



# SUMMER DOUBLE ISSUE

JUL & AUG 2025



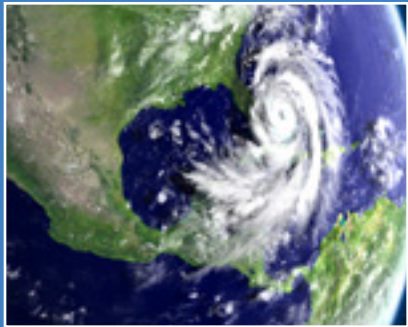
# L'CHAYIM

Published by the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

July/August 2025 / 5785 JewishFederationLCC.org Volume 47, Number 10

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Make a significance difference for the ever-increasing number of people who rely on our Food Pantry. Page 5

For the most current news and articles on the war in Israel, please visit our website at JewishFederationLCC.org.

## Annual Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties review

*A co-president's perspective*

By Doreen Kostel, Federation Co-President

This year marked a turning point for Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. With no urgent crises demanding our attention, we focused our energy on regrouping and realigning with our core mission: strengthening and enriching the Jewish community through philanthropic, educational and social service programs — locally, in Israel and around the world.

We raised the bar across our programming, both in long-standing traditions and new initiatives. Guided by the strategic priorities and best practices of The Jewish Federations of North America, we continued building stronger connections with fellow small Federations to share successes, learn from



■ Doreen Kostel

challenges and explore collaborative opportunities for growth.

Our Federation thrives by bringing people together. We foster community through cultural experiences, educational opportunities and social gatherings. In addition to our programming, Jewish Family Services continues to support around 575 individuals each month with food from the Cadkin Family Food Pantry and a variety of

essential services — from Lunch Bunch to Israeli Folk Dancing to case management. Our post-Hurricane Ian partnership with United Way has become an integral part of JFS's offerings, strengthening our capacity to serve.

This year, program attendance surged as we entertained, educated and celebrated with the community.

We opened the year with our traditional Community Breakfast, headlined

by Joel Chasnoff. His thought-provoking talk, along with his ongoing podcast, gave us an insider's perspective on life in Israel — its societal complexities, daily tensions and the ever-present shadow of conflict.

Later, Yaniv Cohen, known as The Spice Detective, brought Middle Eastern flavors to life at our Linda Idelson Culinary Event. Participants created their own spice blends while honoring Idelson's legacy through this much-loved annual tradition that unites generations around the joy of cooking.

The Annual Film Festival continued to shine, thanks to our dedicated sponsors and tireless committee. Reviewing over three times the number of films eventually shown, the committee's efforts ensured a diverse and compelling lineup. Highlights included comedies like "Bad Shabbos," films exploring Jewish life in earlier centuries, WWII and Holocaust history, and timely pieces such as "Colleyville," a documentary about a hostage situation followed by a discussion with the filmmaker.

When our community expressed a desire to celebrate Israel with both local and seasonal friends, we listened. Our Jewish Heritage Day kicked off with a Boston Red Sox game and continued under a shaded tent full of music, food, dancing and educational displays. This collaboration with the

*continued on page 2*



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 Volume 47, Number 10**

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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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**SEPTEMBER ISSUE  
 EDITORIAL  
 DEADLINE:  
 Monday, August 4**



### OUR MISSION

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

### OUR VISION

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

# Are you ready for hurricane season?

By John Murtagh, Secure Community Network Regional Security Advisor-Florida West Coast

As hurricane season approaches, it's time to ask: Are you and your family prepared? Do you have the necessary supplies — water, nonperishable food, medications, flashlights, batteries and important documents?

Beyond stockpiling essentials, have you developed a family preparedness and response plan?

Are you aware of your evacuation zone? This knowledge is vital should a storm threaten your area. If evacuation



becomes necessary, do you have the transportation, shelter arrangements and resources needed to leave safely?

Knowing where to find accurate, county-specific emergency preparedness information is crucial. Check



John Murtagh

your county and state emergency management websites, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and trusted nonprofit disaster response organizations.

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties' community security page is also an excellent source for

important weblinks. You can find them by navigating to the Resources tab at the top of the main page. An Emergency Preparedness section can be found under the Community Security tab.

Preparedness saves lives. Take the time now to ensure you're informed and equipped before a storm hits.

To help you get ready, Lee County Emergency Management will host a community-wide All-Hazard Disaster Preparedness Presentation in the Federation Community Room on Thursday, Aug. 7, at 10 a.m. This important session will provide practical tips, answer your questions and connect you with local preparedness resources.

Don't miss this opportunity to protect yourself, your family and your community. 🌪️

## IF YOU GO

### All-Hazard Disaster Preparedness Presentation

Practical tips, answers to questions and local preparedness resources.

When: Thursday, Aug. 7 at 10 a.m.

Where: Federation Community Room

### annual jewish federation...continued from page 1

Red Sox has become a beloved community-wide tradition.

At the suggestion of a community member, we revived "JFED Hits the Road." Our group visited the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, where we experienced a powerful Anne Frank exhibit and cutting-edge virtual reality testimonies from survivors. To top off the day, we dined at Yaniv Cohen's restaurant in Miami — a perfect blend of education and enjoyment.

We hosted two compelling author events, featuring books that explored Jewish influence in U.S. government and stories of WWII heroism. Meanwhile, a new volunteer-led initiative, Women Discovering Local Treasures, took us on enriching tours of the Alliance for the Arts, the Florida Repertory Theater, Florida Gulf Coast University and downtown Fort Myers, connecting us with our broader community.

At our Annual Meeting, we honored the countless volunteers who power everything from the Food Pantry to Mahjong. We paid special tribute to Tracey Goldenberg Siegel, a beloved and irreplaceable Pantry volunteer whose sudden passing left a deep impact.

Looking ahead to 2025–26, we remain hopeful. We aim to build resilience, strengthen community bonds and support peace in Israel.

Our newest initiative, SecureLCC — formed in partnership with the Pinellas and Naples Federations — enhances safety across our community through security assessments, training, grant support and connections to national counterterrorism resources. As antisemitism and extremist threats grow, our security partners help us prepare, protect and adapt. If you haven't yet met our security advisor, John Murtagh, or explored the Secure Community Network's offerings, now is the time.

Emergency preparedness — whether for hurricanes or lone actors — is no longer optional. It's a priority.

As I write this, we hold onto hope: hope for a ceasefire in Gaza, the release of hostages and lasting peace. Despite ongoing turmoil, Israel presses forward — balancing tradition with innovation, war with resilience. Please continue to stand with our Israeli brothers and sisters. May peace come soon to Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. And may the Abraham Accords continue to grow, fostering a stronger, safer future for us all. 🌍

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# Strengthening community connections

By Doreen Kostel, Federation Co-President

Under Debbie Sanford’s leadership, Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties has expanded its community relations during the last few years and has asked Board member Sylvia Simko to lead the Board’s effort.

Sanford and Simko are very articulate about the need “to show up” — to pull together as a community to respond to hurricanes, antisemitism, food and shelter insecurities and to build relationships as a foundation for community-wide understanding.

Sanford has focused on outreach, such as with local Chambers of Commerce, United Way, and faith-based organizations. The response to Hurricane Ian built our partnership with United Way, permitting our Federation to offer expanded social services.

The rise in antisemitism demonstrates that these relationships are a priority. Sanford, as Executive Director, and the Board participate in community activities and programs, such as the clergy-guided interfaith discussions.

The latest example of communal activity was Simko’s participation in a National Prayer Day (as pictured), in downtown Fort Myers, organized by Bishop Gaspar Anastasi. 🕍





## TOGETHER we can make a Difference



### INDIGENT FUND PACESETTERS

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

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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!**

## TRIBUTES

*Honors & Memorials*



With a tribute gift you can mark a milestone, celebrate a special occasion, extend your sympathy or send wishes for a speedy recovery. It is a meaningful way to acknowledge friends or family and strengthen our Jewish community by contributing to the Annual Campaign.

A personalized tribute card will be sent to the honoree or bereaved on your behalf, reflecting a personal message if you wish.

### In Honor of All Volunteers

*Judy & George Litman*

### In Memory of Jerry Razowsky

He will be missed.

*Debbie & Ian Sanford & Family*

[jewishfederationlcc.org/tribute-memorials](http://jewishfederationlcc.org/tribute-memorials)

## HOW

### THE JEWISH FEDERATION SERVES

#### Local Jewish Education and Culture

- Community-wide Jewish Education and Cultural Programs for all ages
- L'CHAYIM published monthly to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues.
- CRC-Community Relations Council to address issues of anti-Semitism and Interfaith Relations.
- Israel Advocacy and Initiatives to strengthen local Jewish community ties with Israel. Holocaust education for middle and high school students in the community and a college campus Jewish life experience committee.
- Volunteer opportunities for all ages.

#### Overseas

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

#### Jewish Community Foundation

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



Jewish Federation  
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

Jewish Family  
Services

#### Local Seniors Services

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

#### Local Social Services

- Non-sectarian, individual & family outreach, information & referral services.
- South Fort Myers United Way House.

#### Local Emergency Services

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

#### Education, Arts & Culture Programs

Israeli Folk Dancing  
Jewish Social Club  
Mah Jongg  
Holiday Senior Visits  
PJ Library  
Federation Hits the Road-Day Trips

Holocaust Remembrance  
Jewish Film Festival  
Community Breakfast  
Major Gifts-Pacesetters  
Jewish Heritage Day

Lion of Judah  
Women's Day  
TRIBE  
Annual Meeting  
Men's Division  
P2G Partnership Together

Stay **connected**  
& **informed.**



### Sign up for the Shalom JFED Newsletter

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

[jewishfederationlcc.org/newsletter](http://jewishfederationlcc.org/newsletter)

## What do you think?

### L'CHAYIM *wants to know!*

Send your letters and comments to Sharon Hood, L'CHAYIM Editor, at [sharon@marketcrank.com](mailto:sharon@marketcrank.com).

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# Planning, partnering and preparing for an exciting year

By Tali Gomel, Life Enrichment Coordinator

Now is the perfect time to reflect on the past few months and share some exciting plans for what's ahead.

Let's also take a moment to thank those who made the last season meaningful.

Comfort Keepers were the generous sponsors of our lovely Passover meal in April. We are deeply grateful for their support and the meaningful work they do in providing compassionate in-home care to those in need.

We were also fortunate to host Bruce B. Rosenblatt from Senior Housing Solutions, whose presentation was both eye-opening and practical. He highlighted the importance of planning for the future and surrounding ourselves with environments that support us, especially through life's challenges.

**Lunch Bunch**

During June, our Lunch Bunch series took a short, intentional break, allowing us to reflect, refresh and focus on planning the year ahead with intention and care. We believe in offering programs that truly serve and uplift our community, and thoughtful planning is the key to that mission.

We're especially excited to kick off the new program year with a special Lunch Bunch on July 10, noon at Temple Shalom, Port Charlotte. John Murtagh will lead a fascinating session on environmental awareness in everyday life — a relevant and eye-opening topic to launch our season of learning and connection.



Tali Gomel



**Looking ahead**

We're thrilled to share that we're expanding our offerings to include more family-friendly events in partnership with PJ Library. Mark your calendars for: Fall Fest (September), Smoothie in the Sukkah (October), Challah Bake – Hanukkah Edition (November), Family Fun Day (February) and Summer Celebration (May). More details will be announced soon. We can't wait to see you there!

In addition, I'm honored to begin my role as Partnership2Gether coordinator, focused on strengthening the vital connection between our local community and Israel. I'm excited to deepen these relationships and bring meaningful opportunities for engagement to all generations.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers. You are the heartbeat of everything we do. If you're interested in joining our team of helpers, bringing your talents to our events and finding joy and purpose in giving back, I'd love to hear from you. You can reach me anytime at [taligomel@jfedlcc.org](mailto:taligomel@jfedlcc.org).

**Lunch Bunch with John Murtagh**

When: July 10 at noon  
Where: Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte

# JFS Food Pantry update

By Monica Wildonger, JFS Case Manager & Food Pantry Coordinator

We want to take a moment to share some important updates regarding the JFS Food Pantry and how you can help support our community.

**Current needs**

As our pantry continues to serve an increasing number of residents from Lee and Charlotte Counties, we want to highlight some specific items that are urgently needed:

- Pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Cereal
- Tuna

Your donations of these items will make a significant difference in the lives of those who rely on our pantry. Every contribution counts, and we are grateful for your generosity.

**Gift card donations**

In addition to food donations, we also accept gift card donations from Publix, Walmart or Target. These gift cards allow



Monica Wildonger

our clients to select items that best meet their needs, providing them with the flexibility to shop for their families.

**Volunteer training**

In June, we held a Civil Rights Training session for all our volunteers. This essential training ensures that our pantry operates with inclusivity and respect for all individuals. We appreciate everyone who attended!

**A heartfelt thank you**





A special thank you to all of our amazing volunteers! Your hard work and dedication make the JFS Food Pantry a vital resource for our community. Together, we can continue to provide support to those in need.

Let's keep working together to make a positive impact in Lee and Charlotte Counties. If you have any questions or would like more information on how to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your continued support!

# 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 & FOR MORE INFORMATION

contact Debbie Sanford at 239.481.4449 ext. 6  
[debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org](mailto:debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org)



# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



## LUNCH BUNCH: MONTHLY LUNCHES

Looking for a meaningful way to give back every month? Join our volunteer team for Lunch Bunch around various locations in Lee and Charlotte Counties! Lunch is included.

Positions we are looking to fill:



Set-up  
Clean-up  
Registration  
Greeters



Contact Tali Gomel to sign up or for more information:

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Sat. Sept 13	8:00 PM Havdalah & Dessert Reception 9:00 PM Selichot Service
Mon. Sept 22	7:30 PM Erev Rosh Hashanah Service
Tues. Sept 23	10:00 AM Morning Service & Junior Congregation 12:30 PM Tashlich & Lunch Reception
Wed. Sept 24	10:00 AM 2nd Day Service
Sun. Sept 28	10:30 AM Cemetery Memorial Service at TBE Garden of Memories <i>Lee County's only Temple-owned Jewish cemetery</i>
Wed. Oct 1	7:30 PM Kol Nidre Service
Thurs. Oct 2	10:00 AM Morning Service & Junior Congregation 3:00 PM Exploring Book of Jonah <i>Online</i> 5:00 PM Yizkor 6:00 PM Neilah & Break the Fast Reception
Thurs. Oct 9	12:00 PM Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Luna in the Sukkah
Sun. Oct 12	5:30 PM Simchat Torah Dinner 6:30 PM Celebration/Service
Tues. Oct 14	6:30 PM Yizkor Service <i>Online</i>





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# Joyous engagement announcement

Courtesy of Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida

The community is delighted to share in the simcha of the engagement of Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz and Shani Silver.

The announcement comes with heartfelt gratitude to Hashem and with blessings received at the holy Ohel of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Surrounded

by family, friends and well-wishers, this joyous occasion has brought warmth and celebration to all who know the couple.

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz is widely respected for his leadership, scholarship and dedication to Jewish life and learning. His kallah, Shani

Silver, is known for her warmth, grace and deep commitment to the values of Torah and chesed. Together, they look forward to building a *Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisrael* — a faithful and joyful Jewish home infused with Torah, mitzvos and chassidic values.

The engagement was celebrated with a beautiful ceremony, marked by heartfelt words, an elegant party and blessings, reflecting the joy of

two families — and an entire community — coming together in unity and happiness.

As preparations for the wedding unfold, the families extend their deepest thanks for the outpouring of love and well wishes.

May the couple be blessed with a lifetime of health, happiness and spiritual fulfillment. *Mazel Tov!* 🕊



Engagement of Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz and Shani Silver

## Jews By Choice

*The last Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. via Zoom*

Jews By Choice meets via Zoom on the last Thursday each month from 8 to 9 p.m. in a relaxed and comfortable format. Discuss the delights and challenges of converting and reconnecting.

Recent converts, those exploring conversion, and Jews seeking to reconnect with their roots are encouraged to attend.

If you are considering the process of converting to Judaism, if you are in the conversion process, if you are rediscovering Judaism, if you have questions and/or need to talk with like-minded individuals in a friendly, non-judgmental atmosphere, we invite you to attend Jews By Choice.

For more information contact Dawn Wineinger at [d.wineinger@yahoo.com](mailto:d.wineinger@yahoo.com). 🕊

## A Jewish 12-step recovery group

*Every Saturday at 11 a.m. via Zoom*

Are you looking for a path to recovery? Whether it is alcohol, drugs, and/or other addictions such as food, gambling, sex, shopping, etc., we invite you to experience this Jewish Twelve Steps program and discussion group.

We meet Saturdays at 11 a.m. via Zoom, and we use a guidebook authored

by a rabbi and M.D. The guidebook is, “Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery” by Rabbi Kerry Olitzky and Stuart Copans, M.D., second edition.

All who might benefit from this group are welcome. Zoom details are available by calling the Temple Beth El office at 239-433-0018. 🕊

## Nar-Anon support meetings

**Nar-Anon support meetings**

Nar-Anon Family Groups, a 12-step fellowship that offers a recovery program for those affected by someone’s addiction, will be meeting in the community room at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties.

The disease of addiction can affect family members and friends of addicts physically, emotionally and spiritually. In the group meetings, these family members and friends share their experiences, strengths and hopes to help each other and themselves.

Addiction is a family disease. It affects the relationships of those close to the addict: parents, spouses, siblings, children, longtime friends and employers. If someone’s addiction is affecting you, first you must help yourself.

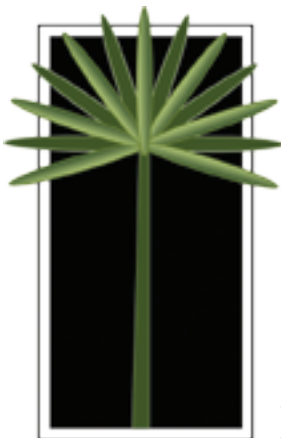
Just come to a meeting. You will hear others who are going through similar problems and talk about how they cope and find recovery.

Nar-Anon is based on a set of spiritual principles and has no affiliation with any particular religion. There are no dues or fees. The only requirement for membership is a problem of addiction in a relative or friend.

This group has been a part of the Lee County community for over 18 years. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. every Thursday at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties (9701 Commerce Center Court, Fort Myers).

For more information, please contact me at [jogo118@gmail.com](mailto:jogo118@gmail.com) or 239-470-4827. 🕊

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# At the Museum

By Erin Blankenship, Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center President & CEO

The year 2025 is going by so quickly; it's hard to believe it is summer-time already!

## Record-setting school year

Our 2024-25 student Holocaust education programs reached a record high, impacting more than 40,000 students and teachers! Among the programs offered to students and teachers in eight Florida counties were in-classroom presentations, Pop-Up Museum exhibitions, Museum field trips, survivor and 2G presentations, and the opportunity to host the Jack and F.E. Nortman Boxcar Educational Project.

Two recent field trips to the Museum — Oakridge Middle School from Collier County and Miami Shores Presbyterian Church School from Miami — illustrate our reach! Our public outreach programs and group tours impacted more than 3,000 additional people. We are grateful to the June Hirsch Jones Foundation Inc. and the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation for their grants, which support the costs of student/teacher/chaperone Museum admission, transportation fees for field trips, and substitute teacher reimbursement costs. Our educational programs are also funded by our wonderful donors and other generous foundations.

## Scholarship winners

This school year, two generous donors (one anonymous) provided funding for three Southwest Florida student scholarships awards. The anonymous donor offered two \$1,000 awards — one for students in Collier County and one for students in Lee County. To qualify, entrants either interviewed a 2G member or wrote a reflective essay about an exhibition or artifact from our Museum. The Collier County scholarship was awarded to Jack Marshal from Naples High School. The Lee County scholarship was awarded to Javaria James from Fort Myers High School.

Museum Board member Stephen Light provided funding for a third contest award. Available to students in any of the eight Southwest Florida counties we serve, the award's criterion was an essay reflection on the impact that Holocaust education has had on them personally. This scholarship was awarded to two North Port High School students in Sarasota County. The students are putting the funds toward their "Classroom Without Borders" trip to visit Holocaust sites in Germany, Poland, Austria and the Czech Republic.

## Principals and administrators trip

As you read this article, Education Manager Katie Butte and I are in Washington D.C. leading a trip of eight Southwest Florida school principals and administrators. The trip provides the Museum with a unique opportunity to create a contact



Erin Blankenship

network at the administrative level, similar to the one we have built over the years with individual teachers. One of our goals is to build support and advocacy for Holocaust education and our programs in Southwest Florida schools. Our itinerary includes visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to learn more about its Community of Holocaust Education Centers (CHEC) program, in which we have previously participated, as well as other important history museums in the area.

The group attended an orientation night at the Museum prior to the trip. Butte and Community Engagement Manager Julie Cohen provided an overview on the variety of age-appropriate Holocaust education programs and exhibits offered at no charge to Southwest Florida schools. Attendees were also given top priority to reserve these programs for the 2025-26 school year.

## Summer programs

We have a lot of

things happening this summer:

- The Jack and F.E. Nortman Boxcar Education Project is on display at the Museum until July 31. It is fully booked for the 2025-26 school year!
- The Museum is offering members a summer "admission reciprocity" program with several other Southwest Florida organizations. For more information, please contact Julie@hmcec.org.
- Through Sept. 1, the "Blue Star Museums" initiative offers active-duty military and up to five family members complimentary Museum admission with military ID.

## Current and upcoming exhibitions

"Convincing the Masses: Propaganda at Home and Abroad" will be on display through Aug. 18. The exhibition provides examples, drawn from the Museum's permanent collections, of World War II Nazi and Allied propaganda. Special artifacts are also on loan from community members.



Propaganda exhibit - radio model display

A new exhibition, "Painting the Irena Sendler Story," begins Sept. 9. Sarasota-based artist Bill Farnsworth donated his paintings to the Museum. He painted



DC trip orientation

them as illustrations for the children's book "Irena Sendler and the Children of the Warsaw Ghetto." Sendler helped save 2,500 children in the Warsaw Ghetto. We use this book in our Holocaust education programs to show students the power one person has to help others in need. The exhibition will be on display through Dec. 15.

## Save the dates

Please mark your calendars with the dates for the 2025 Luncheon and Triumph 2026!

Scheduled for Dec. 3, the 2025 Luncheon will feature a presentation

by New York photographer Gillian Laub, who created the "Live2Tell" photographic project of Holocaust survivor portraits.

Triumph 2026 will be held March 4, 2026. More information on tickets, locations and sponsorship opportunities will be available shortly.

The next time you are in the Museum, please stop by our new Gift Shop in the lobby! Your purchases help support our Holocaust education programs.

All of us at the Museum wish you and your families a happy and safe summer. Hope to see you at the Museum soon! 🌟

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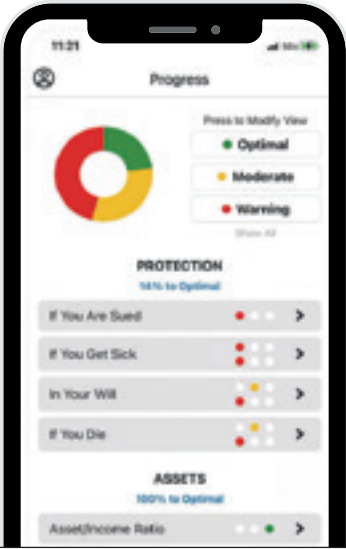
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# Are restaurants getting louder?

*Aging Jewishly — What our traditions teach us about growing old.*

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

“No, I don’t want to go there. And not there either! How about we forget the restaurant and just eat at home!” Elaine just looked at her husband and shook her head. “Lenny, what’s wrong. Eating out is something we’ve always enjoyed. Now, I need a crowbar to get you to go to a restaurant.”



■ Rabbi Barbara Aiello

Lenny paced around the living room and finally spoke up. “Elaine,” he said. “It’s the noise. It seems that nowadays every restaurant is so loud. And it’s not the music. It’s the clanking and banging and voices that carry. We sit at a little table, right across from each other, and we can’t even hear

our own conversation. Eating out isn’t for us old folks. Restaurants today are for a younger crowd.”

Lenny’s lament isn’t limited to the older generation, and the noisy restaurant complaint doesn’t apply only to hearing aid users who have difficulty adjusting the mechanism to accommodate ambient noise. According to a lengthy piece in the Nov. 27, 2018, edition of *The Atlantic* — “How Restaurants Got So Loud” — journalist Kate Wagner reports that the noise level in American restaurants is appreciably higher, to the detriment of patrons and staff alike.

Armed with a calibrated decibel meter, Wagner tested the noise level in a variety

of different restaurants, from coffee shops to fine dining, and what she found corroborates the complaint voiced by many diners. Restaurants are just too loud — so loud in fact that conversations are impossible and a migraine should be a menu item. Wagner says, “Noise levels become harmful to human hearing above 85 decibels,” and she reports that restaurants from Baltimore to New York City were often louder than this 85-decibel safety level. Wagner found decibel levels hitting 86 while at a brunch in a food court, and she recorded 90 decibels at a pub during a Friday afternoon happy hour.

So, what accounts for the change from quiet to noisy that characterizes so many restaurants? Wagner (whose resume includes architecture and design experience) explains that the cultural shift from formal to casual dining is to blame. As recently as 30 years ago, dining was more elegant; soft music played in dining rooms where lush carpeting, brocade draperies and upholstered chairs were not only elegant, but maybe more important, these design elements worked together to absorb sound.

Wagner writes that today “Restaurants are so loud because architects don’t design them to be quiet. Much of this shift in design boils down to changing conceptions of what makes a space seem upscale or luxurious, as well as evolving trends in food service. Right now, high-end surfaces connote luxury, such as the slate and wood.” Wagner writes that “In addition, many upscale eateries feature a preponderance of stainless steel, exposed ceilings and kitchens open to the dining room where patrons can watch their food as it is prepared.”

Wagner goes on to say that “These design features are a feast for the eyes but a nightmare for the ears,” and she reminds us that the absence of soft fabrics and high ceilings means that nothing is absorbing the sound. As Wagner puts it, “A room full of hard surfaces serves as a big sonic mirror, reflecting sound around the room. The result is a loud space that renders speech unintelligible.”

If the increase in restaurant decibel level is bad for one’s hearing, the cultural effects are equally detrimental. According to Wagner, “Noise also degrades the thing that eating out is meant to enhance — culture: a shared social experience that rejuvenates, rather than harms, its participants.”

Is it any wonder that Lenny and many others like him are so upset? “I’ve been to bar mitzvah dinners and wedding receptions where I can’t hear myself think,”



says Lenny who faults the venue, and not the music, for creating such a negative experience. “We’re shouting across the table, just to have a conversation. It’s so uncomfortable that I just don’t want to go.”

Lenny is not alone. Restaurant patrons are lodging more complaints and others, like Lenny, are staying home, so much so that businesses are noticing the downward trend. But getting back to what Lenny would call a more civilized dining experience is not happening to any great degree. Why?

According to author and design expert Allison Perlman, loud restaurants bring in more profit. In her book, “Smart Casual: The Transformation of Gourmet Restaurant Style in America,” Perlman goes on to say that its cheaper and easier to construct a restaurant interior out of hard surfaces — they’re easier to clean, repair and replace — while loud restaurants encourage the adrenaline rush that comes from eating quickly, drinking more alcohol and wolfing down desserts.

For us Jews, the book of Proverbs provides a guideline for the enjoyment of a meal when we read about the eating habits of righteous persons versus those who are wicked. “The righteous eat to satisfy their souls, but the stomach of the wicked still wants” (Proverbs 13:25). What could be more soul-satisfying than eating a meal in a calm and tranquil venue?

Or as Wagner concludes, “I’m not calling for the return of stuffy, socially stratified fine dining ... Rather, I’d welcome a return of a more relaxed and serene dining experience, one in which I can hear my dinner companion, avoid drinking too much, and dodge a stress headache following an after-work drink.” I believe that Lenny would agree.

For 10 years Rabbi Barbara Aiello served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life as resident rabbi. Currently she serves Sinagoga Ner Tamid del Sud in Calabria, Italy. She is Italy’s first woman rabbi. Contact her at [Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com](mailto:Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com)

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# Finding the budget bottles

By Jerry Greenfield, the Wine Whisperer

First, let's start with the golden rule of wine appreciation. There are only two kinds of wine: the kind you like and the kind you don't. As I've mentioned many times in this space, there isn't always a direct relationship between the quality of a wine and the price — or the number of points it gets from critics. The most important consideration is whether or not it tickles your palate.

I've also mentioned that one of our favorite everyday Chardonnay costs under \$12 a bottle. Do we like other, pricier labels? Sure, but there are wines for every taste, every occasion and every price point. The trick is finding those great, affordable wines. You just need to know where (and how) to look.

Start with the distinction between cheap and value wines. Many very inexpensive wines are of questionable quality, but you can find value wines at all price points. It's challenging, but it's possible.

First, get to know the local merchants. Most of the big box stores that sell wine don't have the staff on hand to give you reasonable recommendations and suggestions. While there aren't as many smaller local wine shops as there used to be, some have survived. The people who own them know their stuff, so you can ask questions and get qualified answers.



■ Jerry Greenfield

For example, you can ask store staff for their favorite wines or for suggestions in a price range with which you're comfortable.

Also note that some regions are able to craft excellent everyday wines out of several varietals at very agreeable prices. For example, New Zealand makes a ton of killer Sauvignon Blanc in the \$12-\$20 range. The same is true for its Pinot Noir from the Central Otago region.

Many wine stores offer periodic tastings, and they're a great way to sample new wines, ask questions and find values. Some also have a wine club arrangement or membership program that gives you periodic discounts and members-only specials. Total Wine & More is a good example of this. You get points, discounts and special offers.

You can always check prices on wine websites and apps to compare and make sure you're not overpaying. Then, when you find a wine you like at a comfortable price, you can look for it in local stores or on wine-searcher.com. You'll see dozens of retailers selling the wine you want with all prices listed. Another great place to look is vivino.com.

It's also very helpful to learn about the "other" wine regions of the world. Wines from the best-known areas, such as Bordeaux or Chianti, will probably cost more than those from less famous areas right next door. First, decide what



kind of varietals you like — Sauvignon Blanc, Malbec, Syrah, whatever. Then, get to know the areas next to the major regions that produce those wines. For example, there are plenty of pricey wines coming out of France's Rhône Valley. If you like those big Grenache and Syrah blends, look for the regions of Lirac and Tavel. They are less well known but are still producers of excellent quality at great prices.

To get you started, here are some recommendations from some of those "other" winegrowing regions in the friendliest price ranges.

**Bonterra Equinox Red Blend California 2020 (\$13)** – This winery prides

itself on its commitment to certified organic and sustainable farming and winemaking practices. The blend is primarily Merlot and Petit Sirah, with a rich deep color and bold notes of mixed black fruit. Wine Whisperer Rating on a scale of 100: 89

**Domaine Bousquet Rose Argentina 2022 (\$13)** – Strawberry and orange aromas and flavors are predominant in this blend of mostly Pinot Noir, with Tempranillo, Pinot Gris and floral notes from 10% Viognier. WW 86

**Gilgal Cabernet-Merlot Golan Heights 2023 (\$18)** – This 50/50 blend is nicely aromatic, delivering mixed red and black fruit flavors with a slight hint of orange and spice. The 12 months of aging help to round it out and make it nicely approachable. The Israelis have come a long way. WW 89

## Ask the Wine Whisperer

Q: I saw the word "passito" on a bottle of Italian wine. What does it mean? — Felix L., Port St. Lucie

A: The word "passito" means the grapes have been dried before being crushed. This reduces water content and concentrates the sugar, making for a sweet wine.

*Jerry Greenfield is a wine author, educator and consultant. Order his books, "Secrets of the Wine Whisperer" and "Ask the Wine Whisperer" and read his blog at [www.winewhisperer.com](http://www.winewhisperer.com).*



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A sort-of Jewish Superman and more

Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Stars of David Contributing Columnist

**E**ditor's Note: Persons in bold are deemed by Nate Bloom to be Jewish for the purpose of this column. Persons identified as Jewish have at least one Jewish parent and were not raised in, or identify with, a faith other than Judaism. Converts to Judaism, of course, are also identified as Jewish.

“Jurassic World Rebirth”

The dinosaurs return when “Jurassic World Rebirth” opens in theaters on July 2. This is fourth film in Jurassic World films and the seventh film in the Jurassic Park films.

The plot is really complex. Suffice it to say that the good guy scientists are trying to get DNA from dinosaurs living in Jurassic Park because their DNA can be a key to drugs that can save human lives. **Scarlett Johansson**, 40, stars as Zora Bennett, a “good” scientist who is trying to get DNA from the dinosaurs.

“My Mother’s Wedding”

Johansson also co-stars in “My Mother’s Wedding,” a British film that was filmed in 2023, but opens in theaters on Aug. 8, 2025. Here’s the set-up: Three sisters return to their family home to attend the wedding of their twice-widowed widowed mother (Kristin Scott Thomas). All three sisters are quite different: One is a palliative nurse (Emily Beachum), another (Siena Miller) is an

actress, and the third (Johansson) is a Royal Navy captain.

“Superman”

Superman was created (1938) by two Jewish guys, **Joe Shuster** and **Jerry Siegel**, and finally, an actor with a Jewish background is playing the “man of steel.” The film is simply named “Superman,” and it opens in theaters on July 11.

**David Corenswet**, 31, was a surprise choice for the lead role in a new Superman film. Yes, he’s good looking, and he’s turned in good performances in HBO and Netflix series — but he certainly isn’t a “big name.” So when his selection as Superman was announced in 2023, it was almost shocking. (Bonus: **Skyler Gisondo**, 27, plays Jimmy Olson in “Superman.” Gisondo’s paternal grandfather was Italian and not Jewish. The rest of his “grands” were Jewish).

Corenswet’s father, a lawyer, comes from a prominent New Orleans Jewish family. His mother isn’t Jewish. Corenswet married (2023) in a service that was presided over by a New Orleans-area rabbi and a Catholic priest. The woman he married is Catholic.

I wasn’t happy. I wished Superman would have a Jewish wedding and a Jewish bride. Then, a friend pointed out that Corenswet wanted a rabbi, which means he identifies as Jewish. Ok, that’s very true, but it’s still not super news.

“Eddington”

A comedy/drama, “Eddington” opens in theaters on July 18. This modern Western was written and directed by **Asi Aster**, 38. It takes place in a smallish New Mexico city in the summer of 2020. It was the first summer of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two main characters are Joe Cross (**Joaquin Phoenix**, 50), the city’s sheriff, and Ted Garcia (Pedro Pascal), the city’s mayor. *Variety* gave this flick a pretty good review, although some other respected media outlets weren’t as favorable. The strong supporting cast includes Austin Butler (who played the lead role in “Elvis”) and Emma Stone.

It’s hard to briefly lay-out all the conflicts between Cross and Garcia, among other conflicts within the city. In many ways, the film shows the ever-growing political fissions in American society. These fissions really took off during the pandemic.

As the film opens, Cross loses popularity, because he’s just about the only person in the city refusing to wear a mask. He had a plausible excuse for that, but he didn’t have an excuse for being an incompetent sheriff. Meanwhile, many “progressive” citizens have their faults too.

“The Fantastic Four: First Steps”

The following is a brief item that could have been a long one. “The Fantastic

Four: First Steps” opens in theaters on July 25. It’s another Marvel superhero film based on Marvel comic series.

Here are the Jewish tie-ins: The Fantastic Four were created, in the comics, by **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby**. At least one of the six screenwriters is Jewish. I could confirm: **Jeff Friedman**, 58; and Director **Matt Shakman**, 49, has a Jewish father — he’s secular. The cast includes **Ebon Moss-Bachrach**, 48 (as a member of The Fantastic Four), **Julia Garner**, 31, and **Natasha Lyonne**, 46.

By the way, Garner also stars in “Weapons,” a horror film that opens on Aug. 8.

“Together”

A comedy/horror film, “Together” opens in theaters on July 30. The stars are **Alison Brie**, 42, and **Dave Franco**, 38. They are married in real life and play a married couple in this movie. Both are the children of Jewish mothers and non-Jewish fathers, and both identify as Jewish.

“Honey Don’t!”

Opening in theaters on Aug. 22, “Honey Don’t” is a detective comedy film co-written and directed by **Ethan Coen**, 67. Margaret Qualley, Chris Evans and Aubrey Plaza star in it. The film played at the recent Cannes Film Festival and reviews were mostly “so, so” or “not so good.” The supporting cast includes comic actor **Billy Eichner**, 46. 🌐

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# Summer vacation

By Brian Simon

I'm writing this from the road. Maybe you're reading this in someplace outside of Florida too.

Those of us who have lived in Southwest Florida for a long time know that no one likes living in Southwest Florida in the summertime. It's hot. It's humid. It's a schvitz with all your clothes on. So, we leave.

Some spend the entire summer up north. Some of us take short trips, so that we can return for that humid slap in the face stepping out of the airport that says, "Welcome back to Florida! Remember why you left?"

According to a story I found on the internet, the history of vacations goes back to ancient Rome. The Roman system of roads — and the expanse of the empire — allowed wealthy people to travel without having to venture into enemy territories.

The American vacation traces its roots to the late 1800s and a best-selling book, "Adventures in the Wilderness; or, Camp-Life in the Adirondacks" by William H. H. Murray (Bill Murray, but not **that** Bill Murray). Murray's book inspired city dwellers to enjoy the natural wonders of upstate New York.

According to *Smithsonian Magazine*, "The Scions of New York City took to declaring they would 'vacate' their city



■ Brian Simon

... the history of vacations goes back to ancient Rome.

homes for their lakeside summer retreats, and the term 'vacation' replaced the British 'holiday' in common parlance."

In Florida, we are replacing the term "vacation" with "evacuation."

Ironically, Florida owes much of its development to the state's draw as a vacation land. It was only after people actually moved here full-time that they realized, "My God, even the lizards are sweating!"

Ponce de Leon gave Florida its name because he discovered it on Easter. Had he discovered it in July he would have named it Humida. There's a statue of de Leon in St. Augustine wearing one of those conquistador metal helmets. The inscription should read: "Mi cabeza está en fuego en esto sombrero metalico."

Contrary to popular myth, de Leon was not searching for the Fountain of Youth. He was searching for air conditioning.

The Spaniards killed much of the Native American population indirectly through exposure to diseases for which the natives had no immunity. We commemorate this each fall when our Northern visitors bring their cooties to infect us with whatever gunk is going around. In exchange, we inundate

them with commercials for personal injury attorneys.

But in the summertime, we go visit them. Or go visit the natural wonders of the mid-South —Tennessee, Virginia, Northern Georgia, and the Carolinas. Ironically, much of that region was hit by devastating floods from Hurricane Helene last summer. Research topic: Are hurricanes contagious?

Of course, our snowbirds have gone back north. And, by snowbirds, I mean the bald eagle and the white American pelican. Just like their human counterparts, some bald eagles stay in Southwest Florida year-round, while some migrate. Brown

pelicans stay, but white pelicans migrate.

I know this because one of them told me. A white pelican named Shecky said he just flew in from Buffalo — and boy were his wings tired!

Someone once explained to me why they prefer cold weather to hot weather. "I can always put another layer of clothes on to keep warm," she said, "but I can't take off enough clothes to stay cool." I get that, but I hate being cold. So do all of us who have moved down here.

I've made my peace with the heat. Besides, I can always vacate to another part of the country, even if it's only for a week at a time. ☺

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## JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA (239) 566-1771

# Jews and the American Revolution

By Marina Berkovich, JHSSWF President

It was 249 years ago, on July 4, 1776, when 56 men, averaging 45 years of age, signed a single sheet of parchment that we now know as the Declaration of Independence.

That was only 13 years after Jews were permitted to settle in Florida, a territory from which they were forbidden by The Spanish Inquisition for 250 years.

The Spanish ceded Florida as part of the Feb. 10, 1763, Treaty of Paris in exchange for the return of Havana, Cuba, a strategically important port that the British captured during the Seven Years' War, to Spain.

Almost immediately, the Jewish resettlement commenced as Jewish families started sending their scouts to Florida. First recorded Jewish settlers Alexander Solomons, Joseph D. Pallaccios and Samuel Israel came to Pensacola in 1763.

The early Jewish settlers played an important role in the trading business

of the colonies. Their familial connections and use of Hebrew as the banking language enabled a web of contacts and payments throughout the New World. But, as usually is the case, they were faced with antisemitism from individuals and governments.

The British control over North America had been strengthened due to the same treaty. After Britain took over French holdings, the impact on land ownership and taxation led to immediate dissatisfaction in "the colonies" and revolutionary ideas swept the continent.

The word "revolution," in this meaning, is a radical and frequently violent change in the political system. It is rooted in modifying the ideological thinking of the population by propagating overthrow of the territorial power systems to fundamentally change the existing political, economic and sociological structure of the society, causing a significant alteration in social and cultural norms.

By 1776, more Jews found their way to Northern Florida, but still, they were only a dozen strong. So, quite understandably, they were not participating in the American Revolution.

It is known that approximately 100 Jews fought in the Continental Army, in battles from Bunker Hill to Yorktown. The first Jewish fatality in the fight for American Independence was Francis Salvador. Born in England in 1747 to a prominent family with ties to British East India Company, he moved to America in 1773 and was elected to South Carolina's First Provincial Congress in January 1775. He was the first Jew ever elected to a political office there. He aided the creation of militia and earned the name of "Southern Paul Revere" in July 1776 when he rode over 30 miles to warn the unit of the British-Indian attack. A month later, he led militia patriots in the ambush on the British-Indian encampment, was shot, scalped and died of his wounds on Aug. 1, 1776, at just 29 years of age.



Marina Berkovich

Jews played a critical role both in fighting for the patriot cause in the American Revolution and defining the republic that was created from that win. Judaism was the most visible non-Christian religion of that time and became central to the debate over freedom of religion in America.

Another Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783, effectively ending the American Revolutionary War. England returned Florida to Spain, and the Laws of Inquisition once again ruled. Spain's census revealed all Jews residing in Florida, including a Polish Jew, David Moses, who kept a hide store in St. Augustine. Remarkably, Spain allowed Floridian Jews to remain without conversion or fines.

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What are you reading this summer?

What's in the news?

By Ida Margolis and Shelley Lieb

In the last issue of this paper, in addition to thanking all the supporters of GenShoah, we suggested getting a head start on reading books that GenShoah will discuss at Readers and Learners and the annual potluck. Everyone is welcome to join in discussing or listening to presentations about “Life in a Jar” by Jack Mayer, “Hana’s Suitcase” by Karen Levine, and “Sabine’s Odyssey” by Agnes Schipper.

Like us, most of our GenShoah members are also members of book clubs; they are avid readers of not just books but many media sources. And of course, most of us are bombarded with emails from a plethora of media. Books are one of our favorite discussion topics. When we get together, please tell us what you are reading and about a library you enjoy visiting.

There is a great library day at the Chautauqua Institution in New York. On that day, most of the people in attendance wear a sticker that says “My favorite book is (fill in the blank). What’s yours?” What a great subject to talk about!

Books seem easier to talk about than the news. But the news, of course, is



Ida Margolis and Shelley Lieb

an extremely important topic. Are you reading the news? What is your source for news? These days, there are thousands of media sources. While there are fewer newspapers actually printed on paper, individuals can consume news from TV and digital devices — their smartphone, computer or tablet. Since there are millions of websites, many of which provide “news,” it is difficult to give an exact number of news websites. What is the point here? The point is not to discuss the validity of sources — that is another topic. The point is the content of the news and how much news with which we may be bombarded.

For example, on May 21, 2025, two young Israeli embassy workers, Sarah Milgram and Yaron Lashinsky, who were at an event organized by the American Jewish Committee to bring together young Jewish professionals and diplomats, were brutally murdered. It was noted by many news sources that the event was dedicated to bringing together war-torn and politically divided regions. (May the lives of Milgram and Lashinsky be for a blessing.) In addition, sources stated that Milgram dedicated her life to fighting antisemitism.

It is likely that all of you heard about this horrible and violent act. What were your sources? Did you receive follow-up articles about how this is another act of antisemitism following a recent surge in antisemitism? This is so sad in so many ways. How many innocent lives have been lost because of the longest hatred? What sources should we be reading to help us not only understand more about antisemitism but to learn what we can do about it?

This may be a discussion you can have with friends and colleagues. And if you have recently read a “Prayer for

Israel,” you may recall these words: “May we see the day when war and bloodshed cease, when a great peace will embrace the whole world.” If only humanity could learn to live in harmony and love, we could have more time to read enjoyable books and not be inundated by so many articles about increasing antisemitism, murder, hatred and destruction.

A reminder that the mission of GenShoah SWFL is promotion of Holocaust education and human rights, preserving the history and memories of the Holocaust, connecting descendants of those impacted by the Holocaust with one another, and support of the Holocaust Museum

& Cohen Education Center. Anyone who shares the mission of GenShoah is invited to attend any of our programs that will be announced soon in this paper and in our free e-newsletter. For information or to receive the newsletter, please email [genshoahswfl@hmcec.org](mailto:genshoahswfl@hmcec.org).

If you find some time to read, you may want to add the above GenShoah recommended books to your reading list, along with our newsletter and news from reputable sources. 🌐

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## CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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# A milestone birthday, a sincere thank you and more

By Cheryl Fulmer, Ellen Feingold and Marcia Rudin

**T**he Fast of Tisha B'Av (the Ninth of Av) begins at sundown on Saturday, Aug. 2 and ends at nightfall on Sunday, Aug. 3. We may fast in remembrance of the disasters that have befallen us over the past three thousand years. The Book of Lamentations is read in synagogues. It is the saddest day in the Jewish calendar.

The destruction of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E., followed by the 2,000-year dispersal from the Land of Israel, is the main impetus for the dirges. But in more modern times, other disasters have befallen the Jewish people, including the expulsion from Spain in 1492, the Crusades, the Holocaust, and the Oct. 7, 2023, massacre at the hands of Hamas.

## Birthday wishes

On a lighter note, our Chavurat Shalom participants range in age from five years to 100 years! We wish our member, Norman Minsky, a happy recent 95th birthday!

Born in Bangor, Maine, Minsky is a lifelong resident. He attended Boston University for his undergraduate and law degrees. Following his service in the army in Germany, he returned to the U.S. and started his law practice in 1955. He served in government as: Bangor City Planning Board chair; mayor of the Bangor City Council; an elected member of

the Maine House of Representatives; and on the Board and chairman of the Bangor Public Library. He served as president of the Community Health and Guidance Center, officer of the Jaycees, president of the Bangor Symphony Orchestra, vice-president of the United Way. He was an original member of the Maine Baxter State Park Advisory Committee.

Minsky was president of the County Bar Association and served the state bar as chairman of the Continuing Legal Education Committee. He was honored by selection as a Fellow of the American College of Real Estate Lawyers. He has been very involved with the University of Maine and serves on various committees for the University and its Foundation. He was elected an honorary alumnus. He was instrumental in the University starting a Judaic Studies program.

The Minsky family, Norman, Leonard and Renee, was elected to the inaugural class of the Maine Jewish Hall of Fame. Minsky was president for 12 years of Congregation Beth Israel in Bangor and started their endowment fund. He was president of the Jewish Community Council, served the Jewish Community



Norman Minsky

Endowment Associates and was involved with the Jewish National Fund. He still acts as caretaker of a small — also the oldest — Jewish cemetery in Maine.

A snowbird since 1994, he was a volunteer at Ding Darling Wildlife Center and a director of Temple Bat Yam in Sanibel, Florida.

We wish Mr. Minsky many more happy, healthy and fulfilling years.

## Tzedakah Committee's donations

Several times a year, Chavurah Shalom's Tzedakah Committee solicits donations from members.

The committee has contributed these funds to: Jewish Federation of Los Angeles; Friends of the IDF; M'ever La Yam (Across the Sea); Israel Children's Fund; Friends of ERAN; American Friends of Rambam Hospital; American Friends of Saroka Medical Center; American Friends of Leket Israel; Sar-El, AID Coalition; Brothers and Sisters for Israel; American Friends of Magen David Adom; FISH; Gladiolus Food Pantry; Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties; St. Matthews House; Harry

Chapin Food Bank; Planned Parenthood of Southwest Florida; Association of Rape Crisis Centers (Israel); The Shelter for Abused Women and Children; Cycle Forward; Quality of Life Center; and the JOINT Distribution Committee.

We thank Tzedakah Committee Chair Dr. Ellen Feingold and her committee members for their efforts.

## Upcoming services and events

Chavurat Shalom holds weekly Friday evening Shabbat services **every Shabbat** throughout the year. All other activities take place on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. All times are Eastern Standard Time.

On the first Tuesday of the month, we have informal "Schmoozes."

The second Tuesday is our "Torah Talk" discussion of the Torah portion.

The third Tuesday is Len Minsky Current Events.

On the fourth Tuesday, there are lectures by Chavurat Shalom members and outside speakers.

All Chavurat Shalom activities are held via Zoom, with in-person gatherings planned occasionally. All are welcome to attend our activities.

Check our website [chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org](http://chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org) or email [chavuratshalom@gmail.com](mailto:chavuratshalom@gmail.com) to get further information and to obtain the schedules. 🌐

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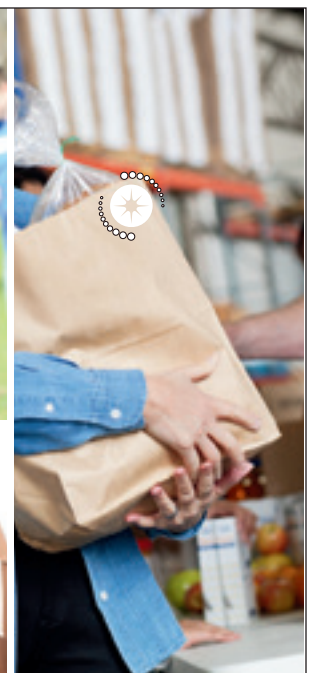
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# Have you met Raquela yet?

By Diane Schwartz, Co-President Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah

Many readers may know of or have read the book “Raquela: A Woman of Israel” by Ruth Gruber. It is a National Jewish Book Award-winning biography.

“Raquela” is the true story of the life of Raquela Prywes who came to Israel during the 1940s. She graduated in the first class of the Hadasah School of Nursing. Her personal and professional life track the pre-State years and growth of the early State of Israel. She knew and treated many well-known people including Golda Meir and Henrietta Szold. Prywes was a strong, empowered Zionist and a fine example of what Hadassah women are today. It is a wonderful book for a book club if you haven’t read it yet. There is a lot to discuss.

Group discussion takes us to the present time. Collier/Lee Hadassah honors Prywes’ name, because her life and actions represent National Hadassah’s history, and our present is represented through *Hadassah Magazine*, weaving these two eras together.

We have initiated groups of women who will focus on reading and discussing a self-selected article from the award-winning *Hadassah Magazine* as



Diane Schwartz

decided by the rotating discussion leader. In this turbulent world, this group is a wonderful way to meet new friends, renew friendships, reconnect with Hadassah and delve into meaningful conversations about topical Jewish issues in Israel, the U.S. and the world.

The group(s) will plan its(their) own meeting(s).

Many thanks to JoAnn Lewin for coordinating the Raquela/Fort Myers Group. They’ve met several times, and the discussions have been meaningful, providing an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts and be heard by their peers. The group meeting is held at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. The next meeting will be on July 15 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Contact JoAnn Lewin via [collierlee\\_hadassah@gmail.com](mailto:collierlee_hadassah@gmail.com) about this and future meetings; please put Raquela/Fort Myers in the subject line.

We are happy to include our thanks to Iris Shur who will lead the Naples group beginning June 16 from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Jewish Federation of Greater Naples. Contact Iris Shur via [collierlee\\_hadassah@gmail.com](mailto:collierlee_hadassah@gmail.com); please put Raquela/Naples in the subject line. Right now, Raquela/Naples has a waiting list.

If you are interested, sign up, and we can create another group. We are aiming for in-depth and enjoyable conversations for 10 to 12 people in all groups.

We live in difficult, stressful times for Jewish communities. We can keep

up with the issues while knowing that our most significant way to deal with these times is to stay together, help each other, talk with each other, pray with each other and volunteer with each other. 🕊

## You Are Invited

July 11 – Enjoy a potluck Book Swap

July 15 – Raquela/Fort Myers

Aug. 11 – Raquela/Naples

Sept. 16 – Clive Daniel Luncheon, Lecture and Shopping

Nov. 17 – Fall Meeting and Vendors Showcase

Dec. 14 – Meet and greet Hadassah National President Carol Ann Schwartz at a luncheon event in Schiff Hall at the Nina Iser Jewish Cultural Center of Greater Naples. This event is open to all Hadassah members as well as the community. Information and invitations will follow in the fall.

Watch your email for further information.

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## TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Fort Myers

Allison Fego, Religious School Coordinator

What a year our religious school had! So many new families joined us this year with kids from pre-kindergarten to seventh grade. Alon Gomel led another successful year of Mazel tots. On top of it all, the biggest goal we had this year was to raise the money to foster the Israeli Guide Dog, and we achieved it!

They brought their love for the kids, love of Judaism, and guidance as teachers to help make our students' school year super fulfilling.

Summer is always an exciting part of our student's and family's lives. When we start off the school year each August, it is usually that feeling of, "Aw! Summer is over!," but at Temple Beth El's Religious



Morah Elaine's class making falafel



Morah Stacy's class getting their hands into making falafel for Yom Ha'atzmaut

If I had to sum up our year with one word, it would be **growth**! We've experienced growth in numbers, growth in education, physical and emotional growth in our students, and especially growth in Jewish values.

We ended our school year with our last family tefillah, then a celebration with all our families. We had a water bounce house, a bounce house slip-n-slide, hot dogs, a water ice truck, bubbles and bouncy balls for the kids to play kickball. Seeing the kids running around and having fun together, along with the parents sitting around and kibbitzing, always makes for a great time.

Our Religious School teachers, Morahs Stacy, Lindsay, Elaine and Zoey, and our music teacher, Moreh Nathan, helped to make this an amazing year.

School, summer was just beginning once school ended in May.

### Jewish Summer Day Camp

In June, we were excited to have our first Jewish Summer Day Camp. Morah Lindsay and Morah Stacy ran the camp. The theme of our camp was, A Trip to Israel. Each day our campers got to learn about and do things based on different areas of Israel. We "went" to Tel Aviv, the Dead Sea and the Judean Desert, a Kibbutz, Tzvat, and Jerusalem. The campers made things like challah, falafel, mud masks, sand clay sculptures and homemade candles. They also planted seeds and painted wooden hamsas.

Along with all the fun and games, it allowed our campers and counselors to immerse themselves in another aspect of



End of School Year Community Shabbat Dinner



Morah Zoey's class playing sederland

what being Jewish is all about. Everyone had fun, and we are looking forward to what lies ahead next summer.

What a special year it's been. From celebrating the *chagim* together to watching our students grow in their learning, middot and friendships, this year has been filled with joy, connection and meaningful moments. We are so proud of all that our community has accomplished.

Dinner and Service. Getting all the families back together with our TBE congregation will be amazing.

As we look ahead to the coming school year, we're excited to continue building a strong, caring, and joyful Jewish environment — together. May we go from strength to strength — *mei'chayil el Chayil* — in the year ahead!

If you are interested in becoming part of our amazing religious school family, please feel free to contact our Religious School Coordinator Allison Fego at [religiousschool@templebethel.com](mailto:religiousschool@templebethel.com). 🌟



Kids enjoying the end of school year celebration



Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration and Religious School Open House



Religious School students on Bima for Religious School Shabbat and Consecration Service



TEMPLE JUDEA RELIGIOUS SCHOOL  
Fort Myers  
Jane Bernstein, VP of Education

At Temple Judea religious school, this past year wasn't just about learning; it was about living Judaism with heart, hands and soul. With a balance of structure and warmth, we built a space where Jewish tradition came alive through stories, songs, Hebrew, mitzvot and moments of joy.

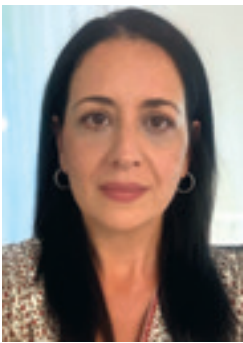
Tefillah

Tefillah (prayer) was one of the most meaningful parts of our weekly rhythm. With our beloved rabbi leading the way, often accompanied by guitar and piano, students learned not only the words of the siddur, but also how to connect to them with *kavannah* (intention).

We explored morning *brachot* (blessings), Shabbat prayers and favorite *niggunim* (melodies). Twice this year, students led beautiful Shabbat tefillah experiences for their families, including lighting candles, reciting Kiddush and sharing a full Shabbat meal together.

Hebrew that comes to life

Our Hebrew program met twice a week in small groups. Lessons were hands-on and lively, filled with games, songs, conversations, dramatic play and structured workbook practice. We saw clear growth in reading skills, Hebrew vocabulary and



Director of Education  
Tehila Cherubino

their ability to use Hebrew in conversation.

Chagim (Holidays)

The Jewish calendar set the rhythm for our year. Every *chag* (holiday) became a multi-sensory experience:

- For Rosh Hashanah, we created New Year cards and learned about *teshuvah* (return).
- At Chanukah, students performed a lively play for families, lit the chanukiyah and played dreidel together.
- Purim was a true celebration: costumes, megillah reading, homemade hamantaschen and a student-led performance.
- In preparation for Pesach, we rolled dough to make matzah, stirred fresh charoset and held a fun and musical model seder.
- And for Shavuot, we gathered outdoors with flower crowns, fruit baskets, water games and a joyful celebration of Torah.

Israel

Throughout the year, we deepened our connection to Eretz Yisrael. We sang Hatikvah, danced Rikudai Am (Israeli folk dances), and explored maps, stories and symbols. Students saw Israel not as something far away, but as a real and living part of their Jewish identity.

Living our values

Jewish values weren't just taught, they

were practiced. We spoke about *kashrut* (dietary laws), *brachot* before and after eating, Shabbat observance and everyday mitzvot like *derech erez* (respect), *tzedakah*, and *lashon hara* (avoiding hurtful speech). Children explored what it means to live Jewishly at school, at home and in the world.


Community, friendship and belonging

One of the most meaningful parts of the year was the friendships that blossomed. Children found real connection with one another. Looking back, it's clear: this year wasn't just educational; it was transformational. Our students didn't just learn Jewish life; they lived it, loved it and grew in it.

This is how we build a warm and connected Jewish community, one child, one moment and one mitzvah at a time.

Looking to the future


We are thrilled to announce that Temple Judea has hired a full-time director of education to lead our religious school in the coming school year. Tehila Cherubino is a seasoned educator, joining us with over 20 years of experience in Jewish day schools and Hebrew schools. She is looking to bring her love of Jewish education to our youngest congregants. Cherubino joins our enthusiastic staff of Morahs, along with Rabbi Arias, with plans for exciting programming this coming school year.

Please join us on our first day of religious school, on Sunday, Aug. 17, for an open house to learn about all we have to offer students from pre-K to bar mitzvah age and beyond. Feel free to reach out to Cherubino at [tjswfledu@gmail.com](mailto:tjswfledu@gmail.com) with any questions and for registration materials. 



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## BBYO

Naples/Fort Myers

Cayla Schreier, BBYO Southwest Coordinator

# Updates from Naples and Fort Myers BBYO

By Cayla Schreier, BBYO Southwest Coordinator

The month of May flew by with teens taking final exams, celebrating Mother's Day with their loved ones, and preparing for summer break. As if the teens were not busy enough, they also planned and hosted their final event of the 2024-25 school year, the Maccabeach Games. The Maccabeach Games took place on Sunday, May 18 at Lowdermilk Park in Naples. The eight teens spent their last event of the school year playing spikeball, cornhole, the Israeli dodgeball-like game, Gaga Ball, and a water balloon toss. The teens ended the event with a water balloon fight, which helped everyone cool down after a long afternoon of fun in the sun.

During their lunch break, the teens helped elect their Fall 2025 Naples BBYO Teen Chapter Board. The following teens were elected to the Board:

- N'siah (President): Brooke Glick
- S'ganit (Programming Chair): MJ Solomon
- Moreh (Membership and Engagement Chair): Noah Tspursky
- Mazkirah (Secretary): Hannah Shraiar
- Gizborit (Treasurer): Mimi Goldberg

We are so excited to have these teens serve on the Fall 2025 Chapter Board. The Board already met to begin planning events for the Fall 2025 term. Please keep an eye out for more information about our local Fall 2025 Kick-off in August!

Welcome to all our new Naples BBYO teens entering 8th grade! We are thrilled that you can now join our vibrant local Jewish teen community.

emails, text messages, and Instagram posts regarding all upcoming Naples and Fort Myers BBYO events.

## A personal message

Hi, everyone. My name is Cayla Schreier. As you may know, I have been an active member of the local Southwest Florida Jewish Community since graduating from Florida Gulf Coast University in December 2020. I have always held a special place in my heart for



BBYO as an alumnus. As I accepted the role of Southwest Coordinator for Naples BBYO in February 2023, Naples BBYO has shown me the resilience of the Jewish people and the need for Jewish programming for the younger Jewish demographic. The teens showed their strength, leadership abilities and determination to have Jewish programming for themselves and their peers.

I have a bittersweet announcement to extend to everyone. Because you have



found my true passion because of you.

While this may be the end of my career with Naples BBYO, I will always hold a special place in my heart for this community. Please keep in touch.

## What is BBYO?

BBYO is a diverse and inclusive Jewish youth group to encourage Jewish teens to become more immersed and interested in meaningful Jewish activities and programs. This organization accepts Jewish teens attending 8th through 12th grades of all backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender, race, denominational affiliation, or socioeconomic status. BBYO currently reaches over 70,000 teens worldwide, with participants in over 60 countries and hundreds of chapters across the United States.

## Supporting our teenage Jewish community

It is crucial to engage teens post-B'nai Mitzvah age in Jewish activities. Having teens get involved in BBYO and be eager to create and confidently continue their own Jewish community within their greater

Jewish communities is critical to our future.

The BBYO chapter of Naples has entered its 11th year of partnership with Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, Temple Shalom, Chabad of Naples, and Beth Tikvah. Each organization provides financial support, volunteers and community involvement opportunities for the BBYO teens. We thank each and every one of our BBYO alum, friends and other supporters for making this a safe and positive environment for the teens of BBYO Naples and Fort Myers.

If you know of someone who has a teen who might like to join BBYO Naples or Fort Myers or know of someone who may want to be an advisor to our chapters, please email [cschreier@bbyo.org](mailto:cschreier@bbyo.org). You can also follow us on Instagram: [@Mishpacha\\_BBG](https://www.instagram.com/Mishpacha_BBG) and [@Negevaza](https://www.instagram.com/Negevaza).

Scholarships to attend BBYO conventions and summer programs are available through both Jewish Federation of Greater Naples and the Temple Shalom Men's Club. Please contact [cschreier@bbyo.org](mailto:cschreier@bbyo.org) for more information on scholarships. If you are a BBYO alum and would like to be included in our Friends and Alumni of BBYO mailing list, please email us at [mjs0821@aol.com](mailto:mjs0821@aol.com). 🌟



If you have a teen entering 8th grade who may be interested in BBYO, don't hesitate to reach out and attend our local Fall 2025 Kickoff!

We hope you all have a wonderful summer. Stay safe and see you in August!

## Upcoming events

More details on all upcoming events to follow. Please keep an eye out for

provided me with the opportunity to become involved in our local community to oversee Naples BBYO, I have decided to transition into a full-time career in Jewish communal work. With this, I have accepted the role as director of community and student engagement for Hillel of Utah and will be resigning as of June 27, 2025. I want to thank everyone for their participation in our local Naples BBYO program. I

# Candle lighting times:

July 4: 8:05 p.m.

July 11: 8:05 p.m.

July 18: 8:03 p.m.

July 25: 8:00 p.m.

August 1: 7:55 p.m.

August 8: 7:51 p.m.

August 15: 7:45 p.m.

August 22: 7:38 p.m.

August 29: 7:31 p.m.





# What really happened on the Ninth of Av?

By Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

**T**isha B'Av (the Ninth of Av), is the day we commemorate the destruction of both Temples in Jerusalem and many other tragedies that befell us throughout history. What's the significance of the Ninth of Av in our Torah?

In Parshah Sh'lach, we learned of the episode of the spies who were sent out to survey the new land and report back regarding how easy or difficult it would be to conquer. Only two of the spies return with a positive report encouraging the Israelites to move forward according to G-d's assurances. The other 10 maligned the land of Israel by calling it a land that devours its inhabitants, saying the people who inhabit the land are like giants and we're like grasshoppers.

The spies embarked on their mission on the 29th of Sivan for 40 days ending on the Ninth of Av. Speaking ill of the land of Israel was regarded as so great a sin by G-d that they were condemned to die in the desert with



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

everyone who followed their negative report. Our own pessimism and lack of faith in G-d was what brought about our exile.

Two groups saw the same place with two contrasting perspectives, and it's no different today as we're confronted by a barrage of anti-Israel media coverage since Oct. 7, 2023. So which report should we believe? The negative majority or positive minority?

If our ancestors had not discovered the power of positive thinking and maintained their defeatism, we wouldn't be worrying about the current conflicts in Israel — there would be no Israel.

In 1948, when Israel was reborn, we were attacked and outnumbered by five Arab nations. Seeing that physical reality, how many would have said "let's surrender; retreat; we can't win; we're doomed to failure." And how many said, "let's move ahead; we can and will succeed; G-d has been with us in the past and will be with us now!"

Thank G-d the positive outlook ruled the day. Since 1948, it's been an uphill battle, but it's only by the power of optimism that we survived. Achievement's never achievable as long as you believe it's an impossibility.

**Achievement's never achievable as long as you believe it's an impossibility.**

With today's anti-Israel bias and an unprecedented global upsurge of antisemitism, we must remain stronger and more resolute than ever before to drown out the voices that say Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, an apartheid state — an evil and oppressive nation. Should we allow the war in Gaza and the war of words being waged against us in the media and on campus protests to once again cause us to retreat in fear?

If we retreat in fear — as we've done in the past — and accept that we

have no right to exist, we may find ourselves in exile, wandering the world in search of a safe haven for another 1,900 years. G-d help us if we do.

There will always be negative chatter from non-Jewish and Jewish voices too. It's our mission to block out those voices and replace them with voices that encourage our success. Hope, faith, positive thinking and sheer willpower have sustained us for thousands of years, and our generation is being tested once again.

Over the centuries much of our history has been written by our talent for beating the odds and achieving the unachievable. Theodore Herzl said, "If you will it, it is no dream." With faith in G-d and the power of positive thinking, the nation of Israel and the Jewish people will continue to survive and thrive forever.

Am Yisrael Chai!

Rabbi Lawrence Dermer serves Shalom Life Center of Southwest Florida in Fort Myers. 🕊

## Community versus individuality

By Rabbi Nicole Luna

**F**rom the moment the Jewish people stood together at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, we have been connected as one Jewish people, *Am Yisrael*, the people Israel. We receive Torah together, we engage in Jewish community together and, alas, we experience antisemitism and hatred together.

Yet, the Torah also focuses on the importance of individual Israelites. Moses assigns creative roles to individuals in the making of the Tabernacle, the portable sanctuary in the desert, and orders a census of the military-age men in each tribe. A Jewish midrash (B'midbar Rabbah 4:2) offers a parable of a person who had a collection of beautiful pearls, and he would count them each time he took them out and put them away. Similarly, the midrash teaches that God says to Israel, "You



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

are my children ... and therefore I count you often."

One imagines God as a parent, bestowing love upon each individual child, understanding their unique personalities and anticipating their own needs and concerns.

We all stood at Mount Sinai as a whole, one people responsible for each other. And we are each a fine pearl, precious to God in our individuality.

How do we balance this focus on both community and the individual?

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler offers us a path forward. He writes, "The separation of individuals prevents the reaching of goals. However, mixing them all together into one unified mass is also not good. Rather, the optimal system is when each individual uses their unique traits and abilities, directing these abilities to one purpose, to the whole ... to reach spiritual

**When we join in Jewish community, we arrive as individuals, but we experience a spiritual unity as a whole.**

wholeness each individual learns from each other." When we join in Jewish community, we arrive as individuals, but we experience a spiritual unity as a whole.

To experience spiritual unity, each individual must share these talents and interests, abilities and strengths. A meaningful Shabbat worship experience only occurs when we show up as individuals, when our voices merge as one, when we join together as a community for oneg. A caring community only occurs when we as individuals check in on one another and help each

other. A sacred partnership only occurs when we speak with kindness and sensitivity, avoid gossip and hearsay.

We are part of the Jewish community because we all stood together at Mount Sinai. We are part of the Jewish community because we all have something unique to share. Just as God treasures each Jew, each human being, so too must we, and in doing so we build a Jewish community of support and kindness, love and faith.

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

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# When hate speaks, we must speak louder

By Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

Eleven days after the murder by a terrorist of Sarah Milgrim (zl') and Yaron Lischinsky (zl') in Washington, D.C., the Jewish people were attacked again, this time in Boulder, Colorado. Twelve Jews were burned during a vigil for the remaining Israeli hostages in Gaza. Two were transferred to a burn unit at a Denver hospital where, as of this writing, they remain — one in critical condition. Our prayers for a full recovery go out to the victims of this horrific event.

These attacks — and the lethal assaults upon Jews in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Colleyville, Texas; Jersey City, New Jersey; Monsey, New York; Poway and Los Angeles, California;



■ Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

and Overland Park, Kansas — over the last 20 years should leave no doubt as to the motive: antisemitism.

The Jewish people are at war.

Let that sink in. We are at war, once again, with those who wish our destruction. The declared motivation of our latest attackers may be the current conflict in Gaza, but antisemites have never needed a reason to

kill Jews. Hatred transcends reason.

These attacks should serve to unite us in an ever-stronger bond with our brethren in North America, Israel and around the world. Our enemies see us as one people. So should we.

But greater unity also brings greater responsibility.

It is not enough to harden our security at our synagogues and JCCs, because there is little defense against lone wolf attackers motivated by ideology. The Jewish community must attack the ideology at its source. Antisemitism is rife on the internet and an entire generation — at both ends of the political spectrum — is normalizing hatred.

The American Jewish community is well placed and sufficiently funded to mount massive media campaigns against antisemitism and racial hatred. A few commercials during the Super Bowl decrying antisemitism were well intended but woefully insufficient. The nation should be seeing these messages every day and on every media platform, especially the corners of the web where young adults gather.

Instead of simply recording the number of antisemitic messages in chat rooms, organized Jewish leadership should be promoting counter messaging. The attitude of a generation of young men and women

**We must shine a light of truth on the lies of the dark web and beyond.**

towards the Jewish people may hang in the balance. We must shine a light of truth on the lies of the dark web and beyond.

Because there are not good people on both sides. There is only one side. The side of humanity.

Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer serves Bat Yam Temple of the Islands. 🕊

## Marcia Can Help

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

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

Help us meet these pressing needs by contributing to the **MARCIA CAN HELP** fund.

For further information please contact Debbie Sanford at (239) 481-4449 ext. 6 or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

## The three weeks

*This year, July 13 through Aug. 3*

By Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

There are three weeks between the fast of the 17th of Tammuz, which recalls the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem and the capture of the city, and *Tishah BeAv*, which commemorates the destruction of the Temple.

These three weeks are times of mourning; we don't conduct weddings or cut our hair. For our sages tell us that whoever does not witness the construction of the Temple should feel as if it was destroyed in his lifetime. Therefore, during these three weeks, we take stock of the faults that led to the destruction of the Temple and try to eradicate them from our own conduct.

But these aren't merely somber times. Quite the contrary. Although we commemorate the destruction of the Temple, that concern is forward oriented — we are looking forward to it being rebuilt. Our recollection of its destruction has that purpose in mind.

For this reason, it is desirable to spend these weeks studying the laws of building the Temple. The study of these laws serves as a powerful catalyst, leading to the time when they will actually be applied. Indeed, the prophet Ezekiel refers to the study of the laws of the Temple's construction as "building G-d's house."

Although the conquerors of Jerusalem — the Babylonians and the Romans — carried away many of the Temple utensils, they were not able to take possession of its most sacred vessel. The Holy Ark — in which the Ten Commandments were placed and on which G-d's presence rested — was not taken into captivity.

Many years before the destruction of the First Temple, Josiah, the



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

last of Jerusalem's righteous kings, hid the ark in a maze-like system of chambers and vaults that King Solomon had constructed under the Temple building. The ark is still buried there, beneath the site of the Holy of Holies. When *Mashiach* comes, it will surface.

It follows that there are two places for the Holy Ark: one in the Holy of Holies, where it is openly revealed,

and another, concealed in the maze-like vaults within the Temple Mount.

Each one of us has a sanctuary in microcosm in his heart, a place where

**Each one of us has a sanctuary in microcosm in his heart, a place where G-d's presence rests.**

G-d's presence rests. There are times when the G-dliness in our hearts shines openly; our personal Holy of Holies is revealed. On other occasions, that G-dliness is hidden, buried in maze-like vaults. But even when hidden, it is not captured. Like the Holy Ark on the Temple Mount, it is waiting anxiously to be revealed.

This is the essence of *Mashiach's* coming — that the Divine potential, which we and every element of existence possess, will shine in overt revelation.

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida. 🕊



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# Tisha B'Av – Déjà vu?

By Cantor Barry Butensky

Year after year, Tisha B'Av mourning for the lost Holy Temple becomes more challenging. The disastrous fall and the derailment of Jewish history occurred thousands of years ago. Genuine mourning requires actual sadness, and it is difficult to experience genuine woe about events so far in the rear-view mirror.

Significant years have passed, and our society has dramatically advanced, bearing little resemblance to the ancient world of the Holy Temple. The world of Judea and Jerusalem, of Romans and Persians, appears dated. It sometimes feels as if these catastrophic events occurred in a different world.

Many Jews view our return to Israel as the inception of a broader redemptive process. We feel gratified to live in an era of historical reawakening, and our collective happiness over this historical awakening dulls our grief and stops us from shedding our tears.

In a modern, enlightened world of Jewish sovereignty, Tisha B'Av feels outdated to some. Many living in Israel assumed their suffering was a relic of the past. No longer facing violence and aggression, it became harder for them to feel the pain of Jewish history and



■ Cantor Barry Butensky

more difficult to grieve over lost destiny.

Everything changed after Oct. 7, 2023. Tisha B'Av feels more real and relevant than ever. Sadness once again casts its shadow over Jewish history. We are waging a relentless struggle for survival against fanatical murderers. Fierce antisemitism rages across the globe. In the post-Oct.

7 world, Tisha B'Av resonates with relevance and urgency like never before.

Ideally, Tisha B'Av should simulate actual mourning and should not be oriented to teshuva or other important values. It should be a day of frustration and despair over the tragedy of Jewish history.

This year's Tisha B'Av, we have so much to mourn over. The loss of thousands of innocent lives. The horrific pogrom we faced in our own homeland. Netanyahu says there are 20 hostages still alive: others say 24, but a total of, maybe, 58? The hostages, those alive, still live underground in excruciating conditions. The immense number of injured soldiers whose lives have been altered

forever, and the horrific desecration of G-d's name.

Our anguish over Oct. 7 cannot be severed from the tragedy of the fall of Jerusalem or from the sadness of our prolonged exile. There is a real danger that our continued agony over Oct. 7 will obscure the broader story that Tisha B'Av is meant to lament. How can we incorporate the suffering of Oct. 7 with past Jewish tragedies?

**In the post-Oct. 7 world, Tisha B'Av resonates with relevance and urgency like never before.**

Acknowledge our own role in the divide of history. Jewish history wasn't meant to evolve this way. There was a different trajectory to our history. We were meant to enter the land of Israel, establish Jewish monarchy, and model the dignity of a blessed lifestyle. Tragically, after centuries of betrayal and religious failure, we were expelled from the land created by G-d.

Ever since that bleak moment, history has not been the same. If history

feels broken, it is because we broke it. We don't take blame for the crimes and violence of others, but on Tisha B'Av, we mourn for the potential we lost and the turmoil that ensued. Our breaking of history destroyed two Temples, provoked terrible Jewish persecution and potentially produced the tragedy of Oct. 7.

On Tisha B'Av, we read about the 10 martyrs who were brutally massacred by the Romans. Rome subjugated many cultures, but there was only one nation whose leadership they hunted down and sadistically tortured and murdered, underscoring the disproportion of Jewish history. We are G-d's people, tasked with calling the world to higher moral and religious ground.

There is no logic to explain the hatred and animosity our enemies feel toward us. It is obvious that we are unlike other nations and that Jewish history is disproportionate. This asymmetry reflects our chosen status and our lofty mission. There has to be higher meaning to all of the hatred and anger.

We outlived the hate and violence for thousands of years, and we will outlive the current attack upon our people. On Tisha B'Av, we mourn the steep price of that unruly pursuit.

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

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# אם אין קֶמַח, אין תּוֹרָה

“If there is no flour, there is no Torah.” (Pirque Avot 3:17)

By Rabbi Bruce Diamond

**Y**ou might appreciate this more than my usual stuff.

## How I make bagels

High gluten flour, please! Try King Arthur bread flour; it's not hard to find. Buy a small jar of yeast, keeping it refrigerated after opening. It will stay fresh for several months.

Get a jar of barley malt syrup for boiling the bagels. (I use the Eden brand, available on Amazon, or from Ada's Natural Market located on College Parkway.)



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

Substituting brown sugar or molasses is OK, but barley malt syrup is the way to go.

Good water makes good bagels, so use filtered refrigerator water or bottled water. You'll need parchment baking paper or a silicone baking sheet. An electric mixer with a bread hook saves about eight minutes of serious kneading by hand to release the gluten. No corner cutting!

Let's start with a small batch, yielding about four

3-ounce bagels. It's best to make the dough the night before you bake it.

Pour 1/2 cup of warm water in a mixing bowl; add 1 teaspoon of plain sugar or agave syrup to feed the yeast. Add 1 level tablespoon of yeast and **leave it alone** until it froths. Then add 1/2 teaspoon of grapeseed oil or canola oil.



Start with 1/2 cup of flour **followed** by 1 teaspoon of salt. The flour goes in first. Mix until smooth and work in another 1/2 cup of flour. Mix to a thick paste and then add the final 1/2 cup of flour. Knead until you have a thick, tacky (not gooey) dough ball. Add a bit more flour, if needed.

**“What sort of man gives a stone to his son who is asking for bread!”**  
(Gillyon Matityahu 7:19)

Lightly dust the dough ball with flour and place in a covered container at least twice the size of the dough and refrigerate a minimum of six hours.

When you're ready to bake, roll the dough into four equal-sized balls. Each should be close to 3-ounces. Or make two balls, leaving the rest in the refrigerator for the next day or two; it keeps.

Let the balls rise on a floured surface or silicone baking sheet while bringing two quarts of water containing 1 tablespoon of barley malt syrup (or brown sugar/molasses) to a **slow**, rolling boil. Use a saucepan that has plenty of extra room to prevent boil-overs.

Preheat the oven (or toaster oven) to 410 degrees and line a small baking pan with very lightly oiled parchment paper.

(Let's pass on the toppings until you've mastered the basic bagel!)

Press the balls into thick discs and, using your pointer finger, poke a hole in the middle of each, widening to about a 2-inch diameter. Let them rest for another 8 to 10 minutes.

**Carefully** drop a bagel into the boiling water, top side down. If you prefer, lightly dust the bagel and use a slotted spatula to slide it into the bath. It should start floating almost immediately. Loosen if it slightly stuck to the bottom from too high of a dive into the bath.

In about 2 to 3 minutes, the bagel will double in size. When it does, flip it and let it cook for another 2 minutes. (The longer the boil, the firmer the bagel.) Use a slotted spatula to lift it out, holding it over the pot for a few moments to drain excess moisture, then **gently** place it on the baking pan.

Repeat this with the other raw bagels. Bake together.

Next time, you can drizzle olive oil on each before sprinkling toppings to hold the seasonings in place. (I use homemade za'atar: dried onion bits, granulated garlic, poppy seeds, etc. work fine.)

Bake on the top rack for about 15 minutes, flip and bake 2 to 3 minutes more until light golden brown. Keep an eye on the bagels since ovens perform differently, and they burn easily — especially with toppings.

Remove and patiently let them firm up on a rack for at least 10 minutes.

Perhaps next time I will describe how to make Scandinavian gravlax — it's easy and better than store-bought smoked salmon passing for lox.

Offering “loaves and fishes” counts more than my typical rabbinic gobbledygook. “Bread and not a stone!”

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



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Rabbi Solomon Agin served as the spiritual leader of Temple Shalom in Charlotte County for more than 22 years. He was respected and admired for his knowledge and contributions to the temple and community during his tenure.

matzo balls to serve the crowd of over 80 participants.

On another occasion, Temple Shalom held a 1960s sock-hop, with music by vocal quartet, The Goldtones, as a fundraiser. It was that, but it was also a “fun” raiser.



Temple Shalom Seder

When Rabbi Agin announced his retirement two years ago, the search for a new rabbi began. The temple Board is working with professional agencies, communicating with local synagogues in the area, and networking with the aid of the congregation to find the best candidate possible.

As one can imagine, the pool of available Reform rabbis looking for a part-time position in Southwest Florida is slim. However, while the search continues, several congregants have taken on the responsibility of leading our Friday night services, sharing personal anecdotes and providing a weekly D'var Torah to our congregation. Our director of music and cantorial soloist, Dr. David Katz, brings lively and meaningful melodies into our prayer service each week.

In addition to the spiritual side of Temple Shalom, Temple President Judi Migdol says, “We are much more than just a house of worship; we are truly a family at Temple Shalom.”

The most recent “family” gathering was our Passover Seder, led enthusiastically by multiple members of the congregation. It required countless

As the High Holy Days approach, Temple Shalom engaged Rabbi Marc Kline, a distinguished rabbi who is well-known throughout the Reform movement, who will lead us for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services.

Temple Shalom was established in 1963 and is financially secure. The beautiful synagogue is mortgage free. We have a modest and growing endowment. We manage to pay our bills because our members value the only Jewish congregation in Charlotte County and show it with their generosity.

Our Board is embarking on initiatives to reach out to currently unaffiliated Jews in Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte and North Port. We are updating the look and content of our web presence and social media channels.

Members of Temple Shalom arrive early and stay late on Friday nights, making worship a social as well as a spiritual event. Anyone interested in our kind of Jewish life is invited to worship with us.

Services are held most Friday nights at 7:30 p.m. Call 941-625-2116 for more information. ☎

## CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA Fort Myers

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Please feel free to join Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida (5620 Winkler Rd., Fort Myers, FL 33919) for the month of Tamuz-Av/ July Schedule of Prayer, Torah study and celebrations.

Friday evening services – Prayer service 8 p.m.

Saturday morning services – Kabbalah

at 9 a.m.; Prayer service at 10 a.m.; Kiddush and Farbrengen at 12:15 p.m.

Evening prayers and Torah study – One hour before Shabbat ends.

We are looking forward to celebrating with you.

For information and to join, please call 239-433-7708, go to [www.Chabadswf.org](http://www.Chabadswf.org) or email [Chabad@Chabadswf.org](mailto:Chabad@Chabadswf.org). ☎

## TEMPLE JUDEA Fort Myers

(239) 433-0201 • [www.tjswfl.org](http://www.tjswfl.org)

Summer excitement is at Temple Judea in July and August.

The Israeli Scouts will perform at Temple Judea in July. These young men and women sing and dance, sharing pictures and stories from Israel. This special event is free and open to the public. We are privileged to host this dynamic performance. Contact the synagogue office at 239-433-0201 for details.

Temple Judea Religious School resumes on Sunday, Aug. 17, at 9:30 a.m. There is an open house at 10 a.m. for all interested families. Meet our new religious school director, Tehila Cherubino.

On Tuesday, Sept. 9, at 7 p.m., join us for an open house for everyone interested in learning more about Temple Judea.

Classes led by Rabbi Arias are pausing until after the High Holidays.

### Women's Chaverot Group

Temple Judea's Women's Chaverot Group says a heartfelt “thank you” to last year's chair, Rivkah Katz. The programs were interesting, fun and honored the spirit of the group. Todah Rabah Rivkah!

The new co-chairs of Women's Chaverot Group are Mindi Simon and Jodi Cohen. They have some program ideas for the coming year, and their goal is to create programs for the various ages and life stages of the women of Chaverot. Our Chaverot members are learned, talented and creative, and we plan to utilize their gifts and talents to help us continue providing great programs for our members and the community.

There will be a survey coming up to ask your interests and suggestions.

### Honey from the Heart

Emails will be coming soon about Honey from the Heart, our Rosh Hashanah honey gift fundraiser. You can reach Jodi Cohen at [jodi@jodicohen.com](mailto:jodi@jodicohen.com) or contact the synagogue office for more information.

For Hazak events and suggestions, contact Joyce Rosinger at 239-437-1566 or [gjrosinger@gmail.com](mailto:gjrosinger@gmail.com).

Temple Judea continues to accept food donations for the Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. There are collection envelopes near the front door for contactless monetary or gift card contributions. Contributions may be mailed. Please call the office to ensure your contribution has been received.

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

### Regularly scheduled events

Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. Kiddush luncheons are served every Shabbat. If you are interested in sponsoring a Kiddush, please contact JoAnn Lewin at [jalewin2@aol.com](mailto:jalewin2@aol.com).

Morning minyan, normally held on Mondays at 9 a.m., is paused until after the High Holidays. Jan Klein's Monday morning meetings are on hiatus until after the High Holidays as well.

We would love to see you in person or via Zoom. ☎

## SHALOM LIFE CENTER Fort Myers

(239) 218-3433 • [www.shalomlifecenter.org](http://www.shalomlifecenter.org)

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

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

Shalom Life Center offers individualized learning and spiritual guidance including bar/bat mitzvah preparation as well as special needs bar/bat mitzvah preparation. Shalom Life Center also

offers Pop Up Shabbat experiences that are open to the whole community, as well as weekly Torah study, Café Kabbalah, book club, and so much more. If you'd like to learn more, please send an email to [info@shalomlifecenter.org](mailto:info@shalomlifecenter.org) or give us a call at 239-218-3433.

Shalom Life Center also offers many other opportunities to enhance your Jewish life and learning and further your involvement in community service while making friends in a warm and welcoming Jewish spiritual community without the financial commitment of membership dues.

Let your spirit soar at Shalom Life Center, where community is family and prayer is always inspirational, meaningful and musical. For more information visit [www.shalomlifecenter.org](http://www.shalomlifecenter.org). ☎



## COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE

Fort Myers

(239) 247-4556 • [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com)

Our deepest sympathies are shared with Dr. Robert Mandelkorn and daughter, Rachel Sophia, at the loss of beloved wife and mother, Mary Beth Mandelkorn, in



Mary Beth and Dr. Robert Mandelkorn

early June. A Michigan native, Mary Beth served as a nursing consultant after marrying and moving to our area in 2001, following an accomplished career in the field of eye banking and transplantation. A joyous elegant woman, she will be sorely missed.

Our heartfelt condolences are also extended to CFS participant Dr. Ronald Clearfield and family at the passing of his wife of 65 years, Alice W. Clearfield.

A committed second and third grade teacher at Ventor Elementary School in Ventnor, New Jersey and Pennsauken Elementary School in Pennsauken, New Jersey, Alice was an avid tennis player, president of her local Hadassah chapter and sisterhood at Beth Jacob Synagogue in Lower Burnell, Pennsylvania, as well as a supporter of the arts. She was laid to rest on May 19 at Park Royale Cemetery in Naples.

"Post season" Sabbath Eve worship continues at the rabbi's home (7210 Falcon Crest Court, The Forest Country Club) each Friday at 7 p.m. The first Friday of each month, a meatless Sabbath Eve dinner starts at 6 p.m. Participants are encouraged to bring a dairy, fish or vegetable dish, salad or dessert.



Alice W. Clearfield

Wine and flowers are also welcome. The rabbi bakes *hallah* each week.

Our *qabbalat shabbat* is viewable via Zoom, as is our 9:30 a.m. Sabbath morning Torah Study. For easy Zoom access, visit our website, [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com).

Days of Awe worship will be conducted in our sanctuary on the Unity Campus (11120 Ranchette Road), where weekly Sabbath Eve dinners and worship resume on Oct. 3, the day after Yom Kippur.

## TEMPLE BETH EL

Fort Myers

(239) 433-0018 • [www.templebethel.com](http://www.templebethel.com)

Florida's heat will not slow us down this summer at Temple Beth El. Rabbi Luna continues her class, "Voices of the Talmud," live and at the Temple on July 2, and will resume on Aug. 13.

Did you know that on the second Friday of each month we regularly honor those who have birthdays and anniversaries that month?

The third Friday of each month is our Shabbat Group Candle Lighting service, where everyone is invited to come up, light candles and say a blessing — all together as one community.

The fourth Friday of the month is our "nachas" service or Good News Shabbat.

Finally, New Member Shabbat services are celebrated every month that has a fifth Friday night. The next new member Shabbat will be held on Aug. 29.

## Upcoming events

Please note that the Temple office is closed on July 4 for Independence Day. Because July 4 is a Friday this year, Temple Beth El will hold a Red, White & Blue Shabbat service and cookout on Saturday, July 5 at 11 a.m. with Jim Waldorf as the vocal soloist. The cookout will follow the service. All are welcome. Please look for emails and our online calendar for additional information.

On Sunday, July 27, at noon, TBE, Temple Judea, and Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties are bringing the Tzofim Friendship Caravan to Fort Myers. These Israeli Scouts are celebrating 50 years of bringing excitement, energy and friendship to North America through friendship and performance. This year, Temple Judea is hosting.

The Shabbat Service on Aug. 8 will be a Welcome Back Shabbat Dinner at 5:30 p.m., followed by an earlier scheduled service at 6:30 p.m., with Rabbi Luna and Cantor Beth Schlossberg sharing the Bima.

It's back to school on Aug. 10 with Religious School's first day — another Welcome Back.

It's not too early to start thinking about and planning for the upcoming High Holidays. We will have a wonderful S'lichot experience on Sept. 13, at 8 p.m. This will include a Havdalah service with a dessert reception — as we

To receive our regular email announcements, send your email address to [synfree@comcast.net](mailto:synfree@comcast.net).

Our Days of Awe information letters are mailed out the beginning of September. If we do not have your mailing address, email it to the CFS or send it to The Community Free Synagogue, 7210 Falcon Crest Court, Fort Myers, FL 33908.

We do not sell tickets or memberships. All are welcome. 🕊

have had in prior years — and Erev Rosh Hashanah is Sept. 22.

Many folks will be traveling during these summer months. We wish everyone safe travels and look forward to sharing the upcoming High Holidays in September and October.

## Recurring programs

Our recurring Temple Beth El programs continue, which include:

- Nonperishable food items can be dropped off in the temple lobby shopping cart whenever the building is open.
- All are welcome Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. for Torah study via Zoom, including while the rabbi is away.
- No book club in July; it will resume on Wednesday, Aug. 6, at 2:45 p.m. via Zoom.
- Tot Shabbat will resume on Sept. 5, at 6 p.m.
- History & Heritage of Our People is on July 15 and Aug. 19 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.
- Jews By Choice meets online on the last Thursday each month from 8 to 9 p.m. Discuss the delights and challenges of converting and reconnecting. Recent converts, those exploring conversion, and Jews seeking to reconnect with their roots are encouraged to attend. For questions contact [D.wineinger@yahoo.com](mailto:D.wineinger@yahoo.com).
- Shabbat services: Fridays at 7:30 p.m. live in the sanctuary, via Zoom and Facebook.
- 12-Step Recovery Group: 11 a.m. on Saturdays via Zoom. We are seeking a path to recovery via Judaic spiritual principles and the 12 Steps, using the book "Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery," by Olitzky and Copans, second edition.

To learn more about Temple Beth El and its special events, Shabbat services and recurring programs, visit our website at [templebethel.com](http://templebethel.com).

There's always something happening here, and our members make it happen: Current Events, Coffee & Chat, Theology & Life, Francophone & Hispanophone Group, the Israel Committee, Solo Travelers, Caring and Visitations, etc.

Follow us on Facebook @TempleBethElFortMyers, and on Instagram, @templebethelfortmyers. You can always contact the office at 239-433-0018.

Temple Beth El ... **where everyone matters.** 🕊



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Ellen Weiss, Executive Director  
phone: 813.769.4785  
[ellen@topjewishfoundation.org](mailto:ellen@topjewishfoundation.org)

Jill Hagler, Dir. of Philanthropy  
phone: 813.769.4769  
[jill@topjewishfoundation.org](mailto:jill@topjewishfoundation.org)

[topjewishfoundation.org](http://topjewishfoundation.org)

*Together, we are ensuring a Jewish future.*

**Changing your address? Keep L'CHAYIM coming to your home. Email [Brigarcia@jfedlcc.org](mailto:Brigarcia@jfedlcc.org).**



### BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS REFORM

Friday evening services at 7pm at the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ,  
2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel  
Spiritual Leader and Cantor:  
Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer  
President: Janice Block Chaddock  
Vice Presidents:  
Sandra Teger, Annette Pacyga  
Email: batyamsanibel@gmail.com  
Website: batyam.org  
Services: October through April  
For more information on our service times and programs, please write to batyamsanibel@gmail.com or PO Box 84, Sanibel, FL 33957

### CHABAD OF BONITA SPRINGS/ESTERO ORTHODOX

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

### CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF CAPE CORAL ORTHODOX

1716 Cape Coral Pkwy. W.  
Cape Coral, FL 33914  
Rabbi Yossi Labkowski  
Phone: 239-963-4770  
E-mail: info@chabadcape.com  
Web site: chabadcape.com  
Sunday - Friday 8:00 A.M Shacharit  
Friday Evening 5:30 P.M.  
Saturday Kabbalah Class 9:00 A.M.  
Shabbat Services 9:30 A.M.  
Kiddush Luncheon 12:00 P.M.  
Hebrew School of the Arts Sunday 10:00 A.M - 12:30 P.M  
JLI Classes Monday 7:00 P.M.  
Torah Study Tuesday 7:30 P.M.  
Women's Weekly Class Wednesday 11:30 A.M.

### CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY ORTHODOX

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

### CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ORTHODOX

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

## SYNAGOGUES & JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES



**Jewish Federation**  
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

www.JewishFederationLCC.org

### COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE CONTEMPORARY TRADITIONAL

Phone: 239- 237-4556  
Email: [synfree@comcast.net](mailto:synfree@comcast.net)  
Website: [www.forymyerssynagogue.com](http://www.forymyerssynagogue.com)  
Zoom Meeting Room ID: 52:7 117 7864 passcode 435419  
Weekly Sabbath Eve Worship 7:00 PM at the Rabbi's home,7210 Falcon Crest Court in the Forest Country Club  
1st Friday of the month Sabbath Eve Dinner at 6:00 PM  
Weekly Sabbath Torah Study Zoom at 9:30 AM  
Holiday worship on the Unity Campus, 11120 Ranchette Road  
Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D.  
Cantorial Soloist: Traci Pavel  
Moderator: Natalie Fulton  
Treasurer: Richard McConville

### CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SWFL CHAVURA

PO Box 722  
Sanibel, FL 33957  
[Chavuratshalom@gmail.com](mailto:Chavuratshalom@gmail.com)  
Web site: [chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org](http://chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org)  
Cheryl Fulmer, President  
Shabbat services - 7:30 p.m. every Friday  
Schmooze - 7:30 p.m. 1st Tuesday  
Torah Talk - 7:30 p.m. 2nd Tuesday  
Current events - 7:30 p.m. 3rd Tuesday  
Speakers - 7:30 p.m. 4th Tuesday

### TEMPLE BETH EL REFORM

16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908  
Rabbi Nicole Luna  
E-mail:[rabbiluna@templebethel.com](mailto:rabbiluna@templebethel.com)  
Learning Tree Preschool Director: Ronni Vega  
[Ronnilearningtree@gmail.com](mailto:Ronnilearningtree@gmail.com)  
President: Michael Altman  
Email: [President@templebethel.com](mailto:President@templebethel.com)  
Phone: 239-433-0018  
Office Manager: Karen Kagan  
Email: [manager@templebethel.com](mailto:manager@templebethel.com)  
Web site: [templebethel.com](http://templebethel.com)  
Shabbat services: 7:30 p.m. Friday  
Torah study 9:00 a.m. Saturday  
Religious School: 9:30 a.m.- Noon Sunday  
Mazel Tots (0-5 yrs. old). Sunday 11:00 a.m.  
Religious school coordinator: Allison Fego  
[Religiousschool@templebethel.com](mailto:Religiousschool@templebethel.com)  
Judaica Gift Gallery  
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

### TEMPLE BETH SHALOM REFORM

702 S.E. 24th Ave., Cape Coral, FL 33990  
President: Helene Glocer  
Phone: 239-772-4555  
Spiritual leader: Cantor Barry Butensky  
Email: [templebethshalomcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:templebethshalomcommunications@gmail.com)  
Web site: [templebethshalomcc.org](http://templebethshalomcc.org)  
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday  
Saturday morning Torah Service/Torah study twice monthly at 10:00 am  
Enrichment night every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.  
Shabbat 10:30 a.m.

### TEMPLE JUDEA

CONSERVATIVE  
14486 A&W Bulb Road  
Fort Myers, FL 33908  
Rabbi David Arias  
E-mail: [rabbi@tjswfl.org](mailto:rabbi@tjswfl.org)  
President: Jan Klein  
Religious School Coordinator: Linat Bahar  
E-mail: [linatbahar@gmail.com](mailto:linatbahar@gmail.com)  
Preschool Director: Suki Kelly  
[templejudeapreschool@gmail.com](mailto:templejudeapreschool@gmail.com)  
Phone: 239-433-0201 • Fax: 239-433-3371  
E-mail: [tjswfl@gmail.com](mailto:tjswfl@gmail.com)  
Web site: [tjswfl.org](http://tjswfl.org)  
Services: 6:15 p.m. Friday and 9:30 a.m. Saturday Minyan: 9:00 a.m. Monday  
Religious School: Sun. 9:30 a.m. - noon;  
Wed. 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.  
Early childhood education: Preschool, M-F, ages 18 months-5 years;  
"Mommy & Me," 12 months-2 years  
*Affiliated: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism*

### TEMPLE SHALOM CHARLOTTE HARBOR AND THE GULF ISLANDS REFORM

23190 Utica Ave., P.O. Box 494675  
Port Charlotte, FL 33949-4675  
President: Judith Migdol  
Phone: 941-625-2116  
E-mail: [Shalompc06@gmail.com](mailto:Shalompc06@gmail.com)  
Web site: [templeshalomfl](http://templeshalomfl.com)  
Organizations: Sisterhood  
*Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism*

### SHALOM LIFE CENTER

TRANS DENOMINATIONAL  
Rabbi Lawrence Dermer  
Phone: 239-218-3433  
Email: [info@shalomlifecenter.org](mailto:info@shalomlifecenter.org)  
Web site: [shalomlifecenter.org](http://shalomlifecenter.org)

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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





Cantor Barry Butensky and Temple Beth Shalom of Cape Coral present the internationally acclaimed vocal performer and recording artist



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with Cantor Mira Davis

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<https://youtu.be/Sn6FfPaBCE4>

<https://youtu.be/wFvcHqKLIM8>

[https://m.youtube.com/shorts/rCISxl\\_Vrhc](https://m.youtube.com/shorts/rCISxl_Vrhc)



**Jewish Federation**  
of Lee & Charlotte Counties



**TEMPLE  
BETH SHALOM**