

L'CHAYIM

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Jewish Federation
Lee and Charlotte Counties

www.JewishFederationLCC.org

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 7 Our Community
- 11 Jewish Interest
- 18 Jewish Film Festival
- 22 Israel & the Jewish World
- 24 Commentary
- 25 From the Bimah
- 28 Focus on Youth
- 29 Organizations
- 32 Community Directory
- 32 Temple News



Federation's annual
Community Breakfast



Federation's Senior Lunch
Bunch update



Tahini took over the sweet
stage in 2019



JWV Post 400 participates in
Veterans Day Parade

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

Come, enjoy and bring friends!

By Brian Simon, Federation President

L'Shana Tova again! I'm so glad we already went through this New Year's thing a couple of months ago. I've already gotten used to writing 5780 on my checks, so that won't be a problem.



■ Brian
Simon

The winter is when our programming swings into full motion. I won't detail all the programs coming up. Debbie Sanford does a great job of that in her monthly column. I do want to take the opportunity to ask a favor from you.

If you're reading this, there's a good chance you're going to attend one of our upcoming events. I'd like to ask you to invite a friend. Or two friends. One of the points of emphasis at our

recent board retreat is that we'd like to find ways to identify Jewish people who are new to our community. It is likely that you know people in your community. Maybe they've recently moved to Southwest Florida. Maybe they're not familiar with our local Jewish Federation.

I just read that the Sarasota-Manatee Jewish community has grown by 86% since 2001. The growth rate in Jewish residents was twice the growth rate of the region overall. While the estimated percentage of Jews is higher in Sarasota-Manatee than in Lee-Charlotte, it's not unreasonable to assume we've experienced a significant growth in Jewish residents over the last 20 years. Lee County was the fastest growing county in Florida in 2018, and we are projected to be the fastest growing county in the state through 2045.

All this is to say, there are Jews

who are moving here, and we want them to know that we're here. We want them to take part in our programs. We want them to know what we do.

One thing that I have tried to make a centerpiece of my term as president is to be very clear about what we do:

- ◆ We provide Jewish cultural programs like the Film Festival
- ◆ We provide services to the Jewish and non-Jewish community in need
- ◆ We support Israel

We appreciate the support you provide to help us accomplish all that we do. Please help us grow the population that we serve by inviting friends to join us at our programs. (By the way, please feel welcome to invite friends even if they're not new to the area!) This is the time of year when we have a lot to share. I hope you come and have a great time.▲

Jewish Family Services update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

For the record: The Jewish Federation provides food and emergency assistance to anyone living in Lee and Charlotte counties, regardless of religion. People ask me all the time if you have to be Jewish to receive help. You do not. This will be one of the questions on the pop quiz.

Food Pantry Update

The Federation food pantry distributes food to an average of 65 people every month. We pack each bag with basic staples: tuna/meat, beans, veggies, soup, peanut butter, cereal, rice, pasta and tomato sauce. If we have the extra inventory, we also include mac & cheese, fruit, protein bars, jelly, crackers, chips, cookies, ravioli/chili and condiments. We try to provide one bag per person per household.

Toiletries are separate from the food. We give each household two rolls of toilet paper, a small bag of sample size soap, shampoo, toothpaste and lotion. I offer clients whatever else we have on hand, including paper towels, deodorant, razors, combs, toothbrushes, floss and any regular size shampoo/conditioner/lotion that are available.

A woman came to the Federation pantry for the first time in early December to get food for a household of 11 people, including seven kids under the age of 18. Her daughter left a bad relationship and moved back in with her own children. That comes to approximately three meals a day, seven days a week for 11 people and equals 231 meals a week. Oy. Due to your generosity, I was able to give this client a gift card, which made her bow her head for a moment and then look back up at me with gratitude and tears.

I invite you to put the Federa-

tion food pantry on your radar, if you haven't already. If you grocery shop on a regular basis, why not keep an extra tote bag in your car for food pantry items. Dollar Tree (my alternate house of worship) carries all of the basic sta-

ple items we pack in each pantry bag. There are great deals at various stores around town and everything you donate is used and appreciated. You don't have to buy a ton of food (unless you

continued on page 6

Your Federation team forecasts A PERFECT SEASON of programming

For more information
visit JewishFederationLCC.org

Monthly Programming Forecast

Ongoing activities at the Federation: Mah Jongg * Jewish War Veterans * BBYO

January 2020	February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020
01-31 Butterflies of Hope Artwork Display County Libraries	02 Opening Day Film Festival	01 Closing Day Film Festival	05 PJ Library Passover Party	03 IsraelFest 2020
08 Pacesetters	03 - 28 Jewish Film Festival	16 Lion of Judah	19 Holocaust Memorial Program	13 Annual Meeting
20 Out & About Films <i>Sustainable Nation</i>	23 JFF at Bat Yam	25 Skype the Author	31 Out & About Films <i>Witness Theater FSW</i>	Monthly Senior LUNCH BUNCH
Israeli Folk Dancing Sundays (Sept-Apr)				



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

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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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FEBRUARY ISSUE
EDITORIAL DEADLINE:
Monday, January 6

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Program notes

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

Here's what's coming up. Please join us on Monday, January 20 for our first Out & About Film, *Sustainable Nation*. It will also be our first collaboration with local non-profit Captains for Clean Water.

This new year-round film series showcases Jewish-themed films that are educational and stimulating. The films will be brought out into the community for maximum exposure and will be shown in venues around both Lee and Charlotte counties, including libraries, schools, temples, churches and other locations accessible to the entire community.



Debbie Sanford

Sustainable Nation follows three individuals who are doing their part to bring sustainable water solutions to an increasingly thirsty planet. Using solutions developed in water-poor Israel, they are working to change the status quo of a world where one in 10 people lacks access to safe drinking water.

Sustainable Nation shows how fixing global water issues is not only a matter of life and death, it's the start of healing the world. When it comes to water, Israelis are incredible role models for how individuals around the world can have an impact.

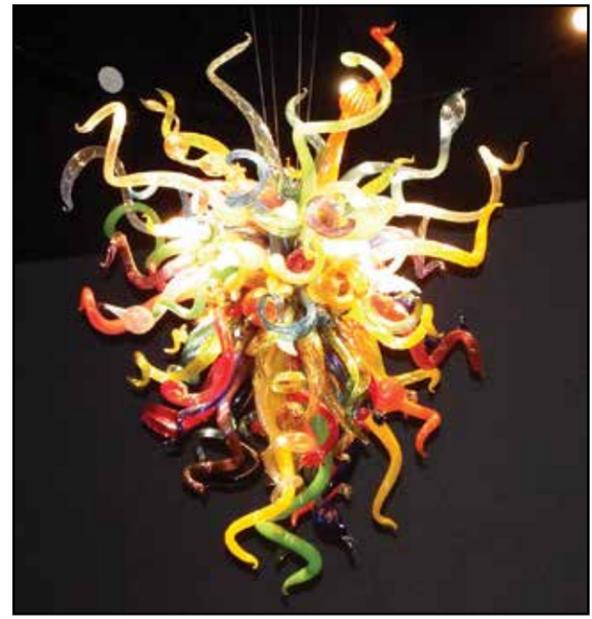
Every individual has a responsibility to protect the environment, and even the smallest acts can make a difference.

To order tickets, go to www.jewishfederationlcc.org/out&about or call me at 239.481.4449 x4.

JFED Hits the Road

Our JFED Hits the Road trip last month to St. Pete was a huge success. Thirty people from Lee and Charlotte counties joined in on the fun and really enjoyed the beautiful glass work at the Chihuly Museum, the delicious Greek lunch at Acropolis, and the glass-blowing demonstration at the Morean Art Center. Unfortunately, I missed the trip and really need to thank wonderful Federation board member Karin Fine, who stepped up to the plate, took my itinerary and went for it. These are just a few photos of Chihuly's artwork and a photo of a few members on the trip, whom we managed to get together for just a moment to take this group photo. If you are interested in joining us on our next trip, in the spring, please let me know.

JFED Hits the Road photos below by Jerry Wadro



Community Breakfast

More than 130 community members joined us at the Federation's annual Community Breakfast. It was the first time we used the Heritage Palms Golf & Country Club venue and we loved it. I have already asked them to pencil us in for next year's breakfast. Guest speaker Tony Gannon and his lovely wife joined us from the East Coast to talk about Space Florida. It was very interesting and humorous at times, and I think we all learned a lot. Thank you to all our volunteers who showed up early to help us set up and man the registration tables, and thank you to all who attended.

Community Breakfast photos below by Naomi Thomson



Some of the participants in the JFED Hits the Road trip to the Chihuly Museum

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.

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

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



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HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES SERVES



Local Jewish Education and Culture

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



Overseas

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



Local Seniors Services

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



Local Case Management Services

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

Local Emergency Services

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



Local Community Services

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

Jewish Community Foundation

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



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.

10 years of Israeli Folk Dancing in Fort Myers!

By Marsha Kistler

Did you know that Israeli Folk Dancing has been offered at the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties for 10 years? And as the snowbirds start to arrive, our dance season is heating up. So what's the big deal? What is this dance craze and why should you join? Do you love to exercise? No? Do you enjoy counting reps or steps or watching the clock? No? Well, if you've done line dancing or Zumba and enjoyed that form of exercise, Israeli Folk Dancing is for you!

There are many benefits of "Jewish aerobics." Research reveals that dancing delivers a three-pronged fitness punch – a mind, body and spirit boost. It's fun and something most people can easily do. Besides giving you a great cardio boost, dance strengthens bones, works all the major muscle groups, builds stamina, and improves balance, coordination and flexibility. Also, dancing that requires remembering dance steps and sequences boosts brain power by improving memory skills. Pair that with great music and the joy of new friends, and Israeli dancing is the complete package!

The folk dance community welcomes newcomers. Every beginner can get involved since each session starts with easy dances, allowing everyone to warm up their muscles and get acquainted. The basic steps used in these dances usually reappear in the more

advanced dances taught as the evening progresses. The "regulars" are always willing to help those just getting started.

Now, if you'd like to join us but still feel a bit intimidated, Federation is offering a special 4-session beginner workshop for people with no prior experience. During these 30-minute sessions, you will learn the basic steps that are repeated in most Israeli dances as well as several easy dances. Thanks to a generous donation from the Jewish War Veterans Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400, dance videos can now be shown on the smart TV in the Community Room. The recommended dance videos will serve as at-home support as you practice what you've learned in the classes. The regular dancing that follows these introductory sessions will incorporate many of these beginner dances in addition to other dances at the intermediate level. The key to learning and internalizing the dances is repetition – the more you attend, the better you become.

So do sign up for the class and join us. The 4-session workshop begins on Sunday, January 5 and takes place from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m., immediately prior to our regular dancing at 4:00 p.m. (Workshop dates: 1/5, 1/12, 1/26 and 2/9). The cost for all four classes is \$20. Pre-registration is a must! Call Debbie Sanford at the Federation office

239.481.4449 x4 to register. You won't be sorry and your body will thank you! All ages, 13-90, are welcome. Come

with a friend, stay and make new friends! I look forward to seeing you on January 5!▲

Israeli Folk Dancing

Beginners Workshop

Sundays @ 3:30 P.M.
January 5, 12, 26
February 9



Jewish Federation Community Room, 9701 Commerce Center Ct., Fort Myers
RSVP to Debbie Sanford at 239.481.4449 x.4
Registration and payment in advance by Jan. 3
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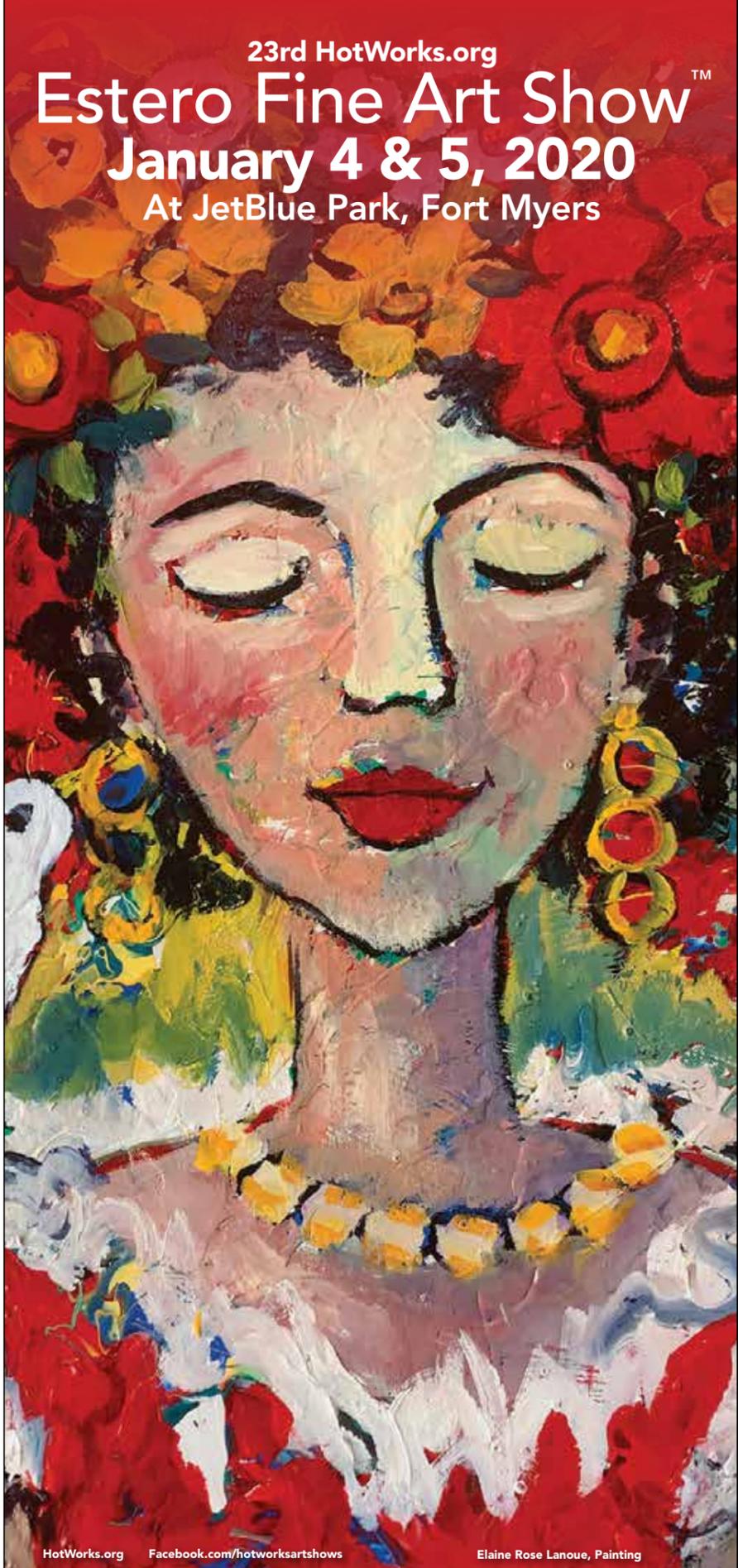
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Save the Date! 3rd Naples Fine Art Show March 28 & 29 at Naples Italian-American Club, Naples



Senior Lunch Bunch update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

Rabbi Nicole Luna and the wonderful staff of Temple Beth El welcomed the Senior Lunch Bunch in November. People are returning for the season and the mood was festive.

Federation volunteers provide as much sparkle as those coming for lunch, and we are grateful for the care, kindness and the attention that our volunteer village provides month after month. Our delicious pasta lunch was from community partner Jason's Deli.

The monthly senior luncheon is a Federation program that keeps growing in popularity. People who have lived in town for years are starting to attend, as well as those who have moved here and want to be where the action is. The vibe is warm, welcoming and friendly. We eat, we learn a little something, we make new friends, and we stay connected to our current friends and acquaintances. There is always room at the table for YOU!

NEXT SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH:
Thursday, January 16 at 12:00 p.m.
Temple Beth Shalom, 702 SE 24th Ave., Cape Coral
RSVP by Friday, January 10 to Jodi Cohen at
239.481.4449 x2 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org

Photos courtesy Helene Glocer



Jewish Family Services update...continued from page 1

want to of course!), but if everyone buys some food, it will keep the pantry well-stocked.

For those who want to donate but don't want to do the actual shopping and schlepping, your cash or check donations are heartily welcomed. In fact, the Federation can get more bang for its buck because we can buy food at a hefty discount from the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Every month in L'CHAYIM we thank the people who donate. You can remain anonymous or invent a persona if you prefer, such as Mrs. Maisel or Mr. Bond. Donations can be dropped off when the Federation office is open, which is Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (This will also be on the quiz.)

In November, the Federation served a record high of 83 pantry clients from 17 households.

Our small, but mighty food pantry is kept running by the grace, grit and literal heavy lifting of Federation volunteers. We always need help in the pantry on an as-needed basis, so please let me know if you would like to volunteer. My heartfelt thanks go to Mary Beth Mandelkorn, Jacki Dunwoody, Donna Cotler, Barbara Gribin, Suzanne Orkin, Laurie McConnville and Sherri Zucker for their help in November.

Emergency Assistance

There are more and more calls coming in from people who have called other places for assistance and have had no luck. Either they are not eligible for services or, most often, agencies and organizations do not have the funding. Oftentimes people call up on the day their electricity or water is due to be shut off.

This is what I notice: people are trying to make ends meet, take care of their children, fold a towel, make a sandwich, determine the next step and then the next. Life gets complicated if you fall and need physical therapy, get cancer, or are between jobs that pay minimum wage.

Many people make assumptions about what services the Federation provides. An elderly couple called asking if we could find them an apartment within their budget, arrange their move from Lehigh Acres to Fort Myers, and pay for everything. Another client returned to the food pantry for the second month expecting gift cards again for gas and groceries. I explained that the cards are given to clients who happen to be in a tight spot, usually awaiting a first paycheck, as was the case with this client.

One client who called for assistance has a young daughter, works full-time, isn't able to get to food pantries during the week and doesn't have a car. His voice was full of despair as he explained his situation and talked about putting food on the table. The Federation bought him a bus pass and sent him a Publix gift card, as he lives near a Publix supermarket.

In November and early December, due to your generosity and support, the Federation was able to assist clients with partial payment for utilities, medical bills and security deposits.

Thank you for all that you do to support the Federation's vision of a Jewish community that is based on Jewish values such as *tzedakah* (benevolence), *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) and *k'lal Yisrael* (taking responsibility for one another).▲

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Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

We thank the sponsors and guests who made the Museum's December fundraiser, "The Luncheon with Music of Hope & Remembrance," a great success. The event featured the Voices of Naples chorale ensemble, conducted by Artistic Director Dr. Douglas Renfro. In addition to a selection of inspiring songs, they sang portions of Verdi's Requiem, which had been performed in 1944 at the Theresienstadt (Terezin) camp. During the camp's inspection by the International Red Cross, Jewish prisoners



■ Susan Suarez

were forced to perform for their captors and the IRC guests. Renowned Czech conductor Rafael Schächter led the performance of Requiem, which for many, including Schächter, was to be their last before they were sent to Auschwitz. Many thanks to the Voices of Naples for their beautiful performance. The funds raised from the popular event benefited the Museum's Education programs.

Our next exhibit starts on Thursday, January 2 in the Estelle and Stuart Price Gallery. "Art & Propaganda in Nazi-Occupied Holland" is presented in conjunction with the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect in New York City. Composed of Dutch Resistance art and official propaganda, this exhibition contains artifacts from three collections in the archives of the Anne Frank Center.

Curated by Rolf Wolfswinkel, Professor of Modern History, New York University, and Yvonne Simons, Executive Director, The Anne Frank Center USA, the exhibit will feature:

- ◆ Original lithographs by Henri Pieck, drawn during Pieck's internment at Buchenwald. His Buchenwald sketches evoke the horror associated with German concentration camps: forced labor, starvation, freezing cold and inhumane treatment.
- ◆ Prints by Marie de Zaaijer, which depict the remembrances, suffering and hardship endured by Dutch citizens during the war.
- ◆ Original propaganda posters designed to encourage the Dutch population to support their German occupiers and to discredit the American and British air forces whose indiscriminate bombing campaigns killed and injured many innocent Dutch civilians as well as armed combatants.

2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the camps and the end of WWII. Please join us in January for these special events of the year-long commemorative program "Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance:"

On Sunday, January 26 at Temple Shalom in Naples, the film *The Boys of Terezin* will be screened at 2:00 p.m. The film shows how five Holocaust survivors, a boy choir and a chamber music

group unite to tell the story of the secret concentration camp journal. Following the screening, FGCU Professors pianist Michael Baron and soprano Jeanie Darnell, accompanied by violinist Ming Gao of the Naples Philharmonic, will play music selections from the film. A special guest appearance is also planned. This event is free and open to the public, but an RSVP is required via our website at www.HMCEC.org.

On Monday, January 27 at our Museum, the film *Defiant Requiem* will be shown at 2:00 p.m. *Defiant Requiem* chronicles a trip by modern American conductor Murry Sidlin and a chorus to the site of the June 1944 performance of Verdi's Requiem. In this documentary, Sidlin and his chorus recreated the Schächter performance to highlight this story of the courage and resilience of the human spirit. This program is free and open to the public, but seating is limited. RSVP required at HMCEC.org.

We look forward to seeing you in 2020 at our beautiful new Museum and as we honor the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the camps with the "Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance" programs. We also hope you will join us for our March 2 Triumph 2020 event featuring Holocaust Survivor Dr. Ruth Westheimer. If you are interested in sponsoring this event, please contact me at susan@HMCEC.org or 239.263.9200. ▲



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FGCU has its first full-time rabbi

Rabbi Mendel Gordon, an Aussie native, started his rabbinical studies back in Australia and completed them in New York in 2015. As a student, Rabbi Mendel led services and ran Jewish programs in six countries, including France, Germany, Switzerland and Australia.

Rabbi Mendel, his wife Shternie and their baby Mussia moved this past summer to become the first full-time rabbi and Jewish program directors at Florida Gulf Coast University. They are coordinating Chabad at FGCU and building a home away from home for Jewish students from all levels of observance and affiliations.

"We had an amazing first semester full of vibrant Jewish life at FGCU," said Rabbi Mendel. "We've had 20-30 students each Shabbat, 100 students involved celebrating Sukkot, weekly kosher lunch and learns on campus, challah bakes, Grill the Rabbi question and

answer, shofar factory, Shabbatons, leadership trips and social events.

"We would like to thank Rabbi Mendel and Luba Greenberg of Chabad of Bonita Springs for their efforts in servicing the students since 2010 and arranging to bring a full-time rabbi to FGCU."

Rabbi Mendel and Shternie Gordon can be contacted at 347.452.0489. ▲



Rabbi Mendel, Shternie and Mussia Gordon

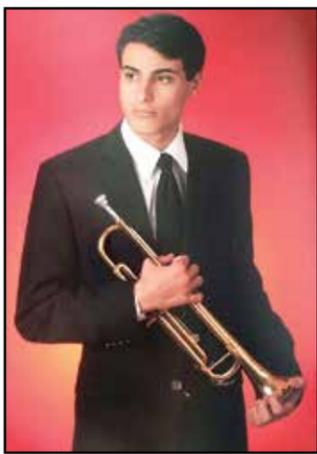
C.F.S. welcomes FGCU trumpet student Eric Swarz

The Community Free Synagogue Musical Ensemble has been joined by Florida Gulf Coast University music major Eric Swarz. Eric, a junior at the University's Bower School of Music, will add his musical talents during weekly Sabbath Eve worship and on other festivals in completion of his Capstone and Internship requirements.

A Miami native, Eric is gifted with perfect pitch, helping him master first the piano and then the trumpet. He plays in the FGCU Symphonic Band, its Wind Orchestra and Jazz Ensemble. He performed his junior trumpet recital at FGCU Bower School of Music a few weeks ago where he played a repertoire

by Handel, Hummel, Bozza and more.

Eric spends his summers teaching brass at the Appel Music Farm Camp in New Jersey, and frequently volunteers his musical skills at senior living facilities.



Eric Swarz

Eric and his family attended Temple Emanu-El on Miami Beach, where he was called to the Torah as a Bar-Mitsvah. His rich Jewish upbringing and his present minor in Religion make him a wonderful "fit" for the synagogue's musical group.

"Eric is a gifted musician and delightful young man who is already proving a blessing to our congregation," noted Rich McConville, a C.F.S. lay cantor. ▲

New JLI course to be presented in SWFL

The new Jewish Learning Institute course, "Judaism's Gifts to the World," is an in-depth exploration of the most notable values and attitudes that the Jews have successfully shared with humanity. Many of these concepts were once considered preposterous, but today they are taken for granted. The stories of such transitions are as fascinating as they are instructive for the present. "Judaism's Gifts to the World" also considers how Judaism might continue its role as a beacon of clarity and fountain of wisdom for all of humankind.

By most indications, modern society is a model of moral progress. Yet when it comes to everyday values, we still grapple with the big ones...

- ▶ What are our responsibilities toward the less fortunate?
 - ▶ Does assisted suicide honor or devalue human life?
 - ▶ How can we make a move toward more cohesive family living?
- Join us to unpack six cherished

values and how they were delivered by the Torah. By tracing their journey to the mainstream, we'll discover a timeless core of purpose and clarity in each value – a powerful gift of guidance as we navigate our own daily choices.

- ◆ Lesson 1: The Gift of Social Responsibility
 - ◆ Lesson 2: The Gift of a Guiding Purpose
 - ◆ Lesson 3: The Gift of Respect for Life
 - ◆ Lesson 4: The Gift of Equality & Individuality
 - ◆ Lesson 5: The Gift of Work/Life Balance
 - ◆ Lesson 6: The Gift of Escaping the Cycle
- The six-week course begins Thursday, January 23, and takes place at Chabad Lubavitch of SWFL, 5620 Winkler Rd., Fort Myers. To sign up, contact Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz at 239.433.7708 or rabbi@chabadswf.org. For more information, visit www.chabadswf.org or www.myjli.com. ▲

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TRIBUTES

The board and staff of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties extends condolences to Judith Satin and family on the passing of Roger Satin.

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In memory of Marilyn Froim
from Sherri & Robert Kramerson

In honor of Dale Cohen
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Please send them to Lori Ramos
at the Federation at loriramos@jfedlcc.org.

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BAR MITZVAH



Gabriel Eli Dahan will be called to the Torah on Saturday, January 11 as a Bar Mitzvah. He is the son of Dr. Irit Hemed and Ilan Dahan, as well as little brother to Adam Dahan.

Gabriel has always been part of the Jewish community. He has been a student at Temple Judea Preschool and a religious school student at Chabad of Cape Coral, as well as Temple Beth El. Gabriel is currently at Temple Judea and has had a wonderful experience preparing for his Bar Mitzvah.

Gabriel is an exceptional seventh grade student at Canterbury School. He has a variety of interests, including basketball, tennis and golf. He was part of the winning middle school district tennis tournament at Canterbury School last year. Gabriel loves spending time with family and friends, as well as his beloved dog Lucy. He enjoys traveling and has had the privilege of going to Israel many times, visiting his family.

We would like to thank all the people who have contributed to Gabriel's Jewish upbringing. Dale Cohen has been an integral part of his education. Thank you to Rabbi Marc Sack for his guidance through the Bar Mitzvah process. It has been an amazing experience!

ENGAGEMENT



Mazel Tov to **Ashlie Coplein** and **David Bogner** on their Thanksgiving engagement!

Ashlie, a Maryland native, holds a master's degree in Public Administration from Florida Gulf Coast University and is employed with the 20th Judicial District Public Defender. She also manages the Lee County Young Democrats.

David, born in New Jersey, holds a degree in Political Science from Florida Gulf Coast University and works as a Revenue Specialist for the Florida Department of Revenue. He was the winner of the Democratic Primary for a local Florida House seat, and is a former member of *The News-Press* Citizen Editorial Board.

Both Ashlie and David are active participants in The Community Free Synagogue, where Ashlie studied and was called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah in 2018.

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



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Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old

When divorced parents age

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

“When the telephone rang at 2:00 a.m. I knew it had to be bad news, and it was,” says Kyle, who, along with his older sister, shares the responsibility for caring for their aging parents. “My sister was out of town so I raced to the hospital to be with Mom. She lives alone and that night she fell and broke her hip.”

Kyle’s mother is not a widow but she lives alone because 27 years ago, she and Kyle’s father divorced. Now both parents are elderly and both have serious health concerns. “Dad has a bad heart,” Kyle says, “and I notice his dementia is getting worse. He has a girlfriend but they never married. Last week when she had chest pains, Dad didn’t call her daughter. He called me! There’ve been times when my sister and I spend every night of the week running back and forth among the three of them. I love my parents but my “shuttle bus life” is exhausting.”

Kyle and his sister are not alone. According to an article by Chris Taylor (*Wealth* magazine 2012), “Some 60 percent of unmarried boomers are divorced.” The implications for the next generation are serious as adult children of divorce struggle with the emotional and financial issues related to what Taylor calls a “demographic tsunami.”

Professor Susan Brown co-authored a study that examined the sociological meaning of what gerontologists see as an alarming statistic. Brown reports that the current crop of unmarried boomers “are much more economically vulnerable than married boomers are” – a situation made especially precarious when multiple marriages are involved.

Adult children like Kyle and his sister may find themselves responsible not only for two parents who live miles apart, but for their parents’ significant other – the stepparent or companion who, like their own mom and dad, eventually needs care and support. When step-siblings are involved, the situation becomes even more complicated.

Francine Russo, author of *They’re Your Parents Too*, emphasizes that in addition to the financial stress of two parents with two different living situations, the emotional stakes can be quite high. Russo reports that “Adult children of divorce may feel anger or resentment at one parent, or feel like they have to parse out their time equally between both parents...and it can get pretty intense.”

In a recent article by Ashley Rosa, “Late-Life Parental Divorce: How to Care for Your Parents” (*Divorce Magazine.com* 2019), the author offers suggestions regarding caring for elderly parents, especially when they divorce later in life.

In what she describes as “double trouble,” Rosa notes that the practical support that happily married seniors enjoy evaporates when seniors divorce, especially after they’ve postponed the split, sometimes waiting years for their children to become adults before they take steps to dissolve the marriage.

Rosa reminds us that adult children of divorce and their parents have issues that need to be addressed. She says, “As an adult, you feel that you should be able to cope and you shouldn’t feel so emotional about your parents’ divorce – making you likely to suffer in silence rather than reaching out for help.”

Breaking that silence is critical and Rosa offers practical suggestions for doing just that:

1. Begin with an honest parent/adult child meeting where emotional issues are acknowledged and addressed
2. Continue with frank discussions

about finances and living arrangements

3. Speak up about how caregiving responsibilities can be shared with siblings, both natural and step
4. Make plans for caregiver respite care and for the possibility of caregiver burnout

In an article on “Divorce Etiquette” (*ReformJudaism.org*), psychotherapist Edythe Held Mencher and family law specialist Marsha Elser discuss how the synagogue community can facilitate positive relationships with families who for years have been navigating the troubled waters of divorce.

The authors emphasize that Jewish professionals can play a leading role as they plan programs and support services that acknowledge that a parent’s divorce has lifelong emotional impact for the children. At each age and stage, from early childhood through the teen years and on to adulthood, divorce brings with it its own set of psychological

concerns. Organizing a Jewish community support group for adult children of elderly divorced parents is one way to ease the isolation that these adults often feel.

Within our Jewish communities, divorced seniors are living alone, often with the particular emotional burden that characterizes a family split. At the same time, adult children of these seniors struggle with the difficulties of what Kyle calls the “shuttle bus life.” Given what the statistics tell us, helping divorced boomers and their adult children is a mitzvah in the making for Jewish communities nationwide.▲

For 10 years Rabbi Barbara Aiello served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life as resident rabbi. She is rabbi of the Reconstructionist synagogue, Ner Tamid del Sud in south Italy, and serves as visiting rabbi in Rhodes, in the oldest synagogue in Greece. Contact her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com.



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A tale of two Januaries

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

This month marks 80 years since the establishment of the Nazi concentration (later, extermination) camp at Auschwitz in 1940. It is also the 75th anniversary of the camp's liberation in 1945.

In 1939, with the outbreak of war, the German Inspectorate of Concentration Camps was authorized to examine the possibility of setting up new camps. One of the first of these, located in southwestern Poland near the confluence of the Vistula and Soła Rivers, was to be built just outside the town of Oświęcim. In German the name was Auschwitz. This was initially to be a camp for Polish POWs.

Auschwitz would ultimately serve as one of the epicenters of the Holocaust, with more Jews murdered there during the war than in any other location. Since the victims came from every part of Europe, and because Auschwitz operated longer than any other extermination camp, it has come to symbolize the horror of the Holocaust overall.

It was on January 25, 1940, that the SS decided to construct a camp near Oświęcim. Then, on February 21, 1940, the Inspector of Concentration Camps, Richard Glücks, reported to Heinrich Himmler that a group of "former Polish artillery barracks" had been found that were suitable for further development.

The town of Auschwitz seemed the ideal location, though it had its objectionable side. Surrounded by open swampy moorland, it remained muddy for most of the year, it was unhealthy and malaria-infested, and in winter it turned bitterly cold. Severe winds swept down from the north, unimpeded by any natural obstacles on the Polish plain. It was flat, cold, wet, muddy, cheerless and colorless. There seemed little to recommend the area surrounding the little Silesian town.

Despite this, on May 4, 1940, the first commandant, Rudolf Franz Hoess, began his task of constructing the new camp. Employing prisoners from other camps as slave labor, the compound was soon built. It received its initial batch of permanent inmates on July 14, 1940.

Understanding the history of Auschwitz is a complex challenge. Initially it was established as a camp for Polish soldiers and political prisoners. Later, Soviet POWs were included, while Jews were added increasingly from mid-1941 onwards.

Further, there was not a single Auschwitz, but rather three main camps – Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II (Birkenau) and Auschwitz III (Monowitz) – along with approximately 50 satellite camps located over a wide geographical region.

In the winter of 1940-1941, German industrial conglomerate I.G. Farben chose Auschwitz as the site for the construction of a new plant. The availability of a railroad junction and raw material, along with the chance to exploit slave

labor, added to its allure. An arrangement was made between I.G. Farben and the SS, whereby the latter would provide the slave labor and I.G. Farben would pay for the use of the workers. At the same time, SS chief Heinrich Himmler ordered the camp system expanded to accommodate over 100,000 additional inmates.

The camp would eventually become a vast complex covering 15 square miles, in which the SS, capitalizing on the use of slave labor, made a fortune as a result.

Auschwitz, together with five other camps located by the Germans in Poland (Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibór and Treblinka) altered the nature and course of concentration camp development. These were the *Vernichtungslager*, the death (or extermination) camps.

Because of their existence, the image of the Nazi concentration camps was irrevocably transformed, such that all camps are now viewed as elaborate and gigantic factories created for the purpose of destroying human lives.

The extermination camps were institutions designed to methodically and efficiently murder millions of people, specifically Jews. These mass murders took place in specially designed gas chambers. At Auschwitz, they employed crystallized hydrogen cyanide, which on contact with air, oxidized to become hydrocyanic (or prussic) acid gas, manufactured under the trade name Zyklon B.

January 1940 therefore had a lot to answer for. But as the war progressed, and Soviet armies advanced toward Germany throughout the latter half of 1944, the position of Auschwitz seemed uncertain. In September 1944, Heinrich Himmler ordered Rudolf Hoess to oversee the camp's liquidation. On No-

vember 26, 1944, when delay threatened and the Soviets drew nearer, Himmler issued another order concerning the destruction of Auschwitz.

After considerable administrative difficulties, the complete evacuation of the complex was ordered for January 17, 1945. The next day, some 22,000 men and women left the camp, and the day after that, a further 3,500 were evacuated. They were about all that was left of a camp complex which at one time could boast a population of possibly 200,000. The earliest date of free contact with Soviet forces was January 22, 1945. When the camp was formally occupied two days later, there were only 2,819 survivors left at Auschwitz.

The prisoners had been evacuated in the face of Soviet progress. The Russians were so close while the prisoners were marching away that the sounds of battle could be clearly distinguished. The survivors suffered terribly during the forced marches that took them toward the west, and countless numbers perished. Discussion of these Death Marches opens a new dimension relating to the story, however, and will await another column at a different time.

The name Auschwitz evokes many things. What is often overlooked, however, are the bookend dates – January 1940 and January 1945 – that separate what happened in the middle. Simultaneously the world's largest murder site and cemetery, the phenomenon of Auschwitz had to begin somewhere. Fortunately, after a herculean effort, it also ended, 75 years ago this month. ▲

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



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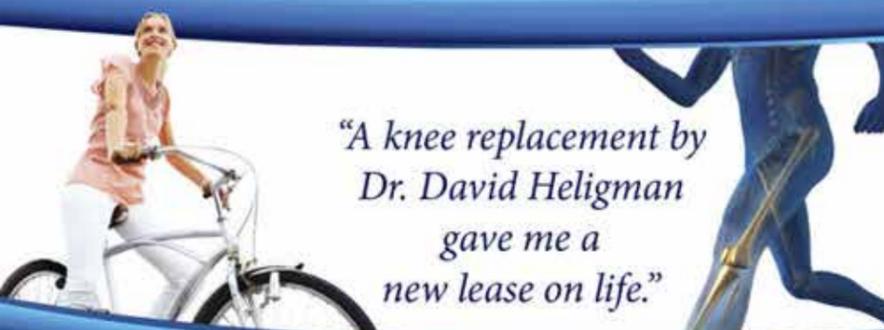
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It's a little bit Brooklyn, a little bit Lower East Side

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

L'Chaim and Lamentations: Stories by Craig Darch.
NewSouth Books. 160 pages.
Hardcover \$24.95.

Not long ago, I had the pleasure of writing about Richard Slotkin's short story collection titled *Greenhorns*. I take the same pleasure in sharing Craig Darch's somewhat similar collection. Darch, a professor at Auburn University, has crafted a compact, resonant memorial to the Jewish ethos as it existed in New York City for many decades.

■ Phil Jason

Though there are few time markers, the ambiance seems to suggest the 1920s through the 1950s. These decades have faded away, with their various tones of hope and disappointment. They are almost forgotten, but the author brings them back through the sensibilities of people who themselves are on a point of balance between forgetting and remembering – as well as being forgotten.

Many live lonely lives, many have fallen upon – or always had – hard times. Many have a special kind of dignity and even courage. Darch's nostalgic heart has made their ordinariness extraordinary.

These are people surviving inside their loneliness. The world they once fully inhabited has changed around them. The corner delicatessens run by hardworking neighbor-owners have vanished or been transformed.

Darch's seven stories are seven gems.

"Sadie's Prayer" offers two aged roommates, Sadie and Esther. They are a kind of odd couple. Esther's temperament demands neatness and convention. She can't understand why the good lord has given her such an annoying partner and how the Jewish housing agency brought them together. Esther cannot adjust to Sadie's smoking, to her Communist leanings, to her messiness. Esther looks backward. Her memories of life with her deceased husband are a kind of anchor. She seems to talk to him, and Sadie is crass enough to point out that "Max is reading the newspaper and having his bagels someplace else this morning."

Esther voices her wish that she had perished with her husband, and Sadie chides her for her silliness.

Knowing that they are each guilty of making each other's lives much more miserable than they need to be, they agree – at Sadie's suggestion – that they each treat the other with civility. Fat chance of that happening – at least not yet. They are wired differently and, most likely, it is too late for them to change.

The women's bickering dialogue is quite humorous, and perhaps will seem familiar to many readers. We all know people like this. They are our relatives, if not necessarily our friends.

They compete about who suffers the most, who prays the most, and whose taste is superior.

In a sense, one can't live without the other, and the conclusion makes clear that Sadie knows it and knows that even

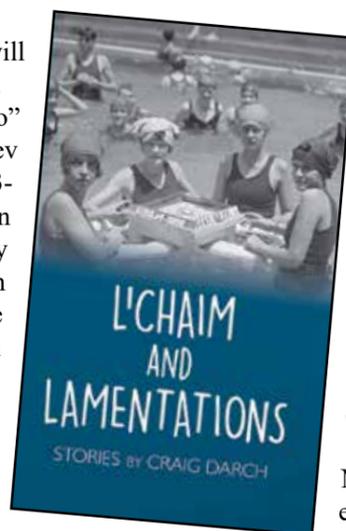
in the afterlife, Esther will need a friend like Sadie.

In "Kaddish for Two" we enter the lives of Zev Abramovitch and his 33-year old unmarried son Aharon. For Zev, it's very important that his son continue the family line and experience its joys in the traditional manner. Readers will suspect the reason for Aharon's resistance to such conversations long before Aharon ends the useless fencing back and forth by announcing that he is gay. Darch's credible and powerful handling of this situation, the horrors of moral blindness and disappointment that overwhelm both men, is stunning.

The premise, that a Jewish man needs a son to guarantee that there is someone to say Kaddish for him, resonates both in comfortable and uncomfortable ways.

"Who's the Old Crone" raises the issue of Jewish continuity in a different way. Three old friends are chatting and noshing at a restaurant, Schwartzman's Nosh, run by Sybil. They see a woman they haven't seen there before who looks down and out. She seems at once pitiful and imposing. But who are they to judge? They are the remnants of the Romanian synagogue "bankrupt and boarded up years ago."

Indeed, they are its last rabbi, last sexton and last cantor. They are learned and somewhat cantankerous. The sexton, Eisenberg, "could kvetch

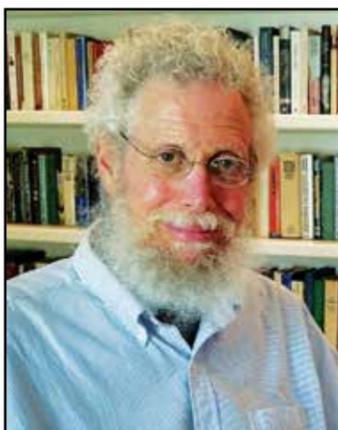


fluently in seven languages." Nachman, the cantor, who had lost his once-glorious voice, magically gets it back. Rabbi Fiddleman holds the group together. They have nothing to do except appraise the dishwasher and overhear a (beautifully rendered) mother-daughter confrontation.

An incident in the Nosh leads the three men, each in his own way, to contemplate death. The rabbi explains that "the Torah makes no definitive statement about an afterlife." A year passes, and they are still talking about the old crone and muttering about how after coming to Schwartzman's for 10 years, there is "never a waitress when you need one."

These tales, and their four companions, are sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes consoling, always luminously true. ▲

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.



Craig Darch



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Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Contributing Columnist

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

Golden Globe Nominations

The 2020 Golden Globe awards will air on NBC on Sunday, January 5 at 8:00 p.m. This is a very good year for Jewish nominees. Here goes:

ACTING: Lead actor, drama film: **JOAQUIN PHOENIX**, 45, *Joker* (his mother is Jewish and he identifies as Jewish); Lead actress, drama film: **SCARLETT JOHANSSON**, 35, *Marriage Story* (exact same background as Phoenix); Lead actress, comedy film: **BEANIE FELDSTEIN**, 26, *Booksmart*; Lead actor, TV comedy series: **MICHAEL DOUGLAS**, 75, *The Kominsky Method*, and **BEN PLATT**, 26, *The Politician*, and **PAUL RUDD**, 50, *Living with Yourself*; Lead actress, comedy series: **NATASHA LYONNE**, 40, *Russian Doll*; Lead actress: mini-series/TV movie: **JOEY KING**, 20, *The Act*; Lead actor, TV mini-series/movie: **SACHA BARON COHEN**, 48, *The Spy* (he played Israeli Mossad agent **ELI COHEN**); Supporting actor, TV series/mini-series/TV film: **ALAN ARKIN**, 85, *The Kominsky Method*, and **HENRY WINKLER**, 74, *Barry*; Supporting actress, TV series/mini-series/TV film: **PATRICIA ARQUETTE**, 51, *The Act*.

DIRECTING/WRITING/MUSIC: Director, film (any genre): **SAM MENDES**, 54, *1917* (his mother was Jewish), and **TODD PHILLIPS**, 49, *Joker*; Screenplay, film: **NOAH BAUMBACH**, 50, *Marriage Story* (father Jewish, identifies as Jewish); Original film score: **RANDY NEWMAN**, 76, *Marriage Story* (note: Both of his parents were Jewish. Randy's first cousin, Thomas Newman, who was

raised in his mother's Christian faith, is also nominated for best score).

BEST FILM awards: The best film and best TV awards are given to the principal producers. My practice is to note if a "best" nominee has a Jewish director or writer. They are usually nominated producers, too. Best drama film: *1917*, Sam Mendes (directed/wrote/produced); and *Marriage Story*, Noah Baumbach (directed/wrote/produced), and *Joker*, Todd Phillips (directed, co-wrote and produced). His co-writer is **STEVE SILVER**, 60ish. Best comedy/musical film: *Jojo Rabbit*, Taika Waititi, 44 (directed/wrote). Special note: This half-Polynesian director has one Jewish maternal great-grandfather. His background is often mis-reported because his mother identifies as Jewish and he refers to her as Jewish. I don't "count" him as Jewish. Best animated film: *The Lion King*, **JON FAVREAU**, 54 (director, producer), with **JEFF NATHANSON**, 54 (*The Lion King* screenplay).

BEST TV AWARDS: Best TV drama series: *The Crown*, **PETER MORGAN**, 56 (produced and wrote. His father was Jewish.); Best comedy/musical TV series: *The Kominsky Method*, **CHUCK LORRE**, 67 (writer, producer, series creator), and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, **AMY SHERMAN-PALLADINO**, 54 (series creator, writer, producer. Her father was Jewish and she identifies as Jewish.), and *The Politician*, **BRAD FALCHUK**, 54 (series co-creator and producer).

Best TV mini-series: All five nominated series have a Jewish connection. *Catch-22*, **GRANT HESLOV**, 56 (co-

Interested in Your Family's History?

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

So here's the deal:

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

producer and co-director. The series is based on the novel by the late **JOSEPH HELLER**.); *Chernobyl*, **CRAIG MAZIN**, 48 (series creator, writer, producer); *Fosse/Verdon*, **STEVEN LEVENSON**, 35 (co-creator and co-writer); *The Loudest Voice in the Room*, **GABRIEL SHERMAN**, 40 (wrote the book the series was based upon, produced series, wrote some episodes); *Unbelievable*, **AYELET WALDMAN**, 54, and **MICHAEL CHABON**, 56 (this wife-husband team co-produced and co-wrote the series).

One Last Carrie Fisher Performance

Still playing everywhere is *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*. It's the final part of the nine-episode Skywalker saga. Like the last three really big *Star Wars* films, it was directed and co-written by **J.J. ABRAMS**, 53. One sad note: **CARRIE FISHER**, who died in 2016, does appear as Princess Leia one more time. They are using footage from the two *Star Wars* films she made just before her death.

Daniel Goldman's Somewhat Surprising Background

DANIEL GOLDMAN, 43, is the counsel to the Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee and, no doubt, you have already seen him question impeachment witnesses and present the articles of impeachment to the House Judiciary Committee. Before the hearings, I knew him slightly as a former MSNBC legal analyst, and I had heard other lawyers praise him as a great cross-examiner with a strong track record as a former Assistant U.S. Attorney.

I didn't know until recently that he was a member of the **LEVI STRAUSS** family. Levi had no children, and his sister's sons inherited Levi Strauss & Co. Daniel is the great-great-grandson of **ELISE STERN HAAS** and **WALTER HAAS, SR.**, who made Levi Strauss & Co. a great national company. Dan's grandparents, **RICHARD** and **RHODA HAAS GOLDMAN**, were famous philanthropists. His wife is **CORINNE LEVY GOLDMAN**, 40ish, an attorney and Yeshiva University grad.▲

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The hora and Israeli folk dance

By Arlene Stolnitz

Who can resist joining a hora at a traditional Jewish wedding? In my case, when I hear those first notes, the music speaks to my soul. It's as if I am being called to the dance floor by some mysterious and enigmatic sound that draws me in!

Typically set to a kind of klezmer-style music, the custom of lifting the newly married couple on chairs is exhilarating as well as often scary! At Orthodox weddings, men and women dance separately, whereas in Conservative, Reform and Liberal movements there is no separation.

The hora, well known in many Eastern European cultures, each in different forms, and known throughout the Jewish Diaspora, became the symbol of the rebirth of the State of Israel and the foundation of Israeli folk dance. Performed in a circle with participants interlocking hands, the dance is set to Israeli music and was often performed in kibbutzim, often continuing for hours.

"Tzena, Tzena" and "Hava Nagila" are the tunes we hear most often at celebrations. Yet there are many other hora songs made popular by the Israeli Folk Dance Movement. A few well-known dance songs include "Siman Tov," "Chiribim, Chiribom" and "Yismehu Hashamayim." Other less-known but equally joyous songs are "Tarras Freilach" and "Naphtaly's Freilach."

But "Tzena, Tzena" and "Hava Nagila" are the most familiar to us. "Tzena, Tzena" was written in 1941 by Issachar Miron, a Polish emigrant who

wrote the song while serving in the Jewish Brigade of the British Forces.

Tzena, tzena, tzena, tzena ha-banot u-r'ena hayalim ba-mosheva/

Al na, Al na, Al na, Al na, al na tithab'ena /Mi-ben hayil, ish tzava.

Go out, go out, go out girls and see the soldiers in the moshav (farming community)

Do not, do not, do not hide yourself away from a virtuous man (a pun on the word for soldier), an army man.

In the 1950s, the folk singing group The Weavers, and later Pete Seeger, recorded the song and, for the first time, Americans were introduced to a sense of what Israel was about: "A land brimming with tanned and muscular kibbutznik soldiers singing, dancing the hora and making the desert bloom." It was an idealistic view of Israel which ignored the malaria-infested swamps and tent settlements that housed Mizrahi Jews. It glorified the men and women who "fight and plant and love."

And its upbeat rhythm provided the perfect backdrop for the emergence of Israeli folk dance in the '40s.

"Hava Nagila," no less popular as a hora tune, has a less defined past. It is thought to have originated in Eastern Europe as a *niggun*, or mystical musical Hasidic prayer, in the mid-18th or 19th centuries. Years later it emerged in Palestine and was transcribed by famed musicologist Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, who added the Hebrew text we sing today.

Hava nagila, hava nagila/ Hava nagila ve-nismeha/ Hava neranena, Hava neranana/ Hava neranena venismeha

Let us rejoice, let us rejoice and be glad, let us sing, let us sing and be glad.

"Hava Nagila" has been called "the Jewish party song that belongs to the

world." Recorded by Harry Belafonte, Chubby Checker and many others, the song emphasizes joy and community with its enticing beat. It's hard to imagine a Jewish wedding without it.

Personally, I look forward to my next wedding invitation, and especially seeing the bride and groom precariously hoisted up on chairs as part of the dance! Hopefully, it won't be too long for that invite. I can hear the strains of the hora being played and can't wait to

get up and dance the hora while I am still able.▲

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



Arlene Stolnitz

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Tahini took over the sweet stage in 2019 – recipe by Chef Dalia Hemed

Tahini, tahini everywhere! You've probably seen that tahini (or tehina, as it's pronounced in Hebrew) has slowly crept into more and more ingredient lists on recipes over the past year, but what is it exactly?

Tahini is made from ground, toasted sesame seeds, and is described as having a savory and slightly nutty flavor. Similar to your favorite natural peanut butter, tahini should be rich, creamy and able to drip easily from a spoon.

Similar to peanut butter in purpose, tahini is a perfect addition to dessert recipes. Tahini is a high unsaturated fat, which allows for desserts to retain their moistness and to satisfy our cravings. In healthy dessert recipes, tahini serves to replace excess oils with a nutritionally dense, good fat full of vitamins B and E, magnesium, calcium and iron.



Additionally, tahini is a great substitute ingredient to use in place of nut butters for those dealing with allergies.

The reason it's popping up everywhere is because it's so versatile! That creamy compound of ground sesame seeds has arrived on the American table and now, at the end of the year, it's safe to say that tahini is no longer a low-key ingredient across the dessert table in 2019. Trendy and healthy, tahini has

taken the dessert stage by storm, leaving everyone wondering how long tahini will remain a celebrity. I am pretty sure this must-have ingredient of the moment is here to stay.

We all know tahini has been all over restaurant menus, and widely noticeable on supermarket shelves for years. Israeli cooking is also gaining wider and wider popularity in America, which means there is likely to be more baked goods made with tahini appearing on restaurant menus, showing up at dinner parties and, of course, my future recipes. Make sure your pantry is stocked for 2020.

Tahini is one of the most eaten products in Israel. Israelis eat more tahini per capita than any other country in the world. In Israel, people drizzle tahini on their chopped tomato-and-cucumber salad, mix it with cooked chickpeas in hummus, use it as a sandwich spread or as a standard salad dressing ingredient, and even glob it on their morning eggs for an extra dose of calcium. And, of course, one of the most popular sweet snacks, halva, is made traditionally with tahini and a sweetener such as honey, date syrup (Silan) or sugar, and sometimes nuts, chocolate, coconut and other ingredients to create many different varieties.

I always loved tahini in its more traditional sense, drizzled on falafel or in hummus, but in the culinary world, I saw how adaptable it could be in all kinds of recipes.

Following the trend, I can't get enough of tahini lately, so this tahini-crème cake is right up my alley. Let me present to you my Israeli tahini cake recipe for the best, moistest and amazing cake you'll ever eat. It's not too sweet, and really fluffy and moist at the same time. The tahini gives this tender cake

a nuttiness that's balanced out by my mouthwatering and tasty tahini butter cream. Simple and elegant, it's the perfect, sweet dessert for the end of the year or the beginning of the new year.

You will need:

- Mixer
- Bundt pan

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 3 large eggs (room temp)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 stick nondairy butter softened
- ½ cup tahini cream (recipe follows)
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 cup coconut milk
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon (optional)
- Halva crumbs for decoration
- 1 tsp cake batter flavor extract

Tahini cream:

- 1 cup tahini
- 1 cup nondairy butter
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon (optional)
- ▶ Preheat your oven to 350°.
- ▶ Grease a Bundt cake pan.
- ▶ Prepare the Tahini crème. Whisk the tahini, nondairy butter and powdered sugar together. Add cinnamon (optional). Look for a thick yet pourable consistency.
- ▶ Mix ½ cup tahini crème with the coconut milk, oil and cake batter flavor extract. Set aside.
- ▶ In another bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder and baking soda
- ▶ In a standing mixing bowl, beat together the eggs and sugar on high speed until it doubles its volume and becomes thick and pale. Reduce the mixer speed to low and gradually add the melted butter. Mix



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

for 20 seconds.

- ▶ Stay on low speed. Add alternately, tahini crème, oil and coconut milk mixture with the dry ingredients mixture, ending with the flour and cinnamon (scrape the side of the bowl in between).
- ▶ Mix until ingredients are combined. Try not to over mix it.
- ▶ Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan. Bake for about 30-35 minutes until golden in color and a toothpick inserted comes out clean. (I prefer to have a few crumbs on it, making sure to not over dry the cake.)
- ▶ After the cake is out of the oven, let it cool in the pan on a rack for 20 minutes and then remove from the pan to cool completely. Pour the remaining tahini crème on top when the cake is cool. Decorate with halva crumbs.

I wish everyone a Sweet and Happy Tahini New Year. Yum! ▲

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Wasserman Schultz: Restore rights of Holocaust-era insurance policy beneficiaries

Washington, D.C. – November 25, 2019 – U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-23) has filed bipartisan legislation to restore the rights of Holocaust-era insurance beneficiaries to help recover billions in unclaimed payments left behind amid the chaos and destruction after World War II.

Due to federal court rulings and a failure by insurance companies to adequately publish the names of recipients and pay these claims, 97 percent of the approximately 800,000 policies held in 1938 have yet to be honored.

The insurers' unreasonable demands that death certificates and original policy paperwork be produced is all but impossible for survivors who, at the time, had just survived death camps, forced relocations, torture and death marches.

"Victims of the Holocaust and their families should be compensated for unpaid policies that were specifically set aside for times of trouble – not to enhance the profit margins for the insurance companies," Wasserman Schultz said. "This legislation would provide the critically important financial support to

these victims who were forced to endure the worst that humanity has inflicted on a people."

The Holocaust Insurance Accountability Act of 2019 was introduced Friday by Wasserman Schultz and U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin (NY-1). A Senate companion bill was recently introduced by Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Sen. Jacky Rosen (D-NV). Specifically, the Wasserman Schultz and Zeldin legislation would:

- ◆ Validate state laws requiring insurers to publish policy holder information

- ◆ Establish a federal cause of action in U.S. courts to ensure Holocaust survivors and heirs have access to U.S. courts

- ◆ Provide a 10-year period of time for cases to be brought after the date of enactment

"Preventing Holocaust survivors and their families from collecting on documented policies is truly outrageous and cruel, but allowing these global insurance corporations to hold on to this unjust enrichment is an offensive re-victimization that cannot be allowed to stand," Wasserman Schultz said. ▲

Navigating the world of wine

By The Wine Whisperer

Once knew a couple who had a shared mutual goal: to ride every major roller coaster in America. During their vacations, they would travel to amusement parks all over the country and do just that. Around our house, a mutual goal is to sample as many different types of wine as we can, from as many places, and hopefully visit most of them.

The joy of discovery is a major part of the delights of wine appreciation. Even after 25 years of enjoying and writing about wine, I still get surprised when someone pours me a glass of Airén, for instance, and I find out that it's the most widely grown white grape in the world. But coming across it on the shelf may not be easy. And when you're browsing in the wine shop, you may go right past that tall skinny bottle of Picpoul de Pinet. But if you do, you'll be missing a treat.

The point is, to get the most out of the many pleasures offered by this ancient and (in many places) sacred beverage, you need to sample widely. Not overindulge, mind you...but stay open to new varietals, regions and experiences. If you sip one and don't like it, that's fine. At least you tried, and I'm sure that if you sample widely enough

the discoveries will outweigh the disappointments.

All that being said, here is a compilation of new evaluations from my tasting panel and me. We're catching up on several samples that have been waiting a while for review. Please try them and enjoy.

Tascante Nerello Mascalese Sicily 2014 (\$45) – Don't let the translucent ruby color fool you. This wine is big and bold on the palate, which is typical of the Nerello Mascalese grape. Lots of blueberry, and lots of structure, too. Well balanced between tannin and acidity, you'll want to enjoy this with highly flavored foods. WW 88-89

Chimney Rock Cabernet Sauvignon Stag's Leap 2015 (\$99) – Over 80% Cabernet with dashes of the other classic Bordeaux varietals, this is a classic wine. Black fruit flavors of currant and cherry coat the palate, along with notes of toffee and vanilla from the French oak aging. Enjoy now or lay it down for a special occasion. WW 98

Dutton Goldfield Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Redwood Ridge 2015 (\$62) – This Pinot is deep and opaque, unlike most others. A symphony of Old World aromas rises from the glass: earth, tobacco, licorice and leather. The fruit flavors chime in with cherry, raspberry and maybe even some black tea. Not your everyday Pinot Noir. Give it time to open. WW 91

Chapoutier Bila-Haut Occultum Lapidem Rouge 2016 (\$30) – In

case you've forgotten your high school Latin, it means "hidden stone." This Rhône red is dense opaque garnet in the glass, with aromas of smoke, bright dark fruit, tobacco and currant that pay off on the palate. Refined tannins lead to a long slightly sweet finish. WW 91

Purple Heart Red Blend Sonoma County 2015 (\$15) – The blend is mostly Merlot, with Zinfandel, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. It offers a nose of perfumed mixed dark fruit. Very straightforward, with some blueberry and a definite hint of cardamom. Produced by the Mondavi Family, which makes an annual donation to the Purple Heart Foundation for wounded military veterans. WW 87

Charles Krug Cabernet Sauvignon Generations Family Reserve Napa Valley 2014 (\$35) – A stunner. Hedonistic dark cherry, blueberry and vanilla, with well-integrated silky tannins and a sweet finish. Lovely now but will age for at least a decade. WW 94

Ask the Wine Whisperer

I've heard that some wines contain a substance called "brett." What is it, and what does it do?

– Marsha N., Miami

Brettanomyces is a type of yeast, one variety of which is used in the fermentation of beer. The wild variety, which can hide on grape skins, in wine barrels or anywhere in a winery can produce...well, let's call it a barnyard or horsey flavor and aroma. In small concentrations, in mainly red wines, it can even be desirable. But for most people, it's something of an acquired taste. ▲

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.



■ Jerry Greenfield



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Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

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

Films will be screened at the Regal Belltower Stadium 20*

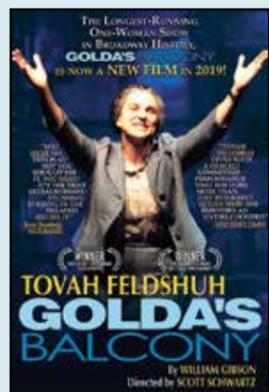
Open seating at all films for general admission tickets

Tickets will be mailed up to December 31.

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

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

Sunday, February 2 at 3:00pm



Golda's Balcony, The Film (2019)

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

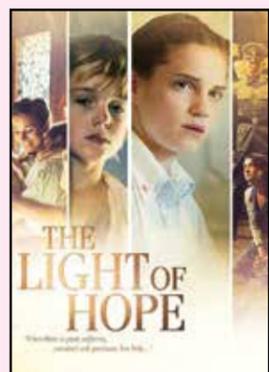
Thursday, February 13 at 7:15pm



Love in Suspensers

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

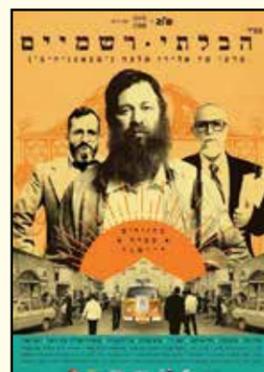
Tuesday, February 4 at 7:15pm



The Light of Hope

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

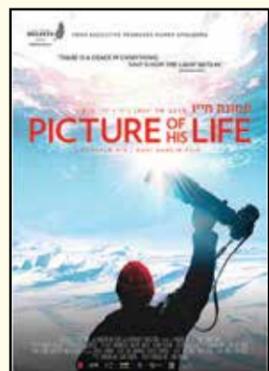
Tuesday, February 18 at 7:15pm



Unorthodox

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

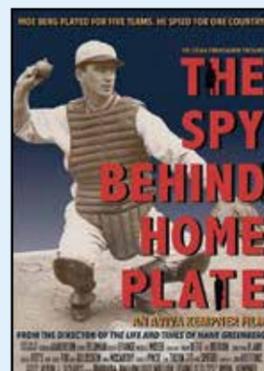
Thursday, February 6 at 7:15pm



Picture of his Life

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

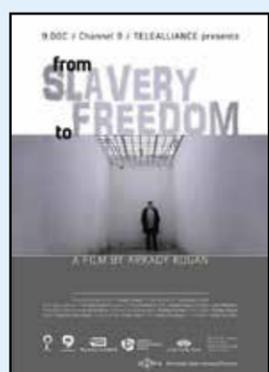
Thursday, February 20 at 7:15pm



The Spy Behind Home Plate

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

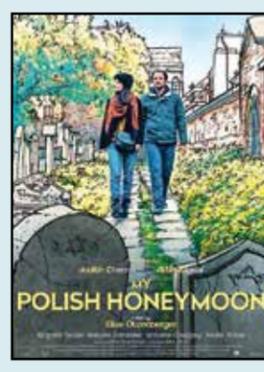
Tuesday, February 11 at 7:15pm



From Slavery to Freedom

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

Sunday, February 23 at 2:00pm

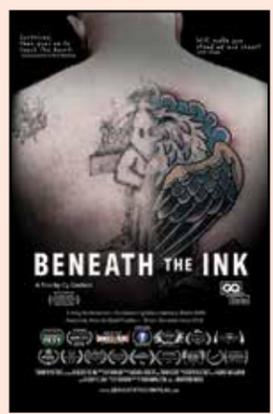


My Polish Honeymoon

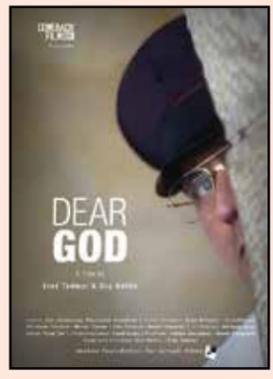
Anna and Adam, a young Parisian couple with Jewish origins, are about to travel to Poland for the first time. They are just married and this will be their honeymoon. They will attend a ceremony in memory of the Jewish community in the village of Adam's grandfather, which was destroyed 75 years ago. Adam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

Wed., February 12 at 2:00pm

Shorts Day



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

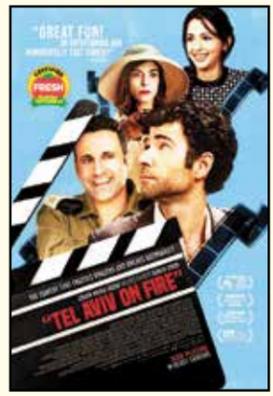


Across the Line
Hananel, a young religious Jew, is hurrying home for Shabbat. An unexpected encounter with Mudir, an unwanted and stubborn Palestinian hitchhiker, leads Hananel on a series of mix-ups that eventually teaches him a lesson in communication, friendship and love. **Short Comedy**
Language: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

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

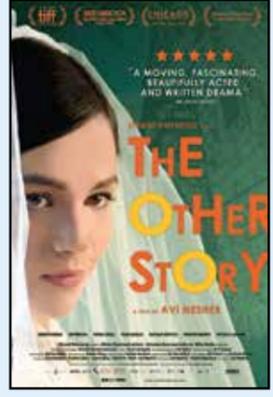
An Average Story
Avi Cohen has just been informed that he is the most average man who ever lived. Overnight, he reluctantly becomes a national icon and celebrity. With his wife's enthusiastic urging, they translate the situation into a business venture that goes awry. **Short Comedy**
Language: Hebrew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

Tuesday, February 25 at 7:15pm



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

Wed., February 26 at 2:00pm



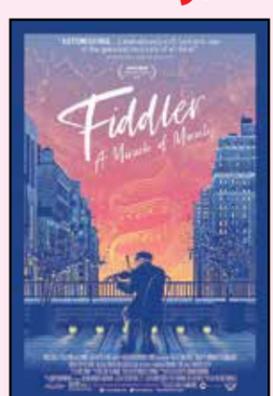
The Other Story
Anat is a rebellious young woman who wants to flee the chaos of secular hedonism for the disciplined comforts of faith. Sari is a young woman who wants to leave behind her oppressive religious upbringing for sexual and spiritual freedom. When Anat and Sari cross paths in Jerusalem, it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

Thursday, February 27 at 7:15pm



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

Sunday, March 1 at 3:00pm



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

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



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

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

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

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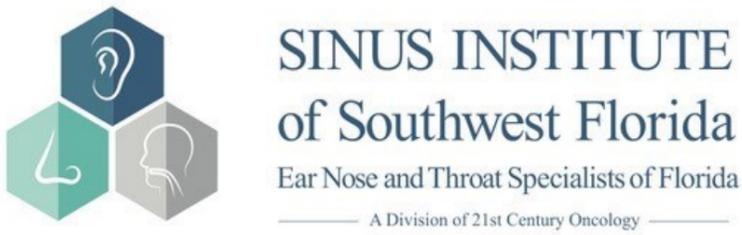
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BRIEFS

INSTINCT BEATS TECHNOLOGY IN AIRPORT SECURITY

Israel takes airport security extremely seriously, as I discovered when passing through the new Ramon airport.

A mandatory pre-flight interview takes place before check-in. Questions range from the highly specific ("When did you book your flight?") to the hum-drum, such as your daily routine at work or favorite football team.

"The way a passenger answers is more important than what the answer is," says Philip Baum, visiting professor of aviation security at Coventry University.

"There is a profiler at every entrance to the airport building. They will stop people who do not meet baseline expectations."

In Britain you have to prove you are not carrying liquids in containers over 100 ml., and take off your shoes. But Israel does not fret about liquids, nor electronics in your cabin baggage.

"The system is based on a common-sense approach of identifying

negative intent rather than the carriage of prohibited articles," says Baum. Instinct can be smarter than technology. (Simon Calder, *Independent* - UK)

MAZE OF TUNNELS REVEALS REMAINS OF ANCIENT JERUSALEM

A rocky spur of land jutting south from Jerusalem's Old City conceals a subterranean labyrinth of natural caves, Canaanite water channels, Judean tunnels and Roman quarries.

Israeli archaeologist Joe Uziel's mission is to unearth a 2,000-year-old, 2,000-foot-long street that once conveyed pilgrims, merchants and other visitors to the Jewish Temple.

Choked with debris during the fiery destruction of the city by Roman forces in 70CE, this monumental path disappeared from view.

Today, an army of engineers and construction workers, toiling 16 hours a day in two shifts, is boring a horizontal shaft under the spine of the ridge.

As they move forward, Uziel and his team laboriously dig out earth from

the top of each newly exposed section to the bottom, retrieving pottery, coins and other artifacts.

For Jews this is the City of David, the place where King David created the first Israelite capital. (Andrew Lawler, *National Geographic*)

MOODY'S AFFIRMS ISRAEL'S CREDIT RATING IN UPBEAT ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

International credit rating agency Moody's has reaffirmed Israel's A1 sovereign debt rating.

Moody's Vice President Evan Wohlmann said Israel "is one of only a handful of advanced countries that has a lower debt-to-GDP ratio now than before the global financial crisis."

"Israel's economic growth has outpaced most other advanced industrial countries over the past decade, driven by a strongly competitive high-tech export sector and a diversified economic base that now includes energy exports." (*Globes*)

ISRAELI SINGERS FORM BRIDGE TO ARAB COUNTRIES

Israeli journalists attending the Regional Economic Conference in Bahrain in June were surprised to find local music stores selling CDs by Israeli artists such as Eyal Golan, Sarit Hadad and Moshe Peretz. Their music is described in Israel as Middle Eastern or Mediterranean, often accompanied by local instruments like the oud and the darbuka. Israeli Middle Eastern music has long been popular in Arab coun-

tries. Israel has a large population of Mizrahim, Jews from Arab lands, who immigrated in the 1950s and 1960s.

Our bond with our neighbors through music is natural because we are the Jews of the Middle East, with our own rich culture," said Yemen-born singer-songwriter Avihu Medina. "We never left the region, nor were we influenced by European culture. We have nothing to change about ourselves in order to integrate into the Middle East. We are an essential part of it." (Danny Zaken, *Al-Monitor*)

SIGD HOLIDAY BRINGS THOUSANDS TO JERUSALEM TO CELEBRATE

Thousands of people from the Ethiopian Jewish community and beyond traveled to the Armon Hanatziv Promenade facing the Old City of Jerusalem on Wednesday, November 27 to celebrate the Sigd holiday together with the community's elders. Sigd, whose roots are found in the biblical book of Nehemiah, is marked 50 days after Yom Kippur, and encompasses prayers for a return to the Land of Israel.

Chief Rabbi of the Ethiopian Jewish community in Israel Rabbi Reuven Wabshat said that after the mass immigration of Ethiopian Jews to Israel, the community decided to continue celebrating the holiday. Spiritual leader Kes Mentasnut Govze explained how in Ethiopia the Jewish community would travel to and ascend a mountain on Sigd to pray to God "that we would reach Jerusalem the next year." (Jeremy Sharon, *Jerusalem Post*)▲



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Ukrainian pogroms

By Jerrold L. Sobel, ZOA of SWFL President, November 27, 2019

In recent days, unless just returning from a far-off place, you cannot have missed the incessant media buzz about Ukraine. Did we send aid? Is the Ukrainian government corrupt? Was the aid held up for political reasons? Was there a quid pro quo? To people aware of the unspeakable atrocities committed by Ukrainians against Jews throughout that country's sordid history, the answer to these questions is a resounding, who cares! In their glorious but often tragic history, there are few periods more abhorrent to the Jewish people than that known as the pogroms.

As background: "Pogrom" is a Russian word designating an attack, accompanied by destruction, looting of property, murder and rape, perpetrated by one section of the population against another. As such, during three distinct periods of time – 1880s, 1903-1906 and 1917-1922 – Jews suffered increasingly severe depredations throughout Poland, Russia and particularly Ukraine. As we prepare to close out 2019, and for the sake of brevity, let's examine the pogroms in Ukraine just 100 years ago in the year 1919.

To say that turmoil reigned in this region during this time would be a huge understatement. Undercurrents of the Russian Revolution spread far and wide. Chaos between competing armies known as Red (Bolsheviks) and White (opposed to the Communists) were joined by a myriad of irregular armies and local peasants that merged with and, in more cases than not, switched sides dependent more on booty and personal gain than political reasons. Commanders (atamans) of these gangs occasion-

ally gained control of whole regions.

As stated in the Jewish Virtual Library, "The Jews in the villages, townlets and cities were constantly terrorized by these groups, who extorted money and supplies from them." Even when placated with plunder, these helpless victims were subjected to humiliations and in many cases murder, without recourse.

As one group would retreat from a town following a period of looting, rape, robbery and mayhem, a competing one would soon enter, prey upon the defenseless Jews and repeat the process. In terms of violence and abject brutality against the Jews of Ukraine, the year 1919 alone surpassed the aforementioned eras combined.

Sharman Kadish, in her book *Bolsheviks and British Jews: The Anglo-Jewish Community, Britain, and the Russian Revolution*, chronicled that 1,326 pogroms took place in and around the Kiev area of Ukraine alone that year, of which it's estimated between 30,000 and 70,000 Jews were massacred. Thousands of women were raped. Hundreds of small towns known to Jews as shtetls were pillaged, and Jewish neighborhoods were left in ruins.

Although 1919 was the apex of the carnage, scattered pogroms decreasingly occurred until the end of 1922. Most assuredly, hatred of Jews during subsequent years was never far below the surface and reawakened in 1941, during a set of pogroms known as the Lviv pogroms. Jews were forced to dig their own graves and once again massacred like sheep in a slaughterhouse by Ukrainian nationalists and local crowds more than willing to assist their

German masters throughout the Second World War. On the eve of the German invasion in 1941, 2.7 million Jews lived in Ukraine. By war's end, less than 100,000 survived.

There is so much history of Ukrainian anti-Semitism throughout the 20th century, and long before, a brief essay such as this doesn't even scratch the surface of what is known about the suffering of the Jewish people in this country.

For those interested in a greater understanding, I recommend the following readings:

- *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919* by Elias Heifetz
- *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* by Klier/Lamboza
- David B. Green, February 15, 2016, *Haaretz*, "1919: Cossacks Start Pogrom in Ukraine, Killing Jews but Sparing Property" ▲

Connecting the dots

Once upon a time, a visiting rabbi comes to a congregation. On the way back from the airport, her host asks, "What are you planning to speak about this evening at services?" The rabbi replies she will be delivering a sermon about the importance of keeping kosher. Her host then explains they live a good distance away from a kosher butcher, and thus, very few people keep kosher. "Any other topics you would like to address," the host asked. "Well, I was planning to speak about the importance of keeping the Sabbath," she replied. Once again, her host demurred saying many people here have businesses that, as you can well understand, need to be open on the Sabbath. "So what do you suggest I speak about," asked the rabbi. "What else? Judaism, of course!"

This may be an old joke, but it contains a relevant idea. Judaism, as a religious system, is based on the practice of the "mitzvot" (commandments). Yet, many of us only know a few and practice less. Why this is the case has been fascinating me for a while now. The first problem I blame on Immanuel Kant and the Enlightenment. Kant lived from 1724-1804, so I doubt he will be disturbed by this. He was a great philosopher during the Enlightenment. One of the quotes attributed to him was: "Nothing is Divine but what

is agreeable to reason." But if reason is the highest value, where does religion come in? If reason is the highest value, how do Abraham and Sarah come to have a child at the ages of 100 and 90? As much as we Jews lift up argument and debate, our highest value cannot be reason, but must be faith in G-d. If we follow Kant's thinking, everything has to be rational. Centuries of poetry and faith, chicken soup recipes and mysticism would all have to be discarded.

And, to some degree, this is what happened. Under the influence of the Enlightenment, Jews wanted to be accepted by their Christian neighbors, to appear more like them and to appear more rational. In a very subtle way, we heard that faith was superior to practice. Like water falling on a rock, drop after drop, the water will eventually wear the rock down. Throw in an occasional (or frequent) persecution and the message reverberated clearly and painfully.

Yes, faith is important, very much so. But so are the "mitzvot." Just as the surgeon has their scalpel and the professor their laptop, we have the commandments. So, the next time you light candles on Erev Shabbat or send a check to the "zedakah" of your choice, give a thought to the beauty, power and mystery of the "mitzvot." ▲

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



■ Rabbi Michael J. Schorin



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You can go home again

Last fall our caring and erudite President Barry Fulmer, at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands, sent a wonderful reminder to the congregation regarding our service for the Shabbat during Sukkot, which was based on the book of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes (like Esther for Purim) is the Megillah read in synagogues during Sukkot.

In his letter, Barry included a quotation from Thomas Wolfe's posthumously published novel, *You Can't Go Home Again*.

I had never read this American classic, and since I was soon to "go home again" to the first congregation I served, Temple Isaiah in Columbia, Maryland, I decided I should.

I served the congregation for 13 years as its first full-time rabbi. Since they were beginning to celebrate their 50th year, they invited my wife Vickie and me back for a weekend to begin a yearlong series of celebratory events.

I didn't realize how long the book was, but in the beginning of chapter 6, I found the perfect quotation to use as the introduction for my Friday night sermon. When after traveling the world, Wolfe's protagonist George Webber returned to his boyhood home of Libya Falls (Asheville in disguise), North Carolina, for the funeral of the aunt who raised him, he felt as I felt when I returned to speak at Temple Isaiah after 33 years: "Something far, near strange and so familiar, and it seemed to him as though he had never left ... and all that had passed in the

years was like a dream."

When the invitation first came to Vickie and me well over a year ago, I was delighted to accept, but I wondered, "Who will remember us? Who will care and who will come?"

To our delight, the service was packed, and many of those in attendance were students from years ago with whom I had studied for Bar or Bat Mitzvah and Confirmation. Some had traveled from as far Rochester (New York), Boston, New York City and North Carolina to be there. It was a joy to see them and have some share the lessons from their B'nai Mitzvah portions as they fit into my teaching session on Shabbat morning.

Then on Saturday evening, the present and past presidents of the synagogue hosted Vickie and me for dinner in a private room of a lovely restaurant. After the meal, the presidents took turns sharing nice memories they had of us.

With one exception, they did not speak about memorable sermons or other "public acts" that stood out in their minds. Rather, they spoke of specific things I did for them personally that made a lasting impact on their lives. To be honest, I could barely recall some of the instances they recounted.

But the lesson of the evening is one I shall always remember.

As May Angelou once wrote: "People will forget what you say ... but they will never forget how you made them feel."

I am glad we could "go home again" to re-learn that vital lesson.▲
Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs serves at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel Island.



■ Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

"Invasive species"

I do not believe in, nor do I care for, the term and the idea of an "invasive species."

According to ecologists, an "invasive species" is any animal or plant relatively newly-arrived to an environment. Very often, labeling a living thing an "invasive species" is both a justification and prelude to its attempted eradication or extermination. According to these would-be conservationists, those "outsiders" disturb the existing ecological balance and pose a threat to the status quo and must be destroyed.

Those who know me well know that I have what Albert Schweitzer called "a reverence for life." Besides not eating animals, I do not allow anything in my home to be killed. Anything! I do not weed the garden since weeds are simply what God wants in our gardens. When an unplanned perennial plant or even tree sprouts up on my grounds, I do not permit the gardener to kill it. I dig it up, pot it and grow it as a lovely addition to our courtyard or as a future gift. I harvest the tomatoes, cucumbers, onion tops and herbs, but I try not to uproot the living plants themselves, even when they are finished producing. I let them live out their lives in full as I hope to live out mine. Fair is fair, right?

Look at the big picture. Everything comes from somewhere. The palmettos, longleaf pines, everglade palms, strangler figs and other plants were not here forever, since most of our region is naturally underwater except during Ice Ages (we are coming out of one now). When the waters receded, those plants

simply got here first. The same can be said for the animals that are called "native." They just got here first.

Why should coming later as an immigrant plant or animal be a crime punishable by death? Why can't we just let life take its course and establish a new dynamic equilibrium? What gives us humans the right to decide what living things deserve extermination?

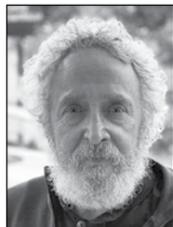
Of course, I could add some force to my argument from our Jewish moral tradition of *bal tashheet*, where we are commanded to not to wantonly destroy any living thing. And so we find in the medieval Sefer Hahinukh: "For this is the way of the pious...they who love peace are happy when they can do good to others and bring them close to Torah and will not cause even a grain of mustard to be lost from the world..." And, after all, does not our creation story tell that God made the human to care and cultivate God's garden, not to take God's place in matters of life and death.

But I shouldn't have to argue my point from Jewish sources since we can figure this out all by ourselves. After all, time and again, we Jews have been labeled an "invasive species" targeted for uprooting and even eradication!

Life is the fingerprints of God in our universe. As Coleridge so perfectly put it at the end of his epic poetic allegory about the Jew, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner:"

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.▲

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



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

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The Shabbat candles

Lighting Shabbat candles holds immense power. The power to make time stop charging ahead with its endless tasks and worries. The power to focus on the self, on what our soul truly needs. The power to connect with generations past and future. The power to give us strength to get through the week.

According to the midrash commentary, Bereshit Rabbah, the tradition of women lighting Shabbat candles begins with Sarah. It explains that three miraculous things occurred in the tent during Sarah's lifetime and they resumed when Isaac, her son, married Rebecca: the Shabbat candles remained lit from one Friday to the next, the dough was blessed and always sufficed for the family and guests, and a Divine cloud hovered over the entrance.

This beautiful image of Shabbat candles remaining lit throughout the week matches our positive associations with the mitzvah of lighting Shabbat candles. We imagine Sarah preparing a Shabbat meal of roast chicken and challah, we feel the quiet Shabbat serenity with the divine cloud hovering over the home, we see Sarah circling her hands and covering her eyes, transforming ordinary time into the sacred. According to our tradition, Sarah, the original matriarch, passes these traditions to her daughter-in-law, Rebecca, and on through the generations.

Alas, we must also confront some less pleasant explanations for the tradition of women lighting Shabbat candles. Going back to the story of Adam and Eve, Rabbi Joshua in Bereshit Rabbah, views the candle lighting as

a punishment, saying: because woman extinguished the soul of the first man, she was assigned the precept of kindling Sabbath lights. The Mishnah warns that on account of transgressing the mitzvah of Shabbat candles, women die in childbirth. When death creeps into our understanding of Shabbat candles, even the story of Sarah is seen in a new light. It is only once Sarah dies that the miracles continue for the next generation.

Light and darkness. Life and death. While the ancient rabbis might have focused on the aspects of darkness and death, they do not have the final word on candle lighting. Wendy Zierler, a professor at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, writes about a type of Jewish literature called t'khi'nis, a body of prayers composed by or for women, from the 17th - 19th century. In one such prayer, Sarah bas Tovim, a Ukrainian rabbi's daughter, turns the rabbinic teachings upside down. Reclaiming the story of Adam and Eve and imagining Shabbat as a woman, she writes, "May the merit of the beloved Shabbas lights protect me, just as the beloved Shabbas protected adam harishon, the first man, Adam."

Just like the ancient rabbis and the authors of t'khi'nis approach the Shabbat candles in different ways, we have a choice in how to view the world: a place of threat and punishment or a place of hope and love. When Isaac brought Rebecca into his mother's tent, he found love and comfort. Together, they discovered Sarah's miracles of the divine presence, abundant food and unending light. May we in our attitudes and actions merit these blessings and bring light into the world.▲

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



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

Looking out for each other

While a student at JTS, I attended morning minyan most days of the week.

Morning prayer is how I wanted to begin my day and, as a young man – I was in my 20s – I was still trying on a more observant lifestyle. (JTS made no requirements of its students, even its rabbinical students, that they attend daily minyan.) I was less enthusiastic about afternoon and evening minyan. I attended these very rarely. Later, as an assistant rabbi in Minneapolis, I was required to attend morning minyan two mornings per week. On a few occasions I attended on the mornings I was not assigned. So, when I moved to Austin, Texas, and found myself serving a congregation that had no minyan, I was disappointed – but not very much.

Until it came time for me to say Kaddish. The year was 1988, and no congregation in Austin had a daily minyan. My entire congregation had shared in my loss and, almost naturally, formed a twice-daily minyan so I could say Kaddish. It started with shivah and just continued: five mornings and four nights per week. I attended every service for 11 months and then I, and the congregation, just kept going. I continued to go because the practice of daily minyan had grown on me, and more, I was deeply grateful that the congregation developed and maintained this minyan for me. It was now my place to keep it going. That congregation has morning and evening minyan to this day.

The congregation I served in Tampa had a long-running morning minyan when I arrived. While the congregation only "required" me to attend on Monday and Thursday mornings, out

of gratitude for what the Austin community did for me, I went every day.

During the difficult periods of my personal mourning, it was the daily minyan that gave me structure and comfort. This is what I was supposed to be doing. This was fulfilling my responsibility to my loved one. It was also my way of hanging onto them for a little while longer. They were in my thoughts every morning and evening.

Once again, it is my turn to say Kaddish. And once again my congregation is forming a daily minyan to support me. Temple Judea has evening minyan, Monday through Thursday at 5:45 p.m. The minyan is not just for me. It is for anyone who is saying Kaddish. It is for anyone who wants 15 minutes of daily prayer in the evening.

Until 100 years ago (this is an approximate number), the Jewish community was full of small "societies" that supported Jews who needed help. One group gave money to poor young women for dowries to help them get married. There were Hebrew Free Loan societies that made interest-free loans to Jewish businesspeople. Our community, like many others, has a Chevra Kadisha, a group of men and women who prepare people for burial. These are just to name a few. They are ways the Jewish community looked out for each other. Now, daily minyan is another of these programs. We support people who are saying Kaddish for their loved one.

This past week, my congregation got a call from someone from out of town. He'll be in Southwest Florida the last week of the month. He's looking for a daily minyan. Gladly, we told him that we had one.

I hope our minyan continues past my time of saying Kaddish. It's a great service to the Jewish people.▲
Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.



■ Rabbi Marc Sack

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Change that which is bad to good, and the dark to light

In the last Torah portion of the book of Genesis, Vayechi, we witness a conversation between the aged patriarch Jacob and his son Joseph. Joseph brought his two sons to Jacob for his blessing. He placed Menashe, the firstborn, near Jacob's right hand, and

Efraim, the younger of the two, near Jacob's left hand. However, when Jacob blessed the youngsters, he crossed his hands over and placed his right hand on Efraim's head and his left on Menashe's head.

Joseph explained to Jacob, "It is not so, my father." Moving Jacob's hands, he continued, "for this is the firstborn."

"I know, my son, I know," was Jacob's reply. "Also he [Menashe] will become a people. He, too, will be great. But his younger brother will be greater than him."

According to our Sages, neither Jacob nor Joseph made a mistake. Rather, their priorities were different.

Menashe and Efraim symbolize two distinct aspects of a Jew's G-dly service. Joseph believed that the G-dly service represented by Menashe was more advantageous, whereas Jacob felt that Efraim's was higher.

Joseph named his oldest son Menashe, "For G-d has caused me to forget ("nashani") all of my toil and all my father's house." This name intimates Joseph's anguish over being distanced

from his father's home and his native lifestyle. His younger son, he called Efraim, "For G-d has caused me to be fruitful ("hifrani") in the land of my affliction." Here, Joseph thanks G-d for the benefits that he reaped specifically because he was living in exile.

When Joseph brought his sons for his father's blessing, his feelings of sorrow over being separated from his family ruled. The spiritual service this parallels is the desire to cleave to G-d, even in exile. Jacob, however, viewed the exile differently, represented by the name Efraim. He saw that there is an "advantage" of exile; in exile, one changes darkness into light. And the light which follows darkness is much brighter, much more noticeable.

The paths of Joseph and Jacob should both be manifested in our lives. We must realize that we are far away from our "father's house;" we are still in exile and the final Redemption has not yet come. Just as important, or possibly more important, is to realize that we can actually light up the darkness of exile. This comes about through studying Torah and observing the commandments.

When a Jew finds himself in a situation or surroundings which are uncomfortable, he must not only be troubled by it and think of the day when he can escape. Rather, he should work to his utmost ability to change that which is bad to good, the dark to light, for this is the entire purpose of being in exile.▲
Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

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Asarah BeTevet

This month we commemorate Asarah BeTevet, which falls on the tenth day of Tevet and is a minor fast day in Judaism. Around 2,500 years ago, Jerusalem was under siege by the armies of the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar. This began a series of events leading to the destruction of the Holy Temple and our exile from the Land of Israel. And so on this day we fast and mourn these tragic events while hopefully learning from them so as not to repeat past mistakes.

As Jews, we all know the feeling of being under siege throughout our history. Although we have returned to Eretz Yisrael after 1,900 years in exile, we are still under siege. When attacked, we have no choice but to fight, and when faced with a tragedy we mourn. But we also search for the deeper meaning behind our struggle, looking for anything positive that might be found within a negative experience. Coming under siege is a terrible experience that can bring pain and bloodshed, but beneath all that negativity is a unifying, liberating and empowering realization: We're all in this together! Despite our differing backgrounds and political views, we share a common fate and identity, a common goal and a common homeland. Being under siege reminds us of the truth that we are all one.

Israel is who we are, and we don't have a choice in eliminating it from our Jewish identity. Our history reminds us of how thousands of our people only dreamed of returning to Israel and how many struggled just to reach the homeland. We recall the devastating effect

on our people throughout history when we lost our homeland, and the great progress and strengthening we've experienced having since regained Eretz Yisrael.

We've seen what can happen to us by leaving our fate in the hands of others. Having a land we can truly call our own is not only an inspiration, but a safety net for Jews anywhere in the world. Although we live in the U.S.A. and not Israel, we must still recognize the importance of these ancient words: "Im Eshkachech Yerushalayim...If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."

Today, Israel is still under siege, surrounded by enemies, be they countries or terrorist groups funded by Iran or brutal butcherers like ISIS, Hamas or Hezbollah.

Connect with Israel, plan to visit and show your support, recognize that Israel is in your Jewish DNA. Defend Israel with your words or with your right hand if need be.

Let's all do what we can to meet the challenges that confront us today. Whether facing the "spiritual" siege of assimilation, or the "physical" siege of facing real and deadly enemies that wish our destruction, let's remember we're the future of the Jewish people. Israel is part of our Jewish soul, our Neshama. When Israel is under siege, we're all under siege. The struggle of the nation of Israel and the Jewish people is yours, mine and ours. May we never forget where we came from, who we are and where we're going together. This year, as we commemorate Asarah BeTevet, may we all be reminded that we are one voice, one heart, one song, and we are strong. Am Yisrael Chai.▲

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



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

The wonder of words

It is not how much we say but what we say that is important. What really matters, when it comes to speech, is quality not quantity. The fact is dramatized by a story in the Talmud that is thousands of years old, yet is as relevant as this morning's newspaper. It is the story of the great Rabbi Gamaliel and one of his wise servants.

Rabbi Gamaliel told the man, "Go to the market and bring me something good." The servant brought a tongue. The rabbi then said, "Go to the market and bring me something bad." Again the servant returned with a tongue. "A tongue, my master may be the source of either good or evil," was the explanation. "If it is good, there is

nothing better. If it is bad, there is nothing worse."

Words are powerful. They can breed hatred or spread healing. They can ignite a quarrel or inspire a cause. They can trigger wars or they can encourage peace. "Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24). Words are valuable currency and deserve to be weighed, measured and counted rather than squandered heedlessly.

Fittingly, the last words of the *amidah*, the Silent Devotion, reflect the hope that we will always find the right words: "May the words of my mouth and the mediation of my heart be acceptable to you, O God, my Rock and my Redeemer.▲"

Rabbi Solomon Agin serves at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte.



■ Rabbi Solomon Agin

Candle lighting times:



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January 10: 5:35
January 17: 5:40
January 24: 5:46
January 31: 5:51

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BBYO happenings

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

Fort Myers BBYO teens came together with teens from all over North Florida Region (NFR) for FallCon (Fall Convention) in Elmenton on November 15-17. FallCon included teen-led Jewish education and identity programming over the course of three days. We celebrated Shabbat, gathered around the bonfire for smores, learned about Jewish identity and culture globally, participated in AZAA and BBGG sports programming, and so much more. What truly made convention so unique is the diversity of teens represented throughout our region and their mutual passion for exploring what Judaism means to them.

With all this talk about convention, you might be thinking, when is the next convention and how can I participate in the fun? Well, lucky for you, NFR's next regional convention, MIT/AIT LTI (Member in Training/

Aleph in Training Leadership Training Institute) takes place the weekend of January 17-19. MIT/AIT LTI not only provides leadership training to all teens in attendance, it also specifically looks to welcome new members to the fold with designated programming to introduce them to BBYO. Reach out to me directly if you are interested in joining Fort Myers BBYO at convention.

On the horizon we have J-Serve, BBYO's international day of service, on Sunday, February 2. Naples and Fort Myers BBYO will take part in the Touchdown Run 5k. We will run to raise awareness for the Children's Cancer Network, NFR's stand up cause for 2019-20. Join us at 6:15 a.m. at North Collier Regional Park in Naples. You can register in advance by going to bit.ly/touchdownbbyo.

Fort Myers BBYO is in the process of preparing its Spring Term Calendar. To be added to our email list and receive updates about BBYO programming, email me at jesszimmerman@bbyo.org. I hope to hear from you and welcome you to Fort Myers BBYO.▲



Jessica Zimmerman



North Florida Region BBYO gathered for a group photo at FallCon



BBGs (B'Nai Brith Girls) of NFR at FallCon

TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS Fort Myers

Temple Judea Religious School

Tab Scribner,

Director of Congregational Learning

December proved to be an exciting time for us at Temple Judea Religious School. The students were firmly in holiday mode, which made for great timing for our special programs. It seems that as soon as the calendar page turned, the excitement began.

On Sunday, December 8, our elder students and families participated in a tallit and tefillin presentation, and completed their custom tallitot by learning how to tie tzitzit. They also learned the brachot for both tallit and tefillin.

On December 13, we held our Tot Shabbat program and our first religious school Shabbat program of the year (a long day for me). The toddlers enjoyed a story by Rabbi Marc Sack and col-

ored foldable dreidels. Later, our religious school students led the service alongside Rabbi

Sack. It was great to see the children showcase their synagogue skills.

On Sunday, December 15 we held our Chanukah festivities in a combined program with the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties and PJ Library. It was an exciting event filled with stories, games and Chanukah crafts. The children had a lot of fun with the dreidel scavenger hunt, and made menorahs from clay, but were most excited about cookie decorating and cooking latkes.

In January we will celebrate a pair of Bar Mitzvahs, and participating in a service day at the Jewish Federation.

If you are interested in any of our religious school or toddler programming, or would like to volunteer for our programs, please contact me at 239.433.0201 or tjswfledu@gmail.com.

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

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

Eryka Aptaker
November was quite a busy month for our Post. For the last several years, we have been participating in an event known as Price & Patriotism, which combines Patriotism and the Arts for students in elementary school all the way up to seniors in high school. The program was held at the Barbara B. Mann and is a non-profit organization which has been around for 13 years.

Each year, they create a Veterans Day program born of an advocacy for the arts and love of country. They display "pride" in our students' artistic talents on a patriotic theme with the presence of our veterans who have afforded students the opportunity to express themselves in a free country. This year's theme was the end of WWI, also known as the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. It was amazing to be a part of this event and to see and talk with these talented young people. We enjoyed performances by a high school cappella choir as well as an orchestra and marching band. What a wonderful treat! There were different categories for each grade level, and the top three competing students in each category were presented with awards. On stage, there was a teacher, a JROTC cadet, a presenter and, of course, the student.

Our next activities took us to Veterans Day. On the evening of November 8, we attended a service at Temple Beth El in honor and acknowledgement of Veterans Day. Our Commander, Harvey Charter, was asked to speak. We had a nice turnout in representation of our Post and were present for a Bar Mitzvah which took place that evening. On November 10, we had participation in the Veterans Day Parade, which took

place in Downtown Fort Myers. In the lead car was Commander Harvey Charter with our Post mascot Sgt. Bogie. (I still don't know who was driving!) Along with our Commander were Sr Vice Commander Bob Ruberto and new members Andy & Maxine Kaufman. Andy is a Vietnam veteran. Following in the second car was our very own Bert Kurland, a WWII veteran and an outstanding individual.

We are very blessed to have WWII veterans in our group. At our past meeting, we had four of our WWII veterans in attendance: Bert Kurland, Herb Marks, Hy Tuchman and Sid Harris. It's wonderful to see the comradery among them.

Our next "traditional" meeting will be on Sunday, January 26. Our meetings are held monthly, on a Sunday, at the Jewish Federation building at 9:30 a.m. Come join this wonderful and committed group as we engage in bagels and cream cheese and great conversation. To become a member, or if you have questions, contact Commander Harvey Charter at hbcharter@aol.com or 239.246.3151.

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



Bert Kurland at the Veterans Day Parade



At the Veterans Day Parade: Andy & Maxine Kaufman, Ed Drucker, Commander Harvey Charter and Sgt. Bogie, Sr. Vice Commander Bob Ruberto and Bert Kurland



Pride & Patriotism presenters from Post 400 with students and their teachers



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HADASSAH Collier/Lee Chapter (732) 539-4011

Remembrance and butterflies

Diane Schwartz

Remembrance is about Pavel Friedmann, author of the poem "The Butterfly" written while imprisoned in Theresienstadt and subsequently transferred to Auschwitz where he perished. It is about the millions of people – children, parents, grandparents and extended families and dear friends – who lost their lives in the Holocaust.

While we move forward in our lives, we can get so focused in the now that we ignore or forget important events or milestones in the past. Sometimes we think that large-stage world events mean nothing to us personally.

There is a huge "but" in all of that. The personal aspects of identity are the subjects of many books and studies, not just for Jews, but for all people who identify as a part of a particular group.

As Jews, it is a rich story of determination and faith which, over time, has led us as a people to create a very meaningful story overall as well as individually.

We also know that the history of our people includes acts of prejudice, persecution and genocide. However, we have been recognized around the world for wonderful achievements as well.

So, how do we put history in a place where it can be revered, admired and built upon so we don't drown in the pain and sorrow of the evil that one human being or group can do to another?

The answer for many is to move forward but to never forget what evil has lived in our world. We need to live in the present, plan for the future and also save a place in our hearts and minds for remembrance.

Hadassah, founded in 1912, before there was an Israel, evolving over these 107 years means building vital medical and social programs which supported and support the development of the State of Israel. In the current times, it also means developing meaningful activities

and programs here in our American communities through local chapters.

It means educating ourselves, our children and grandchildren of the importance of having a sense of history and the deep feeling of what it means to be Jewish, in all its iterations, here in America.

Education is a key to remembrance. Through many wonderful Jewish organizations, including Hadassah, and houses of worship, our Jewish story is told, valued and, hopefully, finds a place in our hearts.

Hadassah believes in remembering and elevating the history of the Jewish people. To that end, Hadassah has joined in support with the Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance project dedicated to promoting Holocaust education via a year-long commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps.

Why do we and should we care about this? In a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise and white nationalists boldly march and rally in our cities, when Jews are targeted and massacred in our houses of worship, we must remember and work to ensure Never Again!

Hadassah's support of Holocaust education also includes the endorsement and active outreach to our congressional representatives and senators to secure endorsement and passage of the bipartisan bill, The Never Again Education Act (H.R. 943 & S. 2085), which would fund Holocaust and anti-hate education grants to support educational institutions offering classes, resources, teacher training and student field trips. Add your voice to this effort and urge your representatives and senators to support these bills.

Those of us in Hadassah, while focused on building and growing our programs in America and Israel, also vow to Never Forget!

For more information about Hadassah, contact me at 732.539.4011 or dianepschwartz@gmail.com.

Hadassah supports Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance

The Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah, building on its long support and advocacy on behalf of Holocaust education, proudly supports the Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance project dedicated to promoting Holocaust education via a year-long commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII and the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps.

It is vital that all of us in the Jewish community follow Elie Wiesel's sage advice. He urged that only in remember-

ing what happened to us, can the world assure that it will not happen to others."

In the photo below: Presented at a recent meeting is a mixed medium painting of butterflies created by artist Wendi Israelite for Hadassah's gift to the project. Accepting Hadassah's gift, which will be on public display in January at the Collier Library, are Ida Margolis, Chair of GenShoah SWFL and Collier County Representative for the Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance Project; Diane Schwartz, President of Collier/Lee Hadassah; and artist Wendy Israelite.



Save the Date:

- ▶ Thursday, January 16: Hadassah Presents... A Book Reading: *We Are Going to be Lucky: A World War II Love Story in Letters* – contact Debbie Kaprove at dkaprove@hotmail.com or 860.558.3331, or Dale Hackerman at dhackerman@comcast.net or 609.828.3766
- ▶ Thursday, January 23: Installation of Officers and Fashion Show by Rebecca's – contact Elyse Morande at amorande@aol.com or 239.498.0623
- ▶ Monday, February 3: Annual Mahjong, Card & Game Day – for reservations, contact Carol Weisberg at carolw@tetragonia.com
- ▶ Tuesday, February 27: Hadassah Presents...ART TALK/Marc Chagall with Joan Jacobs – contact Debbie Kaprove at dkaprove@hotmail.com or 860.558.3331, or Dale Hackerman at dhackerman@comcast.net or 609.828.3766
- ▶ Monday, March 16: Spring Luncheon featuring That's Entertainment with vocalist Carolann Sanita – contact Elyse Morande at amorande@aol.com or 239.498.0623

GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 963-9347

Community programs commemorate 75th anniversary of liberation of Auschwitz

Ida Margolis

January 27 is designated by the United Nations General Assembly as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On the afternoon of January 27, 1945, Allied troops entered Auschwitz concentration camp, liberating the 7,500 prisoners still living, discovering the corpses of 600 more and the ashes of another 1.1 million. Since 2005, the UN has held commemoration ceremonies to mark the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and to honor the memory of the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims of Nazism.

This day is also designated as a date to promote Holocaust education throughout the world. The United Nations Department of Global Communications has issued the following statement: "2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the ending of the Second World War, and the ending of the Holocaust. 2020 also marks the establishment of the United Nations, formed in response to atrocity crimes of the Holocaust and the Second World War, with the aim of building a world that is just and peaceful. Acknowledging the milestone year, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme has chosen as the

theme for Holocaust education and remembrance in 2020, '75 years after Auschwitz - Holocaust Education and Remembrance for Global Justice.' The theme reflects the continued importance, 75 years after the Holocaust, of collective action against anti-Semitism and other forms of bias to ensure respect for the dignity and human rights of all people everywhere."

Because of this special anniversary, The Butterflies of Hope and Remembrance project is presenting programs throughout Southwest Florida.



Butterflies made by 8th grade students who read the poem "The Butterfly" by Pavel Friedmann

This year-long initiative is presenting events and educational programs to commemorate the 75th anniversaries of the end of WWII and the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps, and will promote human rights and Holocaust education. The name of the project was

inspired by a poem titled "The Butterfly," written in 1942 by a young man, Pavel Friedman, who was imprisoned in Theresienstadt concentration camp and perished in Auschwitz in 1944.

Throughout January, South Regional Library (8065 Lely Cultural Pkwy., Naples) will host an art exhibit of butterflies created by artists, community members and students. On Friday, January 10 at 2:00 p.m., the library will screen the award-winning documentary, *Not the Last Butterfly*, a remarkable story about hope, remembrance and the healing power of art. On Wednesday, January 15 at 2:00 p.m., the library will



host a discussion of Alyson Richman's historical novel *The Lost Wife*. RSVP at CollierLibrary.org/events.

Because January 27 is International Holocaust Remembrance Day, remembrances will take place throughout that weekend. During most Shabbat ser-

VICES that weekend, there will be some mention of this special anniversary. On Sunday, January 26 at 2:00 p.m., a major program will be presented, which includes a film, a concert and a special guest. There will be a screening of *The Boys of Terezin*, which shows how five Holocaust survivors, a boy choir and a chamber music group unite to tell the story of the secret concentration camp journal. *The Boys of Terezin* was produced by Music of Remembrance and premiered in May 2011 at the Frye Art Museum in Seattle. After the film, musicians will present a performance of selections featured in the film, and a very special guest is scheduled to appear. This program takes place at Temple Shalom, 4630 Pine Ridge Road, Naples.

An additional remarkable film will be presented on Holocaust Remembrance Day, Monday, January 27 at 2:00 p.m. at the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center, 975 Imperial Golf Blvd., Naples. The film, *Defiant Requiem*, which will be of great interest to both history and music buffs, chronicles how six decades after the brilliant conductor Rafael Schacter taught Verdi's Requiem to prisoners in Theresienstadt concentration camp, a new choir returned to the same spot to highlight this story of the courage and resilience of the human spirit. RSVP for these films at www.HMCEC.org.

For more information about these events and about the local second-generation group, email genshoahswfl@gmail.com.

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 566-1771

Jewish history as a response to divisiveness and abuse

Marina Berkovich

Golda Meir, my favorite historical and political figure (and not only because she and I were born in the same anti-Semitic city), famously said, "One cannot and must not try to erase the past merely because it does not fit the present."

But who really determines what fits the present and who leads Jews in that determination? Separated by differences and traditions of the Diaspora, gradations of religious and political affiliations and allegiances, at times it seems that the only unifying factor as far as *we* are concerned is *their*, and by *they*, I mean anti-Semites and their hatred toward us. *They* do not separate. To *them* we are all one.

Throughout history, *they* varied

and, most probably, *we* reacted responsively to *their* persecution of *us*, frequently making mistakes that in hindsight could have been averted, had we had foresight. I personally believe that the response to anti-Semitism is rooted in the understanding of history, and the best armor against it is indivisible unity. Why do I believe that? I have been taking lessons from Golda and other female Jewish leaders over the last four decades. That is all the years I have been permitted to be who I am. Before then, the history of our people and my particular birthplace tabooed me from such lessons. What one draws from lessons of history is always one's business. The conclusions will depend on personal beliefs and the desire to engage, absorb, grow and impart. Each of us can be flooded with history and ignore its messages and lessons. It is our choice.

Personally, I'd rather learn from the history of others than volunteer

my body for the next pyre. That is the lesson I strive to impart the most. But people with happier birthplaces are more optimistic.

January is Florida Jewish History Month. Marcia Jo Zerivitz is a Jewish Historian extraordinaire. She will be coming to Naples as a guest of the Jewish Historical Society of SWFL to speak about her most favorite topic – Florida Jewish History – on Monday, January 6 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Naples Daily News Community Room. Why is it important that you attend? Wherever you hail from, whatever your story, whether you want it or not, you are a Jewish Floridian. Even if you just winter here. Even if you come from Canada, Germany or Russia. Make a dedicated effort to learn the colorful and complex history of Florida's Jews from the founding executive director of the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU. It is a rare opportunity and we are pleased to be joined by the Jewish Federation of Greater Naples in bringing Marcia Jo Zerivitz to commemorate Florida Jewish History Month with us. It was Ms. Zerivitz's work that propelled the State of Florida to

this designation. She is the exact kind of Jewish female leader from whom I take lessons.

Tickets are \$10 for JHSSWF members, and \$15 for non-members. They must be purchased in advance at JHSSWF.org or Eventbrite.com, or by mailing a check, payable to JHSSWF (must be received by December 31). Phone in to pay by credit card. See contact information below.

To pre-order tickets to JHSSWF's 10th Anniversary Celebration with Naples Mayor Bill Barnett, email office@jhsswf.org.

Membership in The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida is open to anyone who is interested in our mission of local Jewish history preservation.

The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida
8805 Tamiami Trail North,
Suite # 255, Naples FL 34108
833.547.7935 (833.JHS.SWFL)
www.jhsswf.org ~ office@jhsswf.org
Virtual Museum of SWFL
Jewish History http://
jewishhistorysouthwestflorida.org/

HAZAK 55+ CHAPTER at Temple Judea

(239) 433-0201

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

Join HAZAK on Thursday, Janu-

ary 16 at 6:15 p.m. for dinner at the Roadhouse Café. Enjoy the jazz music and wonderful food. RSVPs are a must by

Thursday, January 9 to tjhazak@gmail.com.

HAZAK Shabbat was moved to February. HAZAK will have a guest speaker and sponsor the Kiddush. Watch for further information.

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

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



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

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

A Happy and Healthy 2020 to all from everyone at Temple Judea!

Did you know that Temple Judea now has an evening minyan, Mondays through Thursdays at 5:45 p.m.? If you are saying Kaddish, observing a Yahrzeit or just want to support those who are, you are invited to attend. The service only lasts about 15 minutes and is open to the community. The weekly Monday morning minyan at 9:00 a.m. continues as usual.

Did you know that Temple Judea is participating in a mitzvah project to provide feminine hygiene products to women who often can't afford them? The products are given out by food pantries, including the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties food pantry. We encourage TJ members to bring products to donate each

time they come to the synagogue for a service or event.

February 23 is the date of Temple Judea's annual fundraiser and celebration honoring its members. This year's honorees are Dr. and Mrs. Sandy Cohen. The festivities will again be held at the Heitman house in downtown Fort Myers. The committee chaired by Jennifer Manekin is hard at work planning what promises to be another fun and festive event.

Chaverot members are looking forward to Sisterhood Shabbat scheduled for Saturday morning, January 25. While women participate all year in Shabbat and holiday services, there is always something special about that morning. Following the service, Chaverot will sponsor the Kiddush luncheon.

Along with its new monthly "Lattes and Learning" program, Chaverot has also scheduled a night at the ballpark on Sunday, April 19. Chaverot has reserved a suite at Hammond Stadium

at the CenturyLink Sports Complex to watch the newly named Fort Myers Mighty Mussels (formerly the Fort Myers Miracle) play the Florida Fire Frogs. More information about purchasing tickets will be available in the next issue.

Religious School is busy with a variety of activities. On January 19, students will have a Religious School Service Day at the Jewish Federation food pantry. On February 7, they will lead Shabbat evening services, and on February 19 they will enjoy a Hebrew Bingo Night.

Come to Tot Shabbat on Friday, January 10 at 5:00 p.m. There is always a fun activity included with the musical and entertaining services designed for toddlers and preschoolers. Following Tot Shabbat, Religious School students will lead regular Friday evening services.

A new series of Adult Education classes will begin after the first of the year. Call the synagogue office for information about the new classes. There is no cost to attend.

PLEASE NOTE: Rabbi Sack's monthly lunchtime Torah study in January will be on January 9, rather than its usually scheduled first Thursday of the month. The class is held at the offices of Myers & Brettholz. There is no cost to attend and all levels of Jewish background are welcome.

Our monthly service of meals at the Salvation Army's Meals with Compassion continues. Meals are served on Monday evenings and volunteers are needed for January and February. If you can help, please contact Linda Idelson at lindaaidelson@gmail.com.

Regular scheduled events:

- Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m., preceded each week with a wine and cheese reception starting at 6:15 p.m.
- Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. followed by a Kiddush luncheon
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m.
- Evening minyan every Monday through Thursday at 5:45 p.m.

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

Successful activities in the month of December included a wonderful talk by Rabbi A. James Rudin on Friday evening, December 13 on how Christmas is connected to Hanukkah. This was followed by our outside Hanukkah celebration on Sunday, December 22 with the outdoor lighting of a giant menorah and an awesome concert by a Klezmer band featuring Cantor Riselle Baines, sponsored by the Shelly & Marc Friedman Memorial Fund.

We now enter the month of January. First and foremost, the concert with Cantor Azi Schwartz from the New York City Park Avenue Synagogue on Sunday, January 12 is completely sold out. Through the generosity of the Sylvia and Lesleigh Hershkowitz Memorial Fund, bus transportation is being provided free

of charge from Temple Shalom to the Sarasota Opera House and returning to the temple.

The Jewish Film Festival for the residents of Greater Charlotte County will begin on Tuesday, January 14 at 3:00 p.m. The chairperson for the film festival is Odette Port. It is sponsored by the Sylvia and Lesleigh Hershkowitz Memorial fund.

We have our lunch and learn program on Tuesday, January 28.

On Shabbat morning January 18, Jared Bagan, son of Dr. & Mrs. Matthew Bagan, will be called to the Torah in honor of his becoming a Bar Mitzvah.

Yiddish 101, led by Alvin Lubiner, will begin in January.

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
Preschool director: Jesyca Virnig
President: Governance Committee
Email: governancetbe@gmail.com
Phone: 239-433-0018 • Fax: 239-433-3235
Web site: www.templebethel.com
Shabbat services: 7:30 p.m. Friday; Torah study 9:00 a.m. Saturday; B'nai Mitzvah 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: Harvey Wolfson
Phone: 239-772-4555 • Fax: 239-772-4625
E-mail: office@templebethshalomcc.org
Web site: www.templebethshalomcc.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Religious School: Thursday 4:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Torah study with Rabbi Buchen: Shabbat 10:30 a.m.
Organizations: Brotherhood, Sisterhood, Family Service (1st Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m.)

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

REFORM
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Rabbi Stephen L. Fuchs
President: Barry Fulmer
Phone: 732-780-2016
Email: batyamsanibel@gmail.com
Cantor: Murray Simon
Web site: www.batyam.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday (Oct-Apr)
7:00 p.m. Friday (May-Sept)
Adult Education:
Saturday, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. (Nov-Apr)
Jewish Current Events: Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. (Nov-Apr)
Write: P.O. Box 84, Sanibel, FL 33957
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

TEMPLE SHALOM CHARLOTTE HARBOR AND THE GULF ISLANDS

REFORM
23190 Utica Ave., P.O. Box 494675
Port Charlotte, FL 33949-4675
Rabbi Solomon Agin
President: Judith Migdol
Phone: 941-625-2116
E-mail: shalom06@netzero.com
Web site: templeshalomfl.com
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Religious school: Sunday 10 a.m.
Beginning Hebrew: Tuesday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.
Advanced Hebrew: Thursday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.
Organizations: Sisterhood
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

SYNAGOGUES & ORGANIZATIONS

IN LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE

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

TEMPLE JUDEA

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

SHALOM LIFE CENTER TRANS DENOMINATIONAL

7470 Hickory Drive Fort Myers, FL 33967
Rabbi Lawrence Dermer
Phone: 239-218-3433
E-mail: info@shalomlifecenter.org
Web site: www.shalomlifecenter.org
Shabbat Evening Services 7:30 p.m. (Oct-Apr)
7:00 p.m. (May-Sept)
Saturday Torah & Kabbalah Study 10:00 a.m.

CHABAD OF BONITA SPRINGS/ ESTERO

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

CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

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

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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

CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF CAPE CORAL

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

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- Shalom Life Center
- Lawrence Dermer, Spiritual Leader - 218-3433
- AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee): Jacki Waksman - 954-653-9053
- AJC (American Jewish Committee): Brian Lipton - 941-365-4955
- Anti-Defamation League: 561-988-2900
- B'Nai B'rith International: 941-302-4500
- Chevra Kadisha: Gene Sipe - 239-841-4615
- Generations of the Shoah SWFL: 963-9347
- Hadassah - Collier/Lee Chapter: Diane Schwartz - 732-539-4011
- Hadassah - Sharon Chapter (Charlotte County): Odette Port - 941-505-1409
- Hazak 55+ Chapter: Joyce Rosinger - 239-437-1566
- Israel Bonds: Regional Headquarters: 800-622-8017
- Jewish Community Services: 239-481-4449
- Jewish National Fund: Joshua Mellits, Director, Western Florida 941-462-1330 ext. 865
Memorial Tree Planting in Israel - 1-800-542-8733
- Jewish War Veterans: Post 400: Commander Harvey Charter - 239-246-3151
- Mikvah Bashka of Southwest Florida: Nechamie Minkowicz - 239-822-2784

**TEMPLE BETH SHALOM
Cape Coral**

(239) 772-4555

www.templebethshalomcc.org

All of us at Temple Beth Shalom wish all of you a very happy (secular) new year, filled with health, happiness and success. At the same time, we mourn the numerous members we lost last year, including Rabbi Devora Buchen's beloved husband (is there a male version of rebbitzin?).

2019 was a time of change for TBS. We revamped our religious school, added new activities, updated our announcements and are working on a new website. We made plans to bring our congregation and activities up to date and expand our horizons. We plan to be more involved in the greater Jewish community and in the Jewish Federation, as well as the broader community around us.

December was a mix of traditional Chanukah celebrations, latkes and Chinese food. We enjoyed new activities like our first-ever Jewish Art Show and Latin American themed dinner with typical food from Brazil, Argentina and other places, as well as Latin music from all over including the Caribbean.

A big thank you to all the members who stepped up to conduct services, make phone calls, visit sick members and other duties while Rabbi Buchen

was unable to do so. We hope to continue to assist Rabbi Buchen as she returns to us after a period of mourning. It is a tribute to both the rabbi and the congregation that so many people were willing and able to step up to the plate and help wherever necessary.

Going forward, we invite the community to join us on Thursday, January 16 when we host the Jewish Federation's Senior Lunch Bunch. The Lunch Bunch started at TBS several years ago and we are always pleased when it returns to us. Call the Federation office if you would like to come.

We also invite everyone to join us for our Honoree Gala on Sunday, January 19 at La Venezia Ballroom in Cape Coral. The honorees are Helene & Jorge Glocer and Elyse Smith. The honorees have not only been active in Temple Beth Shalom but in the Jewish Federation and the greater community. We would love to have you join us.

TBS is a very friendly, welcoming community. Please join us for any or all of our ongoing activities. Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat services start at 7:30 p.m. Torah study, when it resumes, is at 10:30 a.m. on Saturdays, Brown Bag lunches are every other Wednesday, Bowling every other Sunday. For more activities, call the TBS office at 239.772.4555. Hope to see you there.



Rabbi Devora Buchen celebrates a Havdalah Service before the Latin American themed dinner to raise funds for Temple Beth Shalom

**SHALOM LIFE CENTER
Fort Myers**

(239) 218-3433

www.shalomlifecenter.org

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

We wish everyone a very happy (secular) New Year. 2020 promises to be a great year for us all and we invite the entire community to join us on Saturday, January 18 at 6:00 p.m. for Havdalah & A Mitzvah & A Movie Night. Join us for a pizza party and a fun-filled evening of popcorn, soda and candy while we laugh and enjoy Mel Brooks' *History of the World, Part 1*. Before the movie, we'll make something together for the Golisano Children's Hospital - a mitzvah! The cost of \$5 includes pizza and snacks! RSVP to info@shalomlifecenter.org.

Join us for our third annual SLC FGCU Women's Basketball night on Monday, January 20 at the beautiful Alico Arena for a wonderful barbecue dinner, catered by Mission BBQ before the game. The cost is \$37 for dinner and the game ticket. RSVP to info@shalomlifecenter.org.

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

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

Every Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. SLC offers a delicious bagel & lox

breakfast followed by an interactive and participatory Torah and Kabbalah study led by Rabbi Lawrence Dermer with a focus on the relevance of our timeless traditions

and bringing the ancient wisdom of Torah and Kabbalah into our daily lives.

SLC also has a dynamic Women's Circle that meets the second Monday of the month for soup, salad and soul led by Rebbitzin Robin Dermer with an emphasis on women's spirituality and personal growth.

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

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

Our Exodus study group meets for monthly discussion exploring the themes and interpretation of Exodus chapter by chapter using the book *Exodus G-d, Slavery and Freedom* by Dennis Prager.

SLC also offers a Book Club, Mahjong, Canasta, Choir, religious learning and Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation as well as many other opportunities to enhance your Jewish life and learning, and further your involvement in community service while making friends in a warm and welcoming community.

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

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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.

**TEMPLE BETH EL
Fort Myers**

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

Temple Beth El Sisterhood sponsored a delightful trivia night recently. A professional DJ entertained five teams and challenged people while enlightening us with questions from music (name that tune), history, geography, sports and more. The Maccabees team proved to be the brainiest of all and walked away with the prize. It was such an entertaining and fun-filled evening that many attendees asked when the next one will be held. Watch this space for updates.

We are starting off the secular new year with beautiful music. Erev Shabbat services on Friday, January 3 will feature guest cantor Jamie Marx, who

will kick off our second annual Leslie Luzar Memorial Cantorial Series of guest cantors. "Back by popular demand" may be a cliché, but Cantor Marx really is back by popular demand. The series is free and open to the community.

Sylvia Simko will present "The History of the Jews of Argentina" on Wednesday, January 15 at 11:00 a.m. in the TBE library. Unlike our regular Jewish Hispanophone Group meetings, this presentation will be in English. For more information, please contact Rachele at luna@exis.net. This event is free and open to the community.

Always edifying, TBE's winter lecture series with Gerald Ziedenisberg is back. A historian, lecturer, author and winter resident, Gerry is returning to Temple Beth El to present his popular lecture series. The community is in-

vited to attend, free of charge, to learn about history through lectures, discussions and films. Mark your calendars for Monday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. from January 6 through March 9. Topics for this winter's series include:

- ◆ January 6 and 13: A two-part lecture about a Jewish family's journey through the 20th century. One group stays in Eastern Europe while another emigrates to Palestine to help found a country. The third goes to the U.S. and establishes two successful businesses.
- ◆ January 20: Guest speaker Thomas Eastwood discusses "Influential Speeches of WWII."
- ◆ January 27: The story of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and how it changed Israeli history forever.
- ◆ February 3: *Blessed is the Match*, a DVD about the life and death of Hannah Senesh, Israel's greatest heroine.
- ◆ February 10: The life story of Ehud Barak, Israel's most decorated soldier.
- ◆ February 17: The trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.
- ◆ February 24: The capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann.
- ◆ March 2: *In Search of Peace*, a

DVD about the story of Israel from 1948-1967.

- ◆ March 9: *Six Days in June, 1967*, a DVD about the war that redefined the Middle East.

Join us for Mitzvah Day, Sunday, January 26, our annual day of community service. On Mitzvah Day our entire congregation and our friends perform mitzvot and engage in tikkun olam. We'll start with a bagel breakfast, and then, driven by our shared Jewish values, we'll engage in projects for every age and interest. New this year will be a beach cleanup, CPR and AED class, creating welcome packages for families entering an emergency shelter, and more. We welcome your ideas and suggestions as we prepare projects to include everyone. We need your input now. Contact the Mitzvah Committee at tbemitzvahcommittee@gmail.com. Signup Genius will be your online tool for event registration and for donating resources. Email blasts will inform you when Signup Genius is ready for you to use. Be a part of building tikkun olam programs for social caring, social action and social justice to benefit our congregation, our Southwest Florida community, and to strengthen our bond with Israel.

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- preserving the record
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Women's Giving Circle

What is a Women's Giving Circle?

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

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

To join and for more information call Debbie Sanford

239.481.4449 x4 or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

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Call Debbie Sanford 481.4449 ext. 4 to add your name to the phone list. Each month we will call to confirm the mailing date and you can let us know if you are available to help label L'CHAYIM.

Time: 9:30 A.M.

**Thursday, January 23, 2020
Monday, February 24, 2020**

BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS
Sanibel
(732) 780-2016
www.batyam.org

The new year 2020 rings with a certain symmetry at least for our mathematicians. As expected, this new year promises to be busy at Bat Yam with varied activities of a religious and secular nature gladly shared with the community.

On Saturday mornings, Rabbi Stephen Fuchs teaches Hebrew reading from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. From 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Rabbi Fuchs offers commentary on the Bible. At 10:30 a.m., a congregant or guest presents on a topic of interest. At 10:30 a.m. on January 4, Alan Lessack will talk about "Ethiopian Jews: Fulfilling their Dream of Becoming Israelis;" on January 11, Gil Mann will be the presenter, topic TBD; Lewis Schneider on January 18 will speak about "Death, Immortal-

ity and Resurrection in Judaism;" on January 25, we are privileged to have Maestro Nir Kabaretti educate us about "The Conductor and the Orchestra Musicians."

Jewish current events begins at 11:30 a.m., led by Leonard Minsky. Vickie Fuchs is coordinator of programming for Adult Education.

The next Grief Support meeting is January 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the library (second floor) of the Sanibel Congregational UCC. It is a safe space to discuss feelings from loss and is open to the community. Questions may be addressed to Dr. Ellen Feingold at 302.345.7187.

Joint classes will be taught by Rabbi Fuchs and Reverend John Danner on Wednesdays, January 8, 15 and 22 at 10:00 a.m. and repeated at 7:00 p.m. The classes will focus on important issues from the Book of Esther read on Purim. Some of the topics will be the status and treatment of women, the

pernicious phenomenon of prejudice, the absence of any mention of G-d in the story, and the question of our destiny as human beings.

Rabbi Paul Citrin, a friend of both Rabbi Fuchs and Cantor Murray Simon, is returning to Bat Yam on Friday, January 17 when he will deliver the sermon. He will lead the 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. session on Saturday, January 18.

The Shared Scholar Lecture will take place on Sunday, January 26 at 3:00 p.m., and the Shared Scholar Seminar is set for Monday, January 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Shared Scholar will be Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker. Dr. Tucker is a Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar at Yale University where she has appointments in the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, the Divinity School and the Department of Religious Studies. She teaches in the joint MA program in religion and ecology, and directs the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale with her husband John Grim.

Dr. Ellen Feingold and Paula

Raboy co-chaired a wonderful, tasty Chanukah celebration on December 22. Members of our host church, the Sanibel Congregational UCC, were invited and decided to try the holiday goodies.

Save the date, Sunday, March 1 at 4:00 p.m., because once again there will be a spectacular 3 Cantors and a Pastor concert featuring Cantors Murray Simon, Rachel Brook and Elizabeth Shammash with Pastor John Danner.

We extend best wishes for a healthy and peaceful 2020 to all our Bat Yam family and friends. With the cold weather up north, we expect to have everyone together again at Bat Yam on Sanibel very soon.

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

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

Rabbi Bruce Diamond and the people of The Community Free Synagogue extend the deepest sympathies to Rabbi Devora Buchen and her family on the death of her beloved husband Dr. Irv Buchen. *Hamaqom yenehem etkhem.*

Mazel tov C.F.S.ers Ashlie Coplein and David Bogner on their Thanksgiving Day engagement. Everyone is sharing in their joy!

C.F.S. welcomes FGCU student Eric Swartz to our Musical Ensemble. A junior trumpet major at the Bower School of Music, Eric brings his polished talents to our worship and celebrations in fulfillment of his fall Capstone and spring internship requirements.

The congregation is also delighted that flutist Abigail Bernikal, daughter of Traci and Lee Pavel, has joined our C.F.S. Musical Ensemble alongside veteran

flutist Laurie McConville. Abi was called to Torah for the first time as a Bat Mitzvah in 2017.

Many thanks to all those who help make our Community Free Hanukkah celebration a high point of each year's calendar. To David Schwartz for designing and building our new outdoor Grand Metro Menorah; to Sharon Boyd, Natalie Fulton and Traci Pavel for getting out the invitation letters; to Auxiliary Rabbi Terri Goldberg for taking the reservations; to Cohen and Cohen Caterers for the gourmet latkes and quiches; to Marvin Goetz for preparing the fresh fruit salad; to Barbara Lubich and Victor Gold for baking the special Hanukkah suphganivot-style cakes; and to the Musical Ensemble for leading a spirited Hanukkah sing-along.

Congratulations to Kathryn Ferrer, called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah in December. And heartfelt thanks to Auxiliary Rabbi Thomas Meiss for preparing her!



Abigail Bernikal

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The next C.F.S. Brownbag Movie Night is at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, and features the 1987 Catskills classic *Dirty Dancing*, starring Patrick Swayze, Jennifer Grey and Jerry Orbach. Pack a dinner. Admission and soft drinks are free.

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

Celebrating its 15th year, The Community Free Synagogue is an independent "no labels" open Jewish community congregation which does not sell memberships. All C.F.S. activities are free and open to all. The synagogue is comfortably supported through volunteerism and voluntary donations.

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

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

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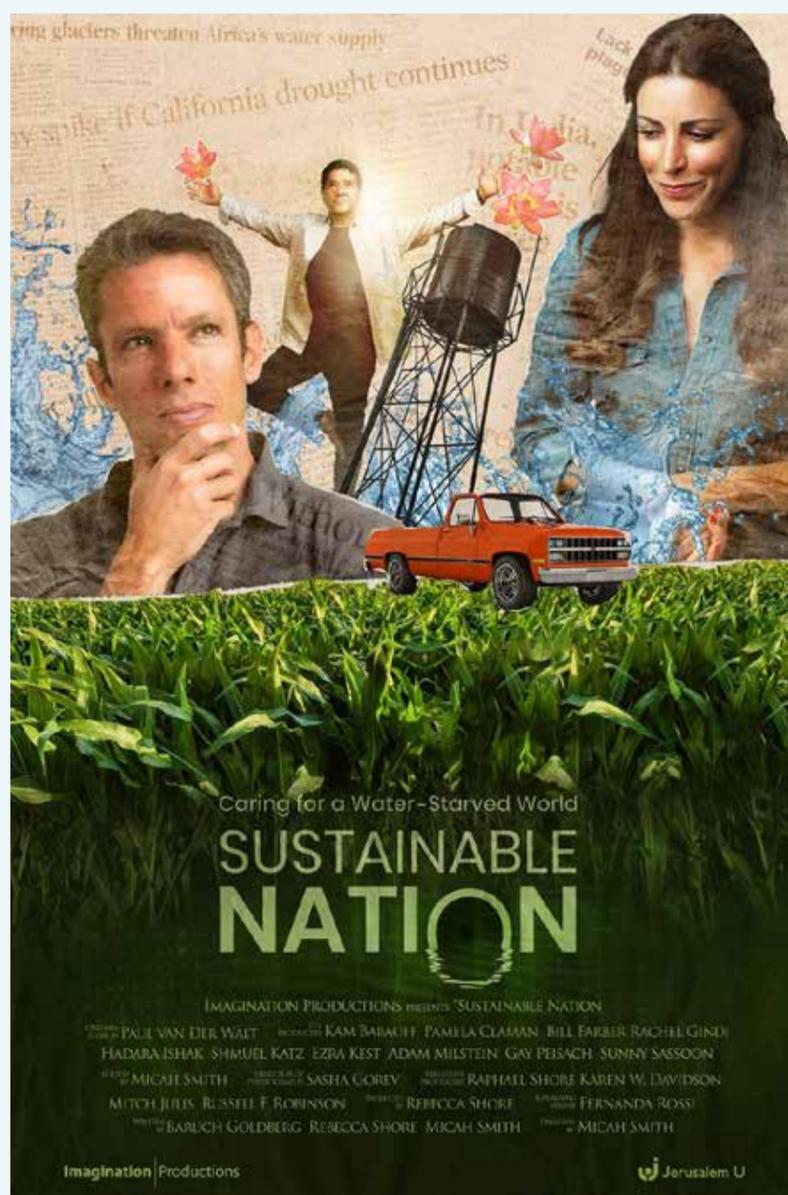
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Every individual has a responsibility to protect the environment, and even the smallest acts can make a difference.



Monday, January 20 at 7:00 P.M.

Southwest Florida Community Foundation Collaboratory
2031 Jackson St., Fort Myers

Tickets \$18



Dessert Reception to Follow

For tickets visit: www.jewishfederationlcc.org/outandabout

For more information visit: www.CaptainsForCleanWater.org

