E-mail: rabbiluna@templebethel.com
Temple educator: Dale Cohen, Ma.Ed., R.J.E
Preschool director: Jesyca Virnig
President: Governance Committee
Email: governancetbe@gmail.com
Phone: 433-0018 • Fax: 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
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TEMPLE BETH SHALOM REFORM

702 S.E. 24th Ave., Cape Coral, FL 33990
Rabbi Devora Buchen
President: Arnie Schwartz
Phone: 772-4555 • Fax: 772-4625
E-mail: office@templebethshalomcc.org
Web site: www.templebethshalomcc.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
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Web site: templeshalomfl.com
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Moses and God

Five times. Not just once or even three times, but five times does Moses try to avoid God's call to go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Now granted, it's a big job. But what an incredible opportunity, what a new beginning. God invites Moses to imagine a new possibility – a future of freedom, safety and blessing. Will he take on the task and create this new future, or will he remain a shepherd, spending his days in the comfort of routine and familiarity?

■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

We all are faced with a similar choice as Moses. Maybe not as dramatic, but we all have a choice. Do we take on new projects, try new things, explore the unexpected or remain content in our regular ways and patterns? Moses hesitates and doubts but, ultimately, takes on the task and accomplishes it. So how does God convince Moses to imagine a new future?

Genesis Chapter 4, verse 1: Moses spoke up and said, "What if [the Israelites] do not believe me and do not listen to me, but say: The Eternal did not appear to you?" Moses is a pessimist. Why bother attempting something when you're likely to fail? Why bother trying to make a change when your chances of success are just so-so? So what does God do? God helps him imagine a positive outcome by sharing with him three miracles – turning a rod into a snake, healing a diseased hand, and turning water into blood. God paints Moses a different picture, one where Moses performs miracles and the Israelites believe him and his authority. What future success can you imagine?

Genesis 4:10: But Moses said to the Eternal, "Please O my lord, I have never been a man of words, either in

times past or now that You have spoken to your servant, I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." And the Eternal said to him, "Who gives humans speech? Who makes them dumb or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Eternal? Now go, and I will be with you as you speak, and will instruct you what to say."

God expects Moses to do a lot of talking – to Pharaoh, to the Israelites. So Moses' concern that he's slow of speech and tongue makes sense. But if before God was encouraging Moses to look beyond his pessimism, now God is willing to acknowledge human limitations and offer divine help. We are not in this alone. God was with Moses, and God is with us. What can you do with God's help?

Genesis 4:13: "Please, O my lord, make someone else Your agent. The Eternal became angry with Moses." Why does God suddenly become angry at Moses? Is God tired of convincing and reassuring Moses? At this point, Moses has run out of excuses. He simply likes his situation and doesn't want the challenge. God gets angry when Moses insists he doesn't want to do it with no reason. Ultimately, God expects Moses to fulfill the task but is willing to provide some help and offers Aaron as his spokesman. Knowing that others will be with him, gives Moses the confidence to move forward.

If all we can imagine is uncertainty or failure, we remember how God showed Moses a positive outcome. We remember that like Moses, God created us with limitations but will be with us to help. But if we completely refuse, we risk God's anger pushing us to leave our place of comfort for greater promise. Though we must be up to the task, we do not have to do it alone. We find brothers and sisters with their own talents to help us. Then, together we march as one toward the Promised Land.▲

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

In memoriam: Amos Oz

When I was in rabbinical school, I was attracted to the Zionist writings of Asher Zvi Ginsberg (1856-1927) who wrote under the pen name Ahad Ha-am. Ha-am knew that the establishment of a Jewish state was about more than providing a refuge for Jews. He saw the future state as the only place where the Jewish culture and spirit could thrive. In his essay, "The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem" (1897), he wrote: "The Jewish Settlement, which will be a gradual growth, will become in course of time the center of the nation, wherein its spirit will find pure expression and develop in all its aspects to the highest degree of perfection of which it is capable. Then, from this center, the spirit of Judaism will radiate to the great circumference, to all the communities of the Diaspora, to inspire them with new life and to preserve the overall unity of our people." The State of Israel would be the center of a Jewish cultural and spiritual renewal that would radiate throughout the Jewish world.



■ Rabbi Marc Sack

To me, Ahad Ha-am had a spiritual heir in Amos Oz, who passed away on December 28. Unlike Ha-am, Oz was born in Palestine. Nor did he have Ha-am's yeshiva training. (Ahad Ha-am left the religious world in his 20s when he was attracted to secular philosophy.) But Oz, like Ha-am, believed in the culture of the Jewish people and saw Israel as its center. In his essay, "The Meaning of Homeland" (1967), he wrote: "The new State of Israel is not tied by an umbilical cord to Jewish religion and history, but also not completely detached from them. It is in the curious and fascinating situation of 'facing.' The Bible and the Mishnah, the prayers and the *piyyutim*, *halakhah* and *aggadah* do not dominate the State of Israel, but they are present in it and indirectly shape its everyday

and spiritual life."

Because he wrote in a contemporary voice, it was Amos Oz who helped me understand and articulate my Zionist commitment. Through his book, *Jews and Words*, written with his daughter, Fania Oz Salzberger, I understood that what we call Judaism is the religious culture of the Jewish people, but it is not the entirety of Jewish culture. He loved our love of language and believed deeply in the transmission of history from parent and grandparent to child and grandchildren. He, like I, believed that this was the task of family, one that was essential to the survival of our people.

As someone who fought in the Six-Day War and was part of the force that liberated Jerusalem, Oz believed that Israel must find some accommodation with the Palestinians. Shortly after that war he wrote: "I believe in a Zionism that faces facts, that exercises power with restraint, that sees the Jewish past as a lesson, not as a mystical imperative or as an insidious nightmare; that sees Palestinian Arabs as Palestinian Arabs, not as the camouflaged reincarnation of the ancient tribes of Canaan..." His political beliefs grew out of his understanding of Jewish history, that we must be sensitive to the needs of the disenfranchised. On this too, I found Oz to be a voice of insight and reason.

I was a teenager when I read Oz's breakout novel, *My Michael* (1968), a story about the inner life of a woman written by a man. I knew back then that this was a writer who intrigued me.

"I like being Israeli," he wrote. "I like being a citizen of a country where there are eight and a half prime ministers, eight and a half million prophets, eight and a half million messiahs. Each of us has our own personal formula for redemption, or at least for a solution. Everyone shouts and no one listens. It's never boring here." Amos Oz was one of Israel's clearer-voiced prophets. His was a voice I listened to.▲

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.

COMMENTARY BRIEFS

NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHES EPIC SMEAR OF ISRAEL

- ◆ The *New York Times* story of December 30 on the death of a young Gazan woman in June 2018 during border riots covered 3 1/2 pages. The rioters hurling fire bombs, rocks, burning tires and flaming kites, and ripping down the fence wherever they can, are not termed "rioters" but "protesters."
- ◆ Thousands of rockets from Gaza have necessitated bomb shelters and concrete-protected schools and public spaces throughout Israel's south, safe rooms in every home and elaborate anti-missile systems to protect against the bombardments. But no mention is made of the millions of Israelis who live under missile threat from Gaza.
- ◆ The *Times* wrote: "Before 2005, Gaza residents could work in Israel. But rocket attacks and bombings after the Second Intifada erupted in 2000 prompted Israel to cordon off the strip." Rocket attacks and bombings "erupted"? By whom, from where?
- ◆ For 80% of the story, Rouzan al-Najjar is reported to have been killed by a bullet "fired by an Israeli sniper into a crowd." Only near the end do readers learn the woman was killed when a bullet struck the ground a distance from her and ricocheted. That is, despite the elaborate diagrams, online vid-

eos and poignant portrait, al-Najjar wasn't targeted by a sniper but was a victim of an unintentional ricochet. (CAMERA - Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America)

HIZBULLAH'S TUNNELS ARE A CLEAR THREAT TO ISRAEL – AND THE UN DOESN'T CARE

This week, IDF forces uncovered the fifth in a series of surprisingly sophisticated tunnels built by Hizbullah and designed to sneak terrorists into Israel from Lebanon. Built in urban areas, they were surprisingly large and reached at least 80 feet underground. All of them terminated near Israeli population centers. This week, the UN Security Council debated the tunnels but took no punitive action, leaving Israel to counter the menace alone. (Editorial, December 28, *New York Post*)

WRITE OFF TURKEY AS LONG AS ERDOGAN REMAINS IN CHARGE

"Jews don't kick men but also women and children when they fall on the ground," Turkish President Erdogan told an Istanbul meeting of the Turkey Youth Foundation on Saturday. Prime Minister Netanyahu responded on Twitter: "Erdogan – the occupier of northern Cyprus, whose army massacres women and children in Kurdish villages, inside and outside Turkey – should not preach to Israel."

About a decade ago, Erdogan decided to turn Turkey from Israel's best friend to one of its greatest adversaries. The countries no longer have an ambassador posted in each other's country. It is difficult to ignore the blatant anti-Semitism in Erdogan's endless attacks against Israel.

Turkey might be a member of NATO, but it definitely doesn't act like one. As long as Erdogan remains leader of Turkey, ties between Jerusalem and Ankara will continue to deteriorate and relations between the two peoples will continue to be poisoned. (Editorial, December 28, *Jerusalem Post*)

NOW THEY CALL US "WHITE JEWS": A NEW AMERICAN ANTI-SEMITISM

"Women's March activists are grappling with how they treat Jews, and whether they should be counted as privileged white Americans or 'marginalized' minorities," *The New York Times* noted recently. The labeling of Jews as "white" and debates on how to "treat Jews," as if Jews are packages in a supermarket, is a form of dehumanizing rhetoric designed to force Jewish people into a binary of "white/non-white" that is currently trendy in U.S. discussions. The new toxic discussion is designed to label Jews

as "white supremacists."

The concept of anti-Semitism was coined by anti-Jewish activist Wilhelm Marr, who objected to the idea that Jews would assimilate into Germany. Anti-Semitism became entwined with the idea that Jews were a separate "race" from white Europeans. Today that has come full circle and Jews are portrayed as not just passing as white, but of being an example of white supremacy. Only 70 years after the Holocaust, the people genocided for being non-white and non-European are now called white supremacists.

The term "white Jews" is anti-Jewish because no other group is subjected to this same slur. Labeling Jews "white" is a way to purposely attack and single out this one group. Those who use this term don't say "white Muslims, white Hindus, white Catholics." Jews are the only minority group in America told that it is "white."

If you remain silent when you hear the term "white Jews," you are not doing your part to stop this creeping hatred. There are no white Jews. There are Jews. Some Jews may appear white, or even have origins in Europe. Some do not. There are many more Muslims who pass as white than there are Jews. (Seth J. Frantzman, *Jerusalem Post*)▲

Stay connected all month long at
www.JewishFederationLCC.org

Opinions and letters printed in L'CHAYIM do not necessarily reflect the views of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties, its Board of Directors or staff, or its advertisers.

Plugging away

Who knows if Henry David Thoreau was right when he observed that “most men lead lives of quiet desperation.” But what I do know is that I have come to admire women and men who can “plug away” at jobs and work for people they do not enjoy, or maybe even loathe, in order to support their families. I have a kind of respect for those who can endure and persevere in unhappy situations for the sake of those who are counting on them because that was something I found nearly impossible to do over the long haul.

Twenty-two years ago, when I first came to the area for a job at a local organization, a member at that place who thought I should have never been hired said to me, “Rabbi, you get by on talent, but you are not a plugger.” Since I think this guy was a “plugger” himself, I am not sure he meant his comment to me in a completely positive way.

But I really took the observation to heart, and still mull it over even today. In some respects he was right: the people who hired me really wanted someone who could plug away at the job no matter what they threw at him, not some intellectual high-wire act who could dazzle and amaze but not attend much to the things they wanted which he might find overly pedestrian or with which he disagreed.

Also back then, I was living under a false assumption based upon what my father, *alav hashalom*, tried to ex-

plain to me when I was acting out in yeshivah high school. The school required the male students to wear white or pastel color dress shirts and ties, no jeans, no sneakers and, oddly enough for an Orthodox school, no facial hair. Bristling under these rules during the era of The Beatles, I argued to my father that Einstein wore sneakers, a sweatshirt and facial hair. To which he replied, “First you have to produce like an Einstein, and then people will put up with you quirks!”

The Jewish tradition emphatically teaches that you must never disagree with your father, especially publicly, and this column is as public as you get. So let me just put it like this: employers pay good money for you to plug away at what they want you to do, not just at what you find interesting and worthwhile. And no matter how brilliant you may be or even they think you are, there are limits to the *mishigas* that most bosses will put up with, the behaviors they don't think fit in with their operations. Talent or even genius does not buy you a free pass over the long haul. You usually have to be your own boss for that.

So “hats off” to those who can swallow their “Campbellian bliss” and plug away at disagreeable jobs working for disagreeable people in order to meet their domestic responsibilities or maybe even climb what they think is the career ladder. Who knows where I would be today if I was able to do that? Certainly not as happy as I am!▲

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

When Adar begins we increase our joy

Once, when Rabbi Beruka met the prophet Elijah in the marketplace, Rabbi Beruka asked him, “Can you show me someone who is assured of a place in the World to Come?”



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

Elijah pointed to two ordinary looking people, whereupon Rabbi Beruka approached them and asked what their occupation was.

“We are jesters who make people laugh when they are sad,” they replied.

What exactly is a jester and how did these particular jesters make people laugh when they were depressed? The word “jesters” is defined by Rashi as “one who is joyful and causes others to rejoice.”

This word can also be read as, “I have given joy to others; consequently, I have also rejoiced.” One experiences personal joy only after he dispenses it to others.

The nature of joy is that it permeates a person's entire being. When a person is happy, he lives joyfully. This happiness affects the way he conducts his life and influences everyone with whom he comes in contact. He shares his happiness with those around him and his happiness brings him success in all matters.

At the conclusion of a passage in the Torah describing a series of curses to be visited upon the Jewish people, the Torah explains, “Because you did not serve the L-rd your G-d with joyfulness and with gladness of heart...”

This idea is somehow foreign to the customary notion of happiness. When do we consider ourselves happy? Well, for most of us, happiness

connotes some pleasurable situation or occurrence.

Jewish teachings define happiness not only as the feeling of joy that results from pleasure. For the Jew, happiness is itself a form of devotion, of Divine service to the Creator. It is a self-imposed state of mind, which denotes our faith and belief in G-d. We are joyous because we are sure that everything He does is in our very best interest; we are joyous because we are living in accord with G-d's Divine blueprint for universal life, the Torah.

Our joyous state of mind exists regardless of externals, it defines our being Jews. And happiness is also a great mitzva, for it is an affirmation in the truest fashion, of our faith in an omniscient and benevolent G-d, whose plan for us may be unfathomable, but Whom we trust, as a child trusts his mother and father.

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria comments, “*Simcha* [joy] is fundamental to the service of G-d. Even if our service was lacking in other aspects, if we had been happy while serving G-d, we never would have been exiled.”

Of course, the mega-*simcha* we are all awaiting is the imminent commencement of the Messianic Era. And we can each hasten its arrival by maintaining an attitude of joy, which will most certainly have a ripple effect through our relationships with everyone we encounter on our meandering paths through this world.

On February 5, the Jewish Month of Adar begins (this year it's for two months), about which the Talmud states, “When Adar begins we increase our joy.”▲

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.

Immokalee on my mind

Recently, I returned to Immokalee for the better part of three days thanks to a program sponsored by T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, under the able leadership of Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster, and I learned so much.

Immokalee is where 90% of all tomatoes eaten fresh in the eastern United States are grown. It is one of the state's poorest cities but a scant half hour away from one of the richest, Naples.

While many residents of Naples live lives of splendor, life for those in Immokalee is difficult, mired in poverty even after hours of backbreaking work in the fields.

They make their living in the vast tomato fields where, not long ago, rampant sexual abuse, pitiful working conditions and equally pitiful, sub-poverty wages were the backdrop for their efforts.

Complaints against these abuses met with summary dismissal.

The sorry history of farm work in Southwest Florida also includes episodes of forced labor in which workers found themselves locked up in windowless and bathroom-less trucks overnight or housed behind barbed-wire enclosures patrolled by armed guards to keep them from escaping. Field foremen often denied workers access to shade, water and bathroom breaks. There are several documented cases of workers being beaten.

But in the early 1990s, the workers began organizing, determined to change conditions in the fields and better their own lives. The organization they founded, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), started by trying to change conditions on the farms directly, attempting to get cooperation from the farm owners. But in 2001, they tried an innovative new strategy, holding the giant corporations at the top of the supply chain responsible for human rights abuses and low wages at the bottom.

The Fair Food Program demands that major food retailers pay a penny more per pound of tomatoes (paid directly to workers and aimed at increas-

ing wages) and buy only from growers who had committed to stringent, legally binding human rights monitoring in the fields.

One of the highlights of my three days in Immokalee was visiting the vast tomato fields of Sun Ripe Certified Brands, of Pacific Tomato Growers. There, in a lovely auditorium designed for worker educational sessions we met with the company's human resources director, Jessica Castillo, who told us, “When as a child, I saw my mother get up in the middle of the night to go out into the fields and be subject to all of the abuses... I never imagined that today I would be here paid by the company to provide mandatory education for workers on their basic rights. I am proud that workers seek out our company as a place to work and know that if they ever have a grievance it will be heard with sympathy and dealt with appropriately.”

Unfortunately, Publix, the largest grocery chain in Southwest Florida, and Wendy's have so far refused to join the Fair Food Program. I am so inspired by the optimism of the members of the CIW. I love that when CIW's Lupe Gonzalo addressed us, she did not refer to Wendy's as an enemy but as “a future partner” in advancing justice in the fields.

To encourage this “future partner” to hasten the day it joins the alliance, I joined seven other clergy people and a group of CIW workers in a demonstration in front of a Wendy's at a busy intersection in Naples. Thousands of cars drove by, and many honked their horns in support.

Why does this matter to me? Our Torah teaches there is no such thing as an innocent bystander in the face of injustice (DT 22:3), that we must pay our workers promptly and fairly (LV 19:13), and that we may not stand idly by while our neighbor suffers. (LV 19:16)

Because I take these teachings very seriously, I encourage you to communicate with Wendy's and Publix about the Fair Food Program. Ask to see the store manager and tell them that a penny per pound is a small price to pay for basic human dignity.▲

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

Read the current and recent issues of L'CHAYIM online at www.JewishFederationLCC.org.

High School Students: Earn CAS Credits!

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

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

Name

Address

Phone #

Age

Grade

School

Preferred volunteer hours (e.g. 2 - 5PM. Sundays)



**TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS
Fort Myers**

*Tab Scribner,
Director of Congregational Learning*
After a much-needed break, Temple Judea Religious School is back at it again. While it was great to see so many of our children serve the community breakfast on December 25, it was not the same as being with the entire group. The children were delighted to see their friends again when we resumed our studies on January 6. It's a tight-knit group that genuinely enjoys each other's company. Tales of vacation adventures, and the joy of time spent with family filled the school. It was a thrill to see the excitement in their eyes as they saw their teachers and reconnected with their classmates. Our youngest learners are getting back into the swing of Religious School and are continuing their work on the aleph bet, reading biblical sto-

ries and learning songs to sing for our Religious School Shabbat on Friday, March 1.

The older children are preparing for two upcoming public programs: leading a Friday night service on March 1 (highlighted with songs prepared by the younger class) and reading from the Megillah on Wednesday, March 20. Every week during religious school, our students have a one-on-one lesson on their Megillah portion both in reading the Hebrew, and in learning trope.

We held our first Tot Shabbat program on January 18 at 5:00 p.m. Our next program is Friday, February 8. These interactive family services are designed with young families in mind and feature music, stories and hands-on activities. For more information about our Tot Shabbat program, please call me at 239.433.0201 or email tjswfledu@gmail.com.

We also welcomed our new Shlichah, Netta Harush, to Temple Judea on January 20. We are very excited to have her presence in our synagogue and religious school. Netta comes from Kfar Vitkin in the Hefer Valley, and she brings a wealth of experience with children and young adults with TAGLIT, the Netzer youth movement and JAVIA. Netta is a veteran of the IDF and is currently a graduate student in Organizational Sociology at Tel Aviv University. Her infectious smile and fun personality were immediately felt when she met the children.



Emily Polk, Henry Reynolds and other kids work the Breakfast for the Hungry on December 25

Michael Shapiro
PHOTOGRAPHY

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February 1: 5:52
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February 15: 6:02
February 22: 6:07

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Enrollment is open to Jewish families with children between the **ages of six months to eight years** living in Lee & Charlotte Counties.

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Funded by the Roth Family Foundation

More information, contact Debbie Sanford 239.481.4449 ext. 3 debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

Families can sign up for PJ Library at pjlibrary.org

SHALOM LIFE CENTER

Fort Myers

(239) 218-3433

We are the trees

Lawrence & Robin Dermer

Our Jewish sages teach that, "Man is the tree of the field." We have so much in common with trees, and there are many lessons that we can learn when we open our minds as well as our eyes.

Why do we celebrate Tu B'Shevat in the winter when most trees are bare? Although many trees appear to be dead, the winter is when they're actually the most alive. We can't see what is happening, but it's now that they're creating new life.

In the winter of our lives – when all seems dark and cold, when it seems that we're doing the exact opposite of blossoming – is when we're truly growing. Even if we can't see it, even if it's

all happening below the surface, what seems like the end is really a new beginning.

Every tree begins as a seed. The difference between being buried underground and being planted in the ground is that when we're planted, we grow. No matter how much dirt comes into our lives, we can see it as an opportunity to grow into our best possible selves.

A little less talk and a lot more action! Trees don't ask for things or complain, and they don't make promises that they can't keep. Trees DO give us air, food, shelter, shade and wood for fuel and building. Trees are not talkers, they're doers!

In Pirkei Avot we are taught: Whoever has more wisdom than deeds is like a tree with many branches but few roots, and the wind shall tear him from the ground... Whoever has more deeds

than wisdom is like a tree with more roots than branches, and no hurricane will uproot him from the spot.

We may think that our words are how we'll be remembered. But trees teach us that, in the end, it's our actions that matter most. Do more, speak less. *Gimelut Chasadim* – it's the acts of loving kindness we'll be remembered by.

A tree with deep roots always thrives and survives. It's strong, beautiful and always bears fruit. How can we continue to grow no matter what challenges we face? How can we keep our roots strong?

Deeply rooted with faith in G-d, we may face obstacles, but we'll be spiritually nourished and able to thrive in any circumstances. With an *Emunah Shleymah*, an unwavering faith, we'll understand that every challenge is really an opportunity to grow. Remember, the deep roots of our faith go back

as far back as Abraham and Sarah.

If trees can give so much to our world, imagine what we, who can walk, talk, sing, pray and plan can do! We are the trees and... "Our Torah is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it, and all of its supporters are happy. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace!"

Join us every Friday for joyful, musical and meaningful Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday mornings for Torah study at 10:00 a.m. Visit our website at www.shalomlifecenter.org for our many clubs, programs and special events. Don't forget to mark your calendars for Saturday, February 23 at 7:30 p.m. for "Rock, Rhythm and Ruach" – an evening of rockin' soul music, Motown and more, including a 50/50 raffle and a delicious dessert buffet after the show. For more information, please email us at info@shalomlifecenter.org or call 239.218.3433.

HADASSAH

Collier/Lee Chapter

(239) 301-0509

Who we are, what we do, and why we do it

Diane Schwartz

Events happen at a dizzying pace and swiftly these days, and it is sometimes difficult to focus beyond ourselves. Nonetheless, Hadassah inspires a passion for and commitment to empowering Jewish women to effect change, strengthening a connection with Israel, supporting our Jewish community life, and bringing healing and justice to the world.

That mission starts and develops with local groups like ours. The Collier/Lee Chapter is one of many across the country – 330,000 Hadassah members and supporters in all – that focuses on causes larger than ourselves, ensur-

ing support so the good work can continue.

This is who we are and what we do. Why we do this is because we

believe in volunteering for a cause beyond ourselves – on behalf of programs and projects which grow in impact over time and through our members' and supporters' efforts and generosity. It is a mitzvah and an honor to do this.

Hadassah also offers thoughtful insights into historic as well as current events and issues. According to Ellen Hershkin, Hadassah National President, "What our world needs right now are more stories about the places where peace prevails, where people actively engage with one another instead of demonizing others, even when it can be challenging."

Our new podcast series, *The Branch*, offers a glimpse into the everyday lives of Jews and Arabs in Is-

rael forging meaningful relationships in the arts, education, business and, of course, at Hadassah's hospitals.

The Branch creates a much-needed space for powerful storytelling about real life and shared society in Israel that reaches American audiences who may have only encountered negative portrayals of Zionism. In Episode 2, for example, host Dina Kraft takes listeners inside the Yad B'Yad School in Jerusalem, where Jewish and Arab students learn together, and about each other, in Hebrew and Arabic. "It's not a small step," says a co-principal. "It's something amazing."

If you find all of this as compelling and important as we do, please join us. There are many ways to participate, and the joy and positive feeling of the future will make you stand taller with a smile on your face – it does me!

You, too, can join and become a member or a life member; volunteer for

a project or program that interests you; become part of a study group or book group; attend Mahjong and Game Day, a luncheon meeting or social gathering.

If you need cards, certificates or JNF trees, consider contacting Hadassah volunteers to help you celebrate an occasion or milestone or mark the passing of a loved one or friend. Contact Mimi Cohn at 239.445.9527 or buzzcohn@aol.com, or Paula Berzon at 239.592.9278 or paula.berzon@yahoo.com. To bring you comfort, would you like to support a Perpetual Yahrzeit performed in Israel? Contact Gale Lazarus at 239.404.4878 or galedoll@aol.com.

All of us in Hadassah do all of these things and so much more to support the Jewish values of *tzedakah* and *tikkun olam*.

For information on any of the above events and activities, contact me at dianepschwartz@gmail.com.

HUMANISTIC JEWISH HAVURAH of Southwest Florida

(239) 495-8484

"The Right to Die with Compassion and Dignity"

Paula Creed

On Sunday afternoon, February 17, the Humanistic Jewish Havurah of SW Florida invites you to join us for a discussion of "The Right to Die with Compassion and Dignity." The meeting will begin with coffee 'n chat at 1:30 p.m. in the David G. Willens Community Room of the Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, 2205 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Suite 2201, Naples. Our speaker takes the podium promptly at 2:00 p.m.

Making a reservation with Dena Sklaroff at denas27@aol.com or 239.591.0101 will help us provide adequate arrangements for this event.

Our speaker will be Bill Schoolman, representing the Final Exit Network. Schoolman was a former activist for 10 years with the ACLUFL, past President of the Broward ACLU Chapter and principal public speaker for the chapter in Broward County. His last position with the ACLU was as the Vice President of the Florida ACLU.

With extensive public speaking experience on a broad range of civil rights issues, Schoolman will discuss issues surrounding the right to die. The Final Exit Network wants to change the laws that deny patients the right to decide how their conditions will be treated. He will also discuss the Network's efforts to change laws that prevent patients from controlling how, when and where they die.

It is nothing short of barbaric to deny someone the right to die a good

death, a death with a minimum of pain and suffering. Furthermore, since Humanistic Judaism holds that each person is the owner of his or her life and body, it follows that each person has the right to decide when and how to end that life. Humanistic ethics oppose the cruel and inhuman notion that human beings must be kept breathing as long as possible, regardless of the circumstances and the person's own fervent wish to be relieved of suffering.

Humanistic Judaism accepts life and death realistically. It promises no eternal salvation, nor, confronted by mortality, does it recommend an attitude of despair. Just as Humanistic Judaism encourages and seeks to secure life with dignity, it encourages and seeks to secure death with dignity.

The nature of all living beings, including human beings, means that their existence is finite. Scientists have discovered no evidence that justifies belief in a life hereafter. Consciousness, thinking and awareness are functions of the brain. At death, the brain deteriorates with the rest of the body, and any kind of awareness is impossible. Without awareness, immortality would be meaningless. The belief in immortality,

then, is and always has been a matter of wishful thinking. Actually, our immortality relies upon the memory we leave to those who live after us.

To recognize one's mortality is not to admit defeat but to acknowledge the necessity of finding in this world and in this life all possible purpose and meaning, rather than to await fulfillment in a hereafter. It is to realize and understand the nature of humankind, which possesses more independence, power, freedom and, hence, dignity than any other known thing in the universe – but not infinite independence, power and freedom.

Humans fall down and are bruised; they are susceptible to viruses and become ill; they may choose to eat too much and get fat, smoke too much and die. Also, they may exercise control over themselves, diet, study and enjoy the pleasures of living. In this sense they are masters of their destiny, but not forever.

Concerns about individual freedom, responsibility, dignity and aid in dying have become controversial issues in the courts, in medical circles and in the media. This topic requires our attention.

HAZAK 55+ CHAPTER at Temple Judea

(239) 433-0201

Jan Klein

On Wednesday, February 13, HAZAK, along with Chaverot and Temple Judea, will host author Anastasia Goodman, who writes mystery novels with Jewish Refusenik themes. Books will be available for purchase after the presentation.

On Sunday, February 17, HAZAK, along with Chaverot, will host speaker Jan Zausmer, who will talk about having lived part of her life as an Orthodox woman. The group will go out to dinner afterwards at Sweet Tomatoes.

RSVP to both events at tjhzak@gmail.com. Please specify which event and if you will be going to dinner on the 17th.

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

Temple Judea's HAZAK has wonderful future programs planned for 2019. Members of the community are always welcome to attend our programs. For more information, contact us at the email address noted above or call Temple Judea at 239.433.0201.

Dues for 2019 are now past due. If you have not paid yet, please take care of it soon.

What do you think?

L'CHAYIM wants to know!

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

Letters Policy

Letters must include the writer's full name, full address and daytime phone. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. We reserve the right to edit for length and/or accuracy. Letters do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of L'CHAYIM nor its advertisers. We cannot acknowledge or publish every letter received.

**JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

(239) 566-1771

**What will history records
tell about you?**

Marina Berkovich

One of my undisputable favorite historical figures, Golda Meir, famously said, "To be or not to be is not a question of compromise. Either you be or not be." I think each of us knows what Golda meant, yet each of us interprets the meaning of this sentence in the way it fits into our individual framework and mindset.

We are a very busy generation of earthlings and we are a very busy generation of Jews. Bombarded by information overflow from every direction, we each charter our navigation to best avoid physical and emotional collision with others as best we can. I presume we all played battleship paper games as children against our friends and fam-

ily members, and called "shots" to injure and destroy the opponent. Nowadays, friends and family do that with opposing opinions, and pass up party invitations because the host or honoree has an inconvenient viewpoint and no one wants any discussion that is uncomfortable.

In a relatively short historical timespan of 50 years or so, no one will remember where anyone stood on issues that are the heated table battlefields of today. Like, do we seriously care where Napoleon, for instance, stood on slavery? We mostly remember him for his wars, and even more so for his defeats. Wars beget slavery.

Odds are that people are 50 percent correct in their assumptions and 50 percent correct in their conclusions. Like, if one assumed Napoleon was pro-slavery, both the assumption and conclusion are incorrect. Through historical magnification of a couple centuries, we know that he valued individual

man's liberty and considered slavery cruel, yet did not stop the exploitation of men to further his own Napoleonic pursuits. In essence, he was pro and against slavery at once. Men liberated by him fell victims to far more drastic enslavement schemes. We now see clearly.

What remains of lives lived in the public eye is only the legacy of the achievements. The greater the person's achievements, the more people will attempt to seek a spot under the spotlight or revise the impact someone's achievements truly meant in the context of their day. I think Golda Meir understood that when she fought for Israel's right to be.

Several decades into the future no one will care whether you joined a political party, signed a petition, attended a rally or gala. Most people are remembered for their humanity and their sincere ways of sharing of themselves in a way that is beneficial, lasting and impactful to their community, however

small or large it may be.

Just as the State of Israel is a tiny spec in the world in a constant battle to defend its existence, each Jew is a tiny spec defending all Jews' right to exist wherever Jews live.

I am writing this article in early January and my 2019 prediction is that the Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida will play a lasting role in our relatively small corner of the Earth by placing accomplishments of Southwest Florida's Jewish Pioneers at the forefront of public opinion about Jews in SWFL, and through its films and Virtual Museum, quite possibly, everywhere else.

I hope you will join us to help us reach our goals.

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

**GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

(239) 963-9347

Ida Margolis

With the current increased interest in genealogy and because of numerous requests to help people find information about their family, a specialist in this area will be at the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center on Sunday, February 17 at 11:00 a.m.

Dr. Jude C. Richter, an information retrieval specialist at the Holocaust Survivors and Victims Resource Center and Tracing Service at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C., is being brought to Naples by GenShoah and the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center. Records in the collections of the USHMM can help those doing research to document the experiences of individual survivors and victims of the Holocaust. They usually include dates and places of birth and, less often, the names of parents and

spouses. The International Tracing Service (ITS) collection has more records for persons persecuted in Western Europe than for those who were persecuted in Eastern Europe. It nevertheless remains the single largest collection of records that documents the fates of individuals during the Holocaust.

Dr. Richter will demonstrate how the ITS collection and other collections at the USHMM can be of value to genealogists and especially those researching ancestors from Ukraine and Galicia. There will be a limited number of opportunities for individuals to meet with Dr. Richter in the afternoon. Please email me at genshoahswfl@gmail.com to reserve a 20-minute slot to meet with Dr. Richter. The first 10 people will receive scheduled time between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. and notified of their time slot. Additional requests will be added to a waitlist.

Space is limited for this special presentation and registration is required. To register, go to HolocaustMuseum-

SWFL.org and click on the Calendar Section at the top of the website.

Also due to requests, GenShoah will be sponsoring an opportunity for members of the Second Generation (2gs) to share their personal stories. At 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 10, 2gs will meet at a member's home. If you are a 2g who would like to share your story and/or listen to others' stories, email rene@geistgroup.com ASAP to reserve a spot for "Our Stories."

Events in Greece during WWII is a topic that is not widely known, but of interest to many. GenShoah program chair Steve Brazina will bring the award-winning inspiring documentary *Life Will Smile* to Naples on Thursday, March 7. This compelling 40-minute film tells the story of the complete survival of Europe's only Jewish community during the Holocaust on the Greek island of Zakynthos. The film is nar-

rated by Greek-Jewish survivor Haim Konstantini. With the help of Monica Goodwin, this film will be shown at St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, 7100 Airport-Pulling Road N., Naples. To register, go to HolocaustMuseum-SWFL.org.

All of GenShoah SWFL's programs support some aspect of its mission of: promotion of Holocaust education and human rights, preservation of the history and memories of the Holocaust, connection of the Second Generation with one another, and support of the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center.

For more information about GenShoah, or to receive the GenShoah newsletter, email genshoahswfl@gmail.com. For information about the Museum, call 239.263.9200, email info@HolocaustMuseumSwfl.org, or visit HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org.

**ZIONIST ORG. of AMERICA
Southwest Florida Chapter**

(914) 329-1024

Jerrold L. Sobel

Statistically, acts of Islamic terrorism have been increasing throughout both Europe and in the United States, a fact, according to a 2017 Gatestone report, that is inexplicably denied by ministers and officials of the European Union. According to the report, such authorities have been saying the same thing: Europe (meaning the EU) Islamic terrorism is merely a marginal aberration. There is "nothing to be afraid of," and if you show too much interest in the matter, "you are probably on the far-right." This dialogue often ends up with: "Do you want to persecute the Muslims and make them the Jews of today's Europe?" Europol, the European Union's law enforcement agency, buttresses this argument, stating: "The trend is clearly downward: far fewer terror attacks in Europe in 2018 than 10 years ago!"

Others argue that it is true, in 2008 there were 583 terror attacks but no fatalities. Whereas in 2018 there were only 142 attacks but 142 people were killed. Admittedly, statistics can often be skewed to fit a particular narrative. What cannot be argued is the reality that Islamic terrorism does exist throughout the world today. However, what is in dispute is the causation of this phenomenon.

Even in the United States there is a non-partisan divide concerning Islamic terrorism, one unlikely to be solved anytime soon. During the 2016 Demo-

cratic primaries, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton refused to use the word "radical Islam" to classify terrorist cells such as ISIS, Boko

Haram and others. Her two rivals, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, likewise agreed. She stated, "I don't think we're at war with Islam. I think we're at war with jihadists." Such thinking is not only shared by Democrats in this country, it also crosses political lines.

Former Republican President George W. Bush, subsequent to the September 11, 2001, attacks, similarly shied away from a rush to judgment on the Muslim faith, stating, "This great nation of many religions understands, our war is not against Islam or against faith practiced by the Muslim people... Our war is a war against evil."

Taking an alternate point of view: On Wednesday, February 27 at 7:30 p.m. at the Chabad Jewish Center of Naples (1789 Mandarin Rd.), noted local speaker Andrew Joppa will be discussing "The Islam in Islamic Terrorism" - a title taken from a book written by former Muslim Ibn Warraq, one of the premier experts on Islam in the world today. Taking on the most prevalent issue of our time should lead to a lively dialogue.

As at all ZOA programs, the audience will be encouraged to engage the speaker during the Q&A session following his presentation.

Tickets are \$20 prepaid and \$22 at the door. Student tickets are \$7. For further information, email jerrysobel@aol.com.



Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

Food Pantry Needs

Following is a list of staples & non-perishable items always in need at the food pantry.

- ✦ Peanut butter and jelly
- ✦ Pasta and Pasta sauce
- ✦ Rice and beans
- ✦ Canned fruits
- ✦ Cereal & oatmeal
- ✦ Canned meats & fish

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

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

the Purim story will be staged and then used during the Megillah reading in March. (See the story in this issue for more information.)

events and programs, including youth and adult Jewish education, are open to all and always free. Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D., who guides the synagogue, is a respected community leader for over 21 years as well as a long-time educator at local institutions of higher learning. The foundation of The

Community Free Synagogue is "Study, Worship and Benevolent Acts," generally following progressive Jewish traditions.

The synagogue meets at the Southwest Florida Masonic Center, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers.

Heartfelt condolences to Dr. Janice Wolfson and her family on the passing of her father Martin Crane.

Mazel Tov to Seth and Simone Monaco on the birth of their son Noah Langston Monaco, whom the Rabbi helped bring into the Covenant of Abraham on January 6, when his name was announced to be Noah Levi ben Simhah Lev.

This year's C.F.S. Thursday, February 14 Valentine's Day special Brown Bag Movie Night will feature Woody Allen's classic romantic comedy, *Annie Hall*, starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Hall. Pack a dinner; admission and soft drinks are free and open to all. (See the story in this issue for more information.)

The photo shoot for C.F.S.' "Power Point Purim 4.0" starts at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 17. Scenes from

Last call for the June 4-15 C.F.S. Israel Pilgrimage! It's the experience of a lifetime and remarkably affordable. For more information, visit the synagogue's website at www.fortmyerssynagogue.com or email Arnie Harris at arnieh@embarqmail.com.

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

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

Now in its 14th year, The Community Free Synagogue is an independent synagogue and the largest Jewish congregation in our area. All of its



Rabbi Bruce Diamond welcomes Noah Levi Monaco, son of Seth and Simone Monaco, into the Covenant of Abraham in early January

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

With the arrival of Leonard Minsky on Sanibel, Current Events is again on the agenda on Saturdays at 11:30 a.m. The February sessions for the congregant-led segment of Saturday morning Adult Education classes will cover varied topics: how to research your Jewish ancestry; Jewish history in Key West; medicine in Iran; and outstanding Jewish women. Thanks to Vickie Fuchs, coordinator, for the interesting topics, and to the volunteer speakers for making it interesting.

The focus is on healing and companionship. Rabbi Fuchs serves as the facilitator. The group is open to everyone. Questions may be directed to Ellen Feingold at 302.345.7187.

Leonard Bernstein and so much more. Following the music, there will be a Meet the Soloists reception in Fellowship Hall with food and beverage. The Leo Rosner Foundation in honor of June Rosner is the primary sponsor of this event.

The Bat Yam snowbirds have landed in such quantity that Friday night Shabbat services are being held in the spacious Sanctuary rather than in Fellowship Hall. It is a joy to have so many congregants worshipping together again. When children and grandchildren are convinced to attend, as well as visitors, there is a wonderful musical chorus emanating from the audience. Of course, it is Cantor Murray Simon, with Abigail Allison on piano, who keeps almost everyone in tune. Rabbi Stephen Fuchs sets the tone and the pace of the service.

The Lee County Board of Rabbis is planning a program to discuss contemporary medical ethics on Sunday, February 3 at 3:00 p.m. at the Jewish Federation, 9701 Commerce Center Court, Fort Myers. Bat Yam's Rabbi James Rudin will be a participant. Rabbis Rudin and Fuchs are members of the board.

On Thursdays, February 14, 21 and 28, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m., in Fellowship Hall, Rabbi Fuchs will offer a three-part class titled "Minor in Name Only." The course will explore the role played in Jewish thought and practice by the so-called Twelve Minor Prophets in the Bible.

The Bat Yam Purim celebration will be on Friday, March 22. Talented individuals are needed to portray a Purim story character and write new words about the Purim character to a song of their choice. If interested in expressing yourself on Purim, contact Rabbi Fuchs.

The joint Temple Bat Yam and Sanibel Congregational UCC Israel trip from April 29 to May 10 is sold out, but a waiting list was created in the event a vacancy occurs. Call Sandy Simmons at 239.472.0497 for more information.

The next meeting of the Bat Yam Grief Support Group is Wednesday, February 6 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library of the Sanibel Congregational UCC.

Mark your calendar for a very special musical program scheduled for Sunday, February 24 at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary of the Sanibel Congregational UCC. Bat Yam's Cantor Simon asked Reverend John Danner, senior pastor of the Sanibel Congregational UCC, to join with him, Cantor Randy Herman from New York and Cantor Elizabeth Shammash from Pennsylvania. Toby Simon will be the piano accompanist. Appropriately, the concert is titled "Sanibel Celebration: Three Cantors and a Pastor." The music will include light classics, Broadway, Pop,

The collection of paper products for F.I.S.H. on Sanibel continues by the Social Action Committee, chaired by Garry Weiss. Please bring your contribution the first weekend of each month.

All Temple Bat Yam services and classes take place on the campus of our host, the Sanibel Congregational UCC, located at 2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel. Members of the community, guests and visitors are always welcome to join with congregants.

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

Looking forward to February, don't miss our Bingo, Pasta & Salad Nite on Saturday, February 2. It's just \$20 for dinner and 10 games of Bingo. Each game includes six cards per player. You don't have to be a member, so come join the fun. Also in February we will have our Brotherhood Shabbat on Friday, February 15 at 7:30 p.m. Finally, we will welcome back the Senior Lunch Bunch

on Thursday, February 7.

This year's banquet was held at the Edison in Fort Myers and was a beautiful event and lots of fun. Congratulations to this year's honorees: Abby di Leonardo, Betty Beckerman, Peri and Bob Pantazes.

The above activities are in addition to our regular Friday night services, Torah Study, Brown Bag Lunches, Bowling, Mah Jongg, Rosh Chodesh and more. Call the Temple office at 239.772.4555 for more information.

Life goes on. Two funerals, a baby naming and a wedding, all in one week. January was full of events, from the sad to the beautiful. The snowbirds are back and the pace of activities is heating up.

Mellow Mah Jongg
Each Tuesday afternoon, an open session of Mah Jongg is held at the Jewish Federation.
Players must be at least advanced beginners, as no lessons are given.
DAY: Tuesdays, 12:30~3:30 P.M.
FEE: \$1 per week
for more information call Rona Strausberg at 239.949.9003

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TEMPLE JUDEA

Fort Myers

(239) 433-0201

www.tjswfl.org

The busy year continues for Temple Judea. Adult education classes continue on Mondays through March 4. If you missed the first class, there is still time to sign up. Classes include:

- “The Mystery of Love,” Part 2, taught by Rabbi Michael Schorin, chaplain at Gulf Coast Hospital. You didn’t have to attend Part 1 to come to this class, which takes place from 6:15 to 7:30 p.m.
- “The Death of Death: Resurrection and Immortality of Jewish Thought” taught by Rabbi Marc Sack. The class is from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- “Hebrew for Beginners” taught by Avigail Gev. The class is from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Call the synagogue office for more information and to register for the classes. There is no cost to attend.

A new monthly Tot Shabbat service began in January and continues Friday,

February 8 at 5:45 p.m. The service is open to all families with young children and features a special activity each month. On February 8, enjoy the kid-friendly service and help your child create a challah cover to use at home.

The next musical Shabbat evening service is on Friday, February 22. Join with congregants in a lively and spiritual celebration of Shabbat. The service begins at 6:30 p.m.

Chaverot, Temple Judea’s Sisterhood, has several events planned. RSVP to tjchaverotfortmyers@gmail.com.

- On Wednesday, February 13, Chaverot joins with HAZAK to host author Anastasia Goodman, author of the *Sasha Perlov Mystery Series* about a Russian-born NYPD detective. Her books will be available for sale. The talk begins at 7:00 p.m. and will be held in the synagogue social hall. Light refreshments will be served.
- On Sunday, February 17 at 4:00 p.m., Chaverot is again partnering with Hazak to sponsor a talk by Jan

Zausmer. Her topic will be “Life as a Chabadnik.” This program will be held in the social hall.

- The monthly Rosh Chodesh program is on Thursday, March 7, and will be at the home of Bernie Perlestein.

Have we got a Purim for you! On Sunday, March 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the religious school will hold a Purim carnival. Grogger making, carnival games, a costume contest and DUNK THE RABBI are just a few of the fun activities planned. There are opportunities to sponsor booths and games. The carnival is open to everyone. Purim is a holiday to be celebrated by all ages!

And the Purim celebration continues into the evening with “A Night to Remember” – a social and fundraising event that begins at 5:00 p.m. at the Heitman House downtown. There will be a delicious hors d’oeuvres buffet dinner and desserts, a DJ, dancing, auction and raffle. Even more special, the congregation will also honor members Diane Seidenstein and JoAnn Lewin, who do so much for our congregation. The cost is \$75 by March 1 and \$100 till March 5. Please contact

Lauren Baugh in the synagogue office for more information and to RSVP.

Rabbi Sack’s monthly lunchtime Torah study is on Thursday, February 7 at noon at the offices of Myers and Brettholtz and Company. It is an hour of open discussion of Torah and Judaism, where all levels of background and all questions are encouraged. Everyone is welcome and there is no cost to attend.

Our monthly serving of meals at the Salvation Army’s Meals with Compassion continues. Meals are served on Monday evenings and volunteers are needed for February and March. Please contact Linda at lindaaidelson8@gmail.com if you’d like to help.

Regular scheduled events:

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

TEMPLE BETH EL

Fort Myers

(239) 433-0018

www.templebethel.com

A congregant recently mused about their way of preparing for Friday night services. “I like to come to services early to have several minutes of solitude and to choose a good seat. On a recent Friday evening, I was met by the joyful sound of small children laughing, singing and playing with instruments. [It was Tot Shabbat – the first Friday of each month at 6:00 p.m.] In the middle of the floor sat a young woman. It was our wonderful rabbi. Surrounded by little kids, she was teaching them blessings and songs. Amazingly, the children were attentive and responsive. I don’t have children but it brought tears to my eyes to see the parents holding

a tallit over the heads of the children, receiving the priestly benediction. I was most grateful to God for the parents exposing their young children to Judaism, for the children’s joyful learning experience, and for the rabbi having the wisdom and energy to relate to the children and engage them in such a loving way.” *L’dor va’dor* indeed.

On another note, no pun intended, TBE’s Leslie Luzar Memorial Cantorial Series is underway. Free and open to the community, our next guest is Cantor Marshall Portnoy on Friday, February 8 at 7:30 p.m. Other ongoing programs are Torah Study, Saturdays at 9:00 a.m.; Jewish Francophone Group, second Wednesdays at noon; Talmud study, Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m.; Current Events, Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.; Lunch & Learn, third Thursdays at

noon. How about a *Mi Shebeirach* for our dear office manager, Karen Kagan, who’s having knee replacement surgery at the end of February?

TBE’s sixth annual Purim fundraiser ends on March 4. Purim gift bags, containing homemade hamentashen and other goodies, can be picked up by temple members from March 8-23.

Monday night is history night at TBE with the always absorbing Gerry Ziedenberg History Lecture Series. On February 4, 11, 18 and March 4 at 7:30 p.m., Gerry will cover a wide range of historical Jewish events and colorful people, including Shimon Peres, Meyer Lansky, Ralph Lauren and Benjamin Netanyahu. Expect a guest speaker and a film, too.

Our Book Club’s February selection is *Paris in the Present Tense* by Mark Helprin. Join us on Wednesday, February 6 in the TBE library at 2:45

p.m. for a stimulating discussion.

Sisterhood presents three programs this month: Preserving Aging Skin on Thursday, February 7; Doo Wop & Motown on Saturday, February 16; and the Raising Cane U.S. Sugar Farm Tour on Thursday, February 28. For further information on any programs, call 239.433.0018 or visit templebethel.com.

Sunday, February 10 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. brings “Grave Matters.” Guest speakers will address advance directives, the TBE Shiva Committee and what they can do for you in your time of need, TBE’s Cemetery Committee’s role and the services they provide, financial planning, the role of chevra kadisha volunteers and more. Rabbi Luna will discuss Jewish end-of-life rituals, as well as cultural and traditional considerations at the end of life. Please join us. Temple Beth El cares.

TEMPLE SHALOM

Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands

(941) 625-2116

www.templeshalomfl.com

This is another exciting month at Temple Shalom. On Sunday, February 3 at 5:00 p.m., there will be a special musical education program featuring conductor Nir Kabaretti of the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Nir will have several principals with him. The program is open to all

and is made possible by the Lesleigh and Sylvia Hershkowitz Memorial Fund.

On Saturday, February 9 at 6:00 p.m., the temple will hold its gala art auction featuring wonderful works of art. This event is open to all. The donation is \$36 per person or \$65 per couple. Complimentary unlimited hors d’oeuvres, wine and beer included. Come and enjoy a wonderful evening benefiting Temple Shalom and the Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community

Clinic. The exciting Temple Shalom Sisterhood Game Day will be held on Monday, February 11 at 11:00 a.m. and includes lunch, games and fun. Open to all. The Jewish Film Festival continues on Tuesday, February 19 at 3:00 p.m. Film to be announced. Refreshments served. Donation: \$5.

Jewish music month will be observed on Friday evening, February 22. Dr. David Katz will be leading this special program. An Oneg Shabat will follow.

February 24 is Karaoke Sunday with Jack Bernstein. Come and enjoy a fun afternoon program starting at 5:00 p.m. A donation of \$15 includes a pizza and salad dinner.

Lunch and Learn will have a session on Tuesday, February 26 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Lunch is provided along with a copy of the *Forward*. There is no charge to attend. Please call the temple office if you wish to attend. The event is sponsored by the Lesleigh and Sylvia Hershkowitz Memorial Fund.

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