

SAVE THE DATE

# Lights, Camera, Inspiration! COMMUNITY BREAKFAST Presents:

DISNEY & NETFLIX FILMMAKER  
AND MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

## SAUL BLINKOFF

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025

SEE BACK PAGE  
FOR MORE INFO



# L'CHAYYIM

Published by the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

October 2025 / 5786

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Volume 48, Number 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 5 Community Focus
- 7 Jewish Interest
- 12 Commentary
- 13 Organizations
- 17 Focus on Youth
- 20 From the Bimah
- 24 Temple News
- 27 Community Directory

### Meet our New PJ Library Coordinator

Brittany Salem brings fresh ideas to our children's programming. Page 2



### Salmon Burekasim Recipe

Dalia Hemed shares her grandmother's secret salmon burekas recipe normally served to her family on Sukkot eve. Page 10

For the most current news and articles on the war in Israel, please visit our website at [JewishFederationLCC.org](http://JewishFederationLCC.org).

## Celebrating 30 years of film, culture and community

*The 30th Annual Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida*

### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

■ Debbie Sanford



Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties is proud to announce a milestone celebration—the 30th anniversary of the Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida. Since its inception, the festival has brought together audiences from across Lee and Charlotte counties to experience the richness of Jewish culture, history and storytelling through the art of film.

In 2026, this beloved tradition will shine brighter than ever with an extraordinary lineup of 30 films. Twelve of these films will be featured at the Regal Belltower in Fort Myers during February and March, while the remaining films will be screened throughout both counties, in-person and virtually, bringing world-class cinema to audiences in diverse settings. From thought-provoking documentaries to award-winning dramas and inspiring true stories, the festival will once again provide opportunities for learning, reflection, entertainment and connection.

The festival is more than just a series of screenings — it is a chance for the community to come together, to

engage in meaningful conversations, and to reflect on themes that touch all of our lives. For three decades, the Jewish Film Festival has served as a bridge, fostering understanding while celebrating Jewish stories, resilience and creativity. This anniversary year promises to be a remarkable celebration of the festival's legacy and the vital tradition of gathering as a community to learn, connect and be inspired.

### Sponsorship opportunities

To make this milestone possible, we

30 films, ensuring they are part of every moment of this special anniversary.

In addition, sponsorship helps sustain the festival and supports the Federation's year-round programs, from cultural events to vital services such as food pantry assistance, senior outreach and community security.

With your support, the Jewish Film Festival will not only celebrate its 30th year in style but will also continue bringing our community together — through the power of film — to learn, reflect and strengthen the Jewish community of Lee and Charlotte Counties for years to come. 🌟



invite members of the community and local businesses to join us as sponsors. Sponsorships are available at various levels, each offering unique benefits. Every sponsor, regardless of level, will receive complimentary tickets to all

For more information about sponsorship opportunities and benefits, please contact me at 239-481-4449 ext. 6 or [debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org](mailto:debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org).



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Victor Gold • Roz Shraiar

**Editor:** Sharon Hood (239) 591-2709

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**NOVEMBER ISSUE  
 EDITORIAL  
 DEADLINE:  
 Tuesday, October 7**



### 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).

## Federation and SCN host successful emergency preparedness exercise

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

Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties and Secure Community Network recently led a dynamic and impactful tabletop exercise, bringing together multiple agencies within its network to evaluate and enhance their collective preparedness for both natural and manmade disasters. The exercise focused on two challenging scenarios: a major hurricane and a manmade crisis involving civil disobedience and an active shooter threat. The exercise was led by Secure Community Network Director of Emergency Management Murray Snow.

Throughout the session, participants examined critical aspects of emergency management, including the communication platforms needed before, during and after a disaster, as well as the protocols and response plans required to ensure organizational readiness. The exercise encouraged each agency to clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations — both internally and in collaboration



John Murtagh

with partners — during high-pressure incidents.

Discussions also centered on community expectations of first responders and the importance of supporting their efforts through trust, cooperation and coordinated action. Emphasis was placed on

mutual aid, transparent communication and proactive planning to ensure an effective response and recovery process. To lend their expertise and perspective, both Lee County Sheriff's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation had members in attendance.

The tabletop exercise was a vital step in strengthening the Federation's emergency response framework, enhancing cross-agency coordination, and reinforcing the shared commitment to the safety and resilience of the community. Secure Community Network and Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties continue to lead in preparing its institutions and members for the unexpected. 🇺🇸



## Meet Brittany Salem

*Federation's new PJ Library coordinator*

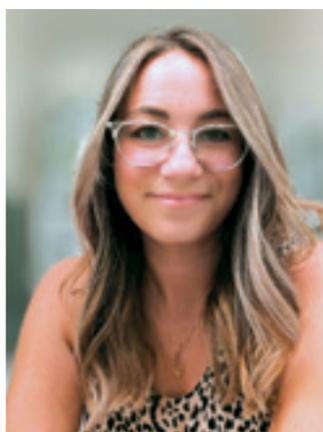
By Brittany Salem, PJ Library Coordinator

My name is Brittany Salem, and I'm so excited to introduce myself as the new PJ Library coordinator!

I have always had a passion for working with children and creating meaningful experiences that bring families together. In this role, my goal is to design programs that are not only fun and engaging but also help our children feel connected to Jewish traditions, holidays and values in a joyful way.

I can't wait to bring fresh ideas to our children's programming, whether it's celebrating the holidays, enjoying hands-on

activities or simply coming together as a community. Most of all, I look forward to getting to know the families, building relationships and making each event something special for your children.



Brittany Salem

A little about me: I grew up in New Jersey and have called Southwest Florida home for the past 10 years. I'm a proud mom of two, and in my free time I enjoy traveling, spending time with family, cooking and relaxing at the beach.

I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to serve in this role and look forward to meeting you all at our upcoming programs! 🇺🇸

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Elite Estate Services.....	22
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Fort Myers Memorial Gardens.....	14
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Gulf Coast Orthodontics....	17
Lyons & Lyons.....	10
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Margaritaville.....	24
Mobile Massage.....	12
PCC Tile & More.....	25
Scott Geller Eye Specialists...9	
Senior Housing Solutions.....	3
Snyderman's Shoes.....	25
Solidarity With Israel Coalition.....	13
Taschner Periodontics.....	18
The Bagel Factory.....	25
Temple Beth EL.....	7
Temple Beth Shalom.....	28

# JFS Food Pantry update

*August at a glance*

By **Monica Wildonger, JFS Case Manager & Food Pantry Coordinator**

August was a busy month at the pantry, and thanks to your support we were able to be there for so many in our community. Together, we served over 1,100 individuals.

Like many months, we felt the challenge of keeping our shelves stocked. We ran especially low on vegetables, pasta sauce, tuna, jelly, cereal and drinks. But even with these challenges, we saw so much good happening.

One bright spot this summer was our kids' snack bag program — a way to give families with children extra support while school was out. It was a wonderful success, and the smiles from the kids said it all.

And we're thrilled to share some exciting news: SWFL Produce and its owner, Elizabeth Etnoyer, have stepped up in a big way. They are generously bringing us fresh fruits and vegetables, free of charge for our families, along with a cooler to help us keep everything fresh. This gift is such a blessing and will bring healthy food to so many tables.



■ **Monica Wildonger**

We are so grateful for Etnoyer, for SWFL Produce, and for each of you — our supporters, donors and friends — who make this work possible. Together, we're not just filling shelves, we're filling hearts.

### How you can help right now

We're especially in need of pasta sauce, canned tuna, jelly and cereal.



Your donations go directly to families in our community who need them most. Every can, every box and every dollar makes a difference. 🌱



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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 Memory of Linda Idelson

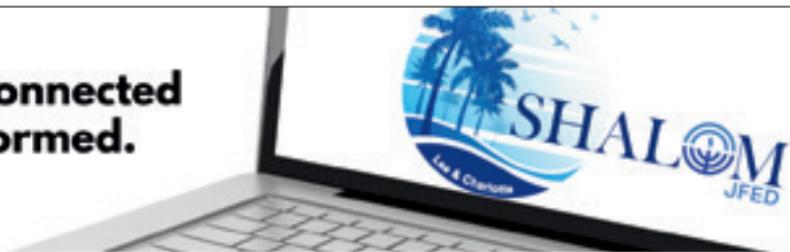
*James & Betty Rubenstein*

### In Memory of Judy Freling

*Marty Freling*

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

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)

## 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

## 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).

#### Letters Policy

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

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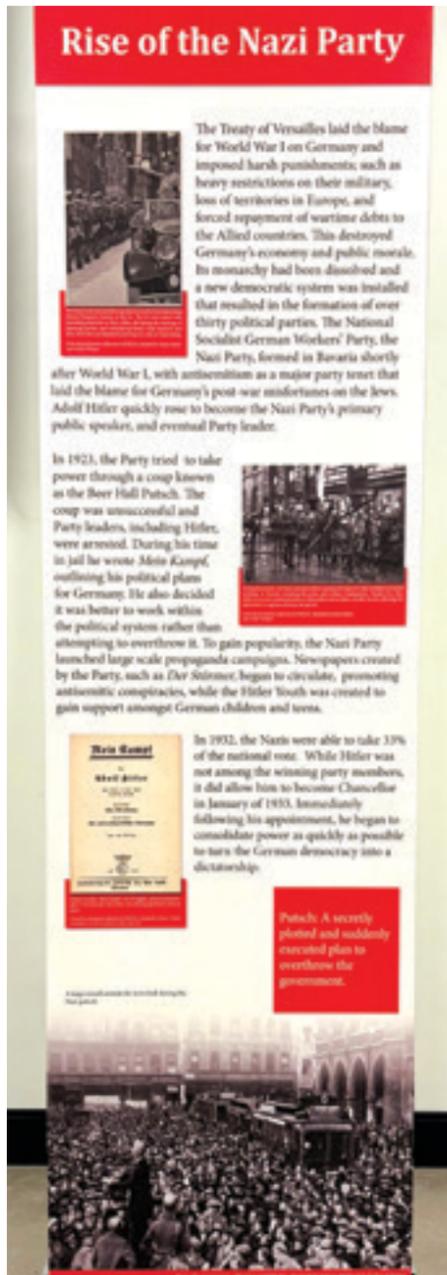
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# At the Museum

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

Reading about an antisemitic incident or act of violence has become an everyday occurrence and we can hear the echoes of the very history taught by the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center. All of us, our staff, Board of Directors and supporters, understand that our work is more critical than ever before.



New banner for the Rise of the Nazi Party PopUp Museum

We teach about the real-world consequences of allowing acts of hatred to go unchallenged. Students also learn the impact that their words and actions can have on others and that they have a responsibility to speak out and take action against antisemitism and hate. By standing up for another in need, they create a ripple effect on those around them.

We thank you for understanding the importance of our mission and educational programs and for your continuing support.

## 2025-26 school year

School is in session and our mornings are busy again with field trips. We anticipate a demanding year as our programs are now being used in nine Southwest Florida counties! Our redesigned PopUp Museum is now traveling to schools and other locations. The new format includes multiple, easy-to-set-up information panels printed on colorful fabric banners and additional artifacts from our permanent collection.

If your school or organization is interested in hosting a PopUp Museum, please contact Community Engagement Manager Julie Cohen at [julie@hmcec.org](mailto:julie@hmcec.org). The Jack and F.E. Nortman Boxcar Educational Project is now booked through the end of the school year and will visit 10 school

and library sites in Southwest Florida through May 2026!

We are grateful for the teacher partners! World Teacher Day is Sunday, Oct. 5. This month, we'll be hosting our first annual Teacher Appreciation Evening to thank our area educators and to learn more about how they teach the history of the Holocaust in their classrooms and how it has impacted their students.

Are you a parent (or grandparent) of a student in a SWFL school? You can help promote Holocaust Education by letting their principal and teachers know about the Museum's free programs for schools! Through a generous grant from Suncoast Credit Union, transportation costs for a Museum field trip can also be reimbursed. Contact Education Manager Katie Butte at [katie@hmcec.org](mailto:katie@hmcec.org) for more information and to receive an informational flyer which can be shared with the school.

## Painting Irena Sendler's Story

There is a new exhibition in the Estelle and Stuart Price Gallery, Painting Irena Sendler's Story, that will be on display through Dec. 15. Artist and Illustrator Bill Farnsworth donated his paintings in this exhibition to the Museum that illustrate the children's book, "Irena Sendler and the Children of the Warsaw Ghetto."

Irena Sendler helped save 2,500 children from the Warsaw Ghetto. We share her story with students in our Holocaust education programs to show them the impact of one person's actions to help someone in need. Sendler is also featured in the Museum's Rissa and Richard Grossman Reflection Room in the "People Who Did the Right Thing" display.

Farnsworth will join us on Monday, Nov. 3, 5 p.m., for a special Members Reception to discuss his creative process. Reservations are required. To RSVP, visit [hmcec.org](http://hmcec.org).



Irena Sendler exhibition painting by Bill Farnsworth

## Movies That Matter Series

The 2025 "Movies That Matter" programs will take place at the Museum at 2 p.m. on the following dates:

- Oct. 23 – "Free For All: The Public Library" – Please note that this program will be a discussion **only** of the documentary. You may watch the film on WGPU-TV on Monday, Oct. 20 at 9 p.m. EST, or you can view it online as part



Erin Blankenship

of the PBS Independent Lens program series.

- Oct. 30 – "Change, Not Charity" – The Americans with Disabilities Act documentary film and discussion

- Nov. 6 – "Facing Fear" documentary film and discussion

Reservations are required. To RSVP, visit [hmcec.org](http://hmcec.org).

## Remembering Amy Snyder

Former Museum Education Director, and later Executive Director, Amy Macera Snyder, recently passed away. Snyder developed the Museum's Holocaust Education Department and Community Outreach programs, impacting the lives of thousands of students, teachers and community members. Her warm smile and quick wit opened doors for the Museum across Southwest Florida.

Our deepest condolences to her husband Kevin, her parents, brothers and their families. A Celebration of Life service will be held Saturday, Oct. 4, 11 a.m., at North Naples Baptist Church in Naples.

## Save the date

Join us for The Luncheon on Wednesday, Dec. 3, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., at Vineyards Country Club in Naples.

Our Luncheon guest speaker is the critically acclaimed photographer Gillian Laub. Her "Live2Tell" photographic

project documenting the testimonies of Holocaust survivors was featured on the CBS News Sunday Morning program in a segment titled "Bearing Witness."

Laub also created the recent article in *The New Yorker* titled, "Power Houses: Inside the Living Rooms of Notable New Yorkers." Celebrities such as Martin



Holocaust survivor Sol Mermelstein (Photo credit: Gillian Laub)

Scorsese, Diane Von Furstenberg, Spike Lee and Elle Fanning were included.

Tickets to the Luncheon are \$200. Sponsorship packages are also available. Please visit our website for more information or contact [donor@hmcec.org](mailto:donor@hmcec.org).

We hope to see you soon at the Museum! 🌍

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## Local Jewish History Film Festival 2025

By Marina Berkovich, JHSSWF President

A local historian will lead a discussion following each of the Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers Films listed below. Attendance is free; registration is required. Visit [jhsswf.org/upcoming-events/](http://jhsswf.org/upcoming-events/).

### Tuesday, Oct. 21, 5-6 p.m.

“Naples’ First Jewish Historian” – Helen and Joe Weinfeld arrived to Naples in 1960s. Discrimination against Jews was in its zenith. They were told to keep driving to Miami. They did not listen and bought property. They encountered many instances of ignorance and intolerance, whilst also making lifelong friendships with Christian neighbors and working together for various charitable causes.

### Tuesday, Oct. 28, 5 p.m.

Film 1, “Chief Plager” – After serving on the Miami-Dade police for nearly four decades, Richard Plager became the very first Jewish policeman on Sanibel Island and served as chief for a decade, bridging gaps of discord and

misunderstanding through wisdom and strength of experience.

Film 2, “When Destiny Called” – Holocaust survivor Elena Rosner came to Marco Island as an investor and convinced its developer into dedicating one of the plots for the first and only Marco Island Jewish Temple.

### Tuesday, Nov. 4, 5-6 p.m.

“The Labodas of Fort Myers” – Dr. Gerald, his wife Sheila, and their parents and children made Southwest Florida their permanent home and contributed to its culture, development, wellness, governance, arts, etc., including organizing The Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties.

### Wednesday, Nov. 12, 5-6 p.m.

“Engineering The Future” – After doing similar work in South America, WWII veteran Irv Berzon helped plan Collier County’s water preservation and other engineering fetes.

### Tuesday, Nov. 18, 5-6 p.m.

“Mark Irgang Road” – Film premiere 🌐

## Jews By Choice

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

By Dawn Wineinger, Temple Beth El member and volunteer

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 me at [d.wineinger@yahoo.com](mailto:d.wineinger@yahoo.com). 🌐

## Nar-Anon support meetings

By Joann Goldman

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. 🌐

## A Jewish 12-step recovery group

Every Saturday at 11 a.m. via Zoom

Courtesy of Temple Beth El

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. 🌐



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# I'm terrified my cancer's coming back!

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

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

It was obvious to his friends seated around the table that Eddy's hands were shaking — so much that the coffee he drank each morning at the local diner nearly sloshed out of his cup.

“Ed, what's doin'?” You got the coffee nerves?” When Ed's friends nodded in agreement, he knew it was time for him to come clean. “It's the cancer,” Eddy began, but Lou shook his head and interrupted, “Oh no. Don't tell me that the cancer came back!”

Eddy smiled. “No, not that I know of. I mean I'm still cancer-free; ten years tomorrow!” Lou slapped his hands on the table. “Then we should be planning your anniversary party. What's the big problem?”

All eyes were on Eddy as he opened up about his fear. Sure, the doctors said Eddy had beaten colon cancer; ten years cancer-free was a pretty good run. “But what if it comes back,” Eddy whispered. “What if some tiny little piece of some cancer cell is still floating around in there? You know what they say about surgery. Once they open you up and the air hits it, the cancer can spread like wildfire.”

Jay, another diner regular, set Eddy straight. “Cancer hitting the air is



■ Rabbi Barbara Aiello

some old time superstition, but worrying about a recurrence, that's legit.”

Jay is right, and Eddy is not alone. According to the American Cancer Society, cancer survival rates are increasing each year. In fact, significantly more people are surviving cancer today compared to decades ago with recent studies indicating that cancer survival rates have doubled since the 1970s.

This means that more and more cancer survivors suffer from general worry to debilitating anxiety that their cancer will return.

## Cancer survivor support groups now recognize the importance of dealing with the fear of recurrence ...

In an article published in the online journal of the MD Anderson Cancer Center, author Valerie Jones discusses what has become a more publicly recognized phenomenon, “How to manage the fear of cancer recurrence” (March 2023).

Jones reports, “People who experience fear of recurrence often have anxiety about every pain, discomfort or sensation they have in their body,” relating an experience reported by Senior Social Work Counselor Sarah Green who stated, “someone could have a pain in their foot and immediately think their cancer has come back ... even though logically they know it's not cancer, they still have that irrational fear.”

Like Eddy, many cancer survivors experience heightened anxiety on or around a surgery anniversary date, while others who suffered debilitating side effects from chemotherapy fear that they couldn't tolerate another round of chemo ever again.

Social worker Jordan Green, whose clients include adolescent cancer patients, concurs. Jordan said, “It's a whirlwind of anxiety where they get stuck thinking they won't know what to do (should cancer return) when in reality they've already accomplished so much.”

Sarah Stone emphasizes, “You can't control whether cancer returns, so instead, focus on what you can do to support yourself in other ways. Do things that make you feel good ... anything that can help you stay in the present moment and not worry about what could happen in the future is best.”

Cancer survivor support groups now recognize the importance of dealing with the fear of recurrence, and many survivors report that focusing on gratitude often calms irrational fears.

King Solomon understood anxiety. In Proverbs 12:25, he wrote, “Anxiety in the heart of a person causes dejection, but a good word will turn it into joy.”

Sara Esther Crispe expanded upon this theme when she wrote about how anxiety can become obsessive (Chabad.org) stating, “It is easy to define oneself by one's problems. We should never allow a situation to become who we are. When we are separated from the problems, and ignore the darkness, we are then able to focus on the light.”

As a cancer survivor myself, I relate to Eddy's fear and embrace Crispe's message of hope. May we place fear in perspective and learn to replace anxiety with gratitude and joy.

*A ten year cancer survivor, Rabbi Barbara Aiello is Italy's first woman rabbi. For 10 years she served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life in Sarasota, Florida as resident rabbi. Currently, as Aviva's Rabbi Emerita, she shares her experiences on Aging Jewishly. Contact her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com.*

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## Loving the Loire

By Jerry Greenfield, the Wine Whisperer

The Loire Valley in France offers abundant attractions to the wine lover. Let's start with the châteaux. In days past, before the Revolution, the rich and famous from Paris retreated in the summer months to their homes along the river. Some of the cottages covered hundreds of thousands of square feet and had over 200 rooms. These days, many of them are either operated as luxury hotels or, better yet, as bed and breakfast inns at delightfully moderate prices.

Then, of course, are the wines. The Loire is the longest river in France, running northward from the eastern highlands and bending around to the west, ultimately emptying in to the Atlantic at Nantes. At the bend are two villages, Sancerre and Pouilly, and it is from here that many of the zingiest, classiest



■ Jerry Greenfield

often with agreeable vegetal overtones such as hay, straw and grass.

Sidebar: In addition to the fine wines of Pouilly and Sancerre, don't pass up the offerings from a region called Menetou-Salon. These lesser-known wines offer great values.

As we travel farther west, we come to the central region,

anchored by the towns of Chinon and Bourgueil (pronounced *boor-GOOEY*, or something like that). In this area, there's hardly a white grape to be seen. It's the home of Cabernet Franc, a big, bold red that's a major component of the Bordeaux blend but bottled here as a single varietal. If you like solid, mouth filling reds, this is the stuff for you.

Keep going, and you'll find yourself in the areas of Samur and Anjou, the home of Chenin Blanc, another refreshing,



examples of Sauvignon Blanc have their origins.

While we might first associate Sauvignon Blanc with New Zealand, the grape is indigenous to the Loire, where it has been cultivated since around A.D. 400. Luckily, Sauvignon Blanc is one of the most food-friendly wines you can buy. I subscribe to my own personal "lemon law:" if you can put lemon on it, you can drink Sauvignon Blanc with it. Perfect for broiled fish, shellfish and similar dishes.

The Loire is a diverse area, and wines are made in a very wide range of styles. Some wineries use stainless steel tanks for fermentation, then age the wine in small oak barrels, which makes it fuller and rounder. In other wineries, there's not a stick of oak to be seen.

Generally, the Pouilly wines are fuller, while Sancerres are lighter, and easier to drink young. Since the villages are directly across the river from each other, they share the same climate, but not the same winemaking traditions. With a cool climate, the major characteristic of both areas is acidity. They are "zippy" whites,

acidic white. Though it originates in this region, the South Africans, who call it "Steen," make some excellent versions at decent prices.

Since the area is so diverse (we haven't even discussed Vouvray or Melon de Bourgogne yet) it may be worth a more extended visit in a future article. For now, however, I'd like to suggest a few producers to watch for. If you see their names on the label, chances are you're in for a treat and a great value.

For Sauvignon Blanc, look for Pascal Jolivet, Alphonse Mellot, and Henri Bourgeois. For Cabernet Franc, our favorites are Yannick Amirault (the "big dog" in the region), and Bernard Baudry.

Sample widely.

Please email questions, comments or suggestions for future articles. Here's to you!

*Jerry Greenfield is The Wine Whisperer — a wine author, educator and consultant. Order his books, "Secrets of the Wine Whisperer" and "Ask the Wine Whisperer," now available through his website or on Amazon. Read his other writings at [www.winewhisperer.com](http://www.winewhisperer.com)*

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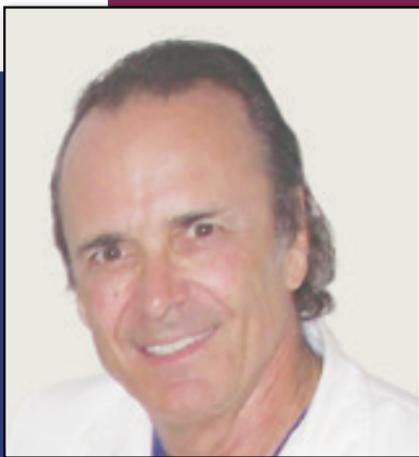
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# My Trip to Israel during Operation Rising Lion

By Chef Dalia Hemed

On the morning of June 13, I woke up to a dozen missed calls and text messages from loved ones in the U.S. asking if I was safe.

Groggy from coming out of a deep, uninterrupted sleep (soon to be my last for a while), I quickly saw the news. That's when I learned: Israel had attacked Iran's nuclear sites. War had been declared against the Iranian regime.

I had just landed in Israel a day before to celebrate my nephew's wedding; not only would the wedding be canceled, but I would also be spending the next 12 days

A few days into the missile attacks, a missile hit Tel Aviv, destroying apartment buildings and many nearby glass storefronts. This attack occurred just four blocks from the apartment I was staying in.

The large boom was so loud it reverberated in my ear while I was down in the shelter and made me scream, but my Israeli family's spirit of optimism and courage in the face of rocket fire gave me strength while being "stuck" here during this time. Speaking of being stuck, over those 12 precarious days, many Israelis asked me, "So, you're stuck here?" Though I was technically "stuck" in

lockdown with tight restrictions that limited my movement to the nearest bomb shelter, I didn't feel trapped in Israel by any means.

During those intense days of running to bomb shelters, I couldn't shake the feeling that I was meant to be here with all my family. I had been to Israel a lot of times before — for culinary trips, to visit family for weddings and funerals, but this was the first time I found myself questioning my own purpose for being in that exceedingly good land during this time. And I got chills all over again when I realized that God was

there for me once again. My trip didn't go as planned but I have left Israel with many tears.

Here's what I learned about Israel, and myself during Operation Rising Lion.

The Israeli spirit of optimism and courage in the face of rocket fire gave me strength while being "stuck" here during this time. They put things to the side and continue forward. That's the chemistry of the Israelis, and the high holidays and the festival of Sukkot are a perfect reason to continue forward. Celebrating Sukkot in Israel is much more than a sukkah. It is really one big carnival. I could feel a new holiday spirit in the air, a spirit that exists nowhere else. You will see sukkahs built in the yards or on balconies of many homes during Sukkot in Israel, and people dancing in the streets with the Arba Minim or four kinds (Etrog, Lulav, Hadas, Arava).

Two elements of the Sukkot holiday have been a highlight of my life in Israel. One was the celebration of the sukkah at Safta's (my grandmother's) house with all uncles, aunts and cousins. The other is Safta's secret recipe of the salmon burekasim she used to serve for dinner on the first night in the sukkah.

When I was a child, my Safta lived in the heart of Jaffa. She had 13 children

Every year when the Day of Atonement ended, after sunset and after we broke the fast with a meal, the whole family would get into my dad's car and drive to Safta's to build a sukkah.

Within a few hours, a sukkah was standing. The adults hung white sheets on the wooden walls and a white curtain on the small window, and then the children hung the decorations. From that evening until Sukkot (about four days), we would come every day to Safta's with additional decorations and paper chains that we had made at home or bought at the store — until there was no more room and the sukkah was adorned like a queen.

On the eve of the holiday, we would all gather at Safta's house. Each family would come with its own food, but my grandmother's special secret recipe for



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

burekas salmon was the highlight of the evening. As far as my grandmother was concerned, it was obvious that everyone was coming. There was no other option for her at all. Everyone would come — about 40 people — and sit inside the sukkah. For my grandmother, who was a religious woman, we were the honored guests (Ushpizin) of the sukkah. For her, we were the main decorations of the evening. And amazingly, I managed to get her special secret recipe for salmon burekas before she passed.

Have you ever had a salmon burekas? No? You're missing out! Take your salmon to the next level and make these gorgeous salmon burekasim.

This is an elaborate dish that requires time, patience and a little skill to prepare. Some may serve small burekasim, like delicate and beautiful jewels, which, however tiny their size may be, equal in size, as if they were made by a machine. And some will serve one large tray with a large burekas that looks like a challah loaf. 🇮🇱



running to bomb shelters to avoid incoming missiles. It wasn't fun; it was very scary.

If I had a shekel every time someone told me to be safe before this trip, I would have, well, many shekels.

## Recipe for Salmon Burekasim

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon mustard honey
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 8 cloves garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry, thawed in the fridge
- 1 (or 4 small pieces) salmon fillet, skin removed
- 1 egg beaten

### Instructions:

First, make the filling sauce. In a small bowl combine the mustard honey and thyme. Mix them together.

Lay the salmon filet on the cooking tray and dry the filet with a paper towel. Cut eight slits evenly

in two rows in the filet large enough to place the garlic cloves into it, being careful not to cut all the way through the filet. Season the salmon fillet with salt and pepper.

Then roll out the pastry sheet on your counter to a size that fits the salmon (or cut it into halves). Spread mayonnaise on top of the pastry.

Place the salmon fillet in the center of the puff pastry sheet and leave about two inches around the edges. If the puff pastry sheet is not big enough, you can roll it out so that it is larger.

Top the salmon fillet with sauce mixture. Using a spoon, spread it evenly. Brush the edges of the puff pastry sheet with the beaten egg. Then fold the pastry sheet by taking one side over the filling and then the other side over the first side.

Place the salmon on a greased baking sheet or one lined with parchment paper, seam side down. Make crosshatch slits on the top of each salmon burekasim using a sharp knife.

Bake at 400°F for 30 minutes or until the pastry is golden.

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# Takes on fall: TV series, two movies (one very Jewish)

*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.

For a variety of reasons, fewer brand-new TV series premiere in September or October. Most premiere in November or next January. I could find just three TV shows in October that have a "Jewish connection" with some "newish" news.

## "Nobody Wants This"

This 10-episode Netflix series was a surprise hit when it premiered in September 2024 with pretty good reviews and an unexpected large viewing audience.

The premise follows the unexpected relationship between Noah Roklov, an unconventional American rabbi (**Adam Brody**, 45) and Joanne, an irascible (not Jewish) agnostic woman (**Kristen Bell**) who co-hosts a podcast with her sister about relationships.

For the benefit of those who haven't seen the first season (yet), I will not summarize how their relationship played out. The second season of "Nobody Wants This" will premiere on Oct. 23.

It's nice to note that Jewish actors play almost all the Jewish characters: **Paul**

**Ben-Victor**, 65, and **Tovah Feldshuh**, 75, play the parents of Rabbi Roklov; **Jackie Tohn**, 45, plays the rabbi's sister-in-law; **Emily Arlook**, 36, plays the rabbi's Jewish, former girlfriend and almost fiancée; and **Stephen Toblowsky**, 74, plays the senior rabbi at Rabbi Roklov's synagogue.

## "Chicago Med"

This hospital-based series premieres its 11th season on Oct. 1, 8 p.m., on NBC. **Steven Weber**, 65, plays Dr. Dean Archer, a trauma and emergency physician. Weber became a "main cast" actor in the show's seventh season, and he may have a bigger role this season.

Weber is still best known as a co-star in "Wings," a hit NBC sitcom (1990-97). Weber's father was a "Borscht Belt" comedian, and he also managed many "Borscht Belt" comics.

## "Shark Tank"

The hit ABC reality show began in 2009, but the new season began on Sept. 24. "Shark Tank" features "regular people" pitching their ideas for a profitable business before a panel of persons who are wealthy business innovators. After hearing a pitch, the panel members opt to invest in the person's company or pass on the opportunity.

"All sources" say that Shark Tank really took off when billionaire **Marc Cuban**, 67, became a "Shark Tank" investor

panel member in its third season. Cuban is not only rich; he is also a very good TV entertainer. Unfortunately, last season he announced he would not return for the 2025-26 season.

However, **Daniel Lubetsky**, 56, who joined the investor "main cast" panel in 2023 will stay this season. Lubetsky was born and raised in Mexico. His father was a Holocaust survivor. He was educated in Mexico, France and the United States. He has a law degree from Stanford. His Mexican Jewish wife is a doctor. He made his billions in snack foods. His Mexican Jewish cousin is **Emanuel Lubezki**, 60, a cinematographer who has won three Oscars.

Lubetsky and Lubezki were the most famous Mexican Jews I knew of until **Claudia Sheinbaum**, 63, became Mexico's president in 2024.

## "One Battle After Another"

This adventure comedy opened in theaters on Sept. 26. Here's the premise: When their evil enemy resurfaces after 16 years, a group of ex-revolutionaries reunites to rescue one of their own's daughter.

It's a big budget action film with A-list actors: **Leonardo DiCaprio**, **Benicio del Toro** and **Sean Penn**, 64 (his late father was Jewish; his mother was Catholic. He's always been secular).

**Alana Haim**, 33, has a supporting role. The film's director, **Paul Thomas Anderson**,

loves the music **Haim** and her sisters make (the group's name is **Haim**). He gave Haim her first film acting role — a star role in "Licorice Pizza" — and he's hired her again.

## "Eleanor the Great"

This drama about a 94-year-old Jewish Floridian woman (**June Squibb**, 95) who strikes up an unlikely friendship with a 19-year-old college student journalist in New York City opened in theaters on Sept. 26.

Squibb converted to Judaism in the '50s, not long before she married a Jewish man. The marriage lasted for six years. She isn't very devout, but she has always continued to identify as a Jew.

"Eleanor the Great" was directed by actress **Scarlett Johansson**, 40. This is the first film she has directed. (Johansson's mother is Jewish, and she identifies as a Jew).

Spoiler alert, more plot: Eleanor moves to New York City to live with her daughter (**Jessica Hecht**, 60) after Bessie, her best friend in Florida and a Holocaust survivor, dies suddenly (**Rita Zohar**, 81).

The college journalist (whose mother is Jewish) talks to Eleanor, and she mistakenly thinks that Eleanor is a Holocaust survivor. Eleanor didn't craft this mistake, but she really likes the journalist's attention. So, she tells Bessie's stories as her own life stories. 🌟



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# Click, clack, bam, crack!

By Brian Simon

We are living in a mah jongg\* renaissance. The game which many of us associate with our mothers, has become popular again and not just with Jewish women.

*\*I'm spelling it differently intentionally. The Chinese version is usually spelled "mahjong," while the National Mah Jongg League, founded by five Jewish women in 1937, makes it two words and adds the extra g.*

If you google "mahjong renaissance," you will get a long list of recent articles about the old game's newfound popularity. They played it on the Today Show in August. *Smithsonian Magazine* did a story in February about how "the 200-year-old tile game is popping up in clubs, hotels and parties as a way for Gen Zers and millennials to connect." A Boston TV station did a story on the growth of the game in New England. The reporter confessed that the reason she pitched the story is so that she could learn how to play.

There are many things to enjoy about mahj.

- The game – Strategy and competition.
- The aesthetics – The tiles are beautiful, they make a pleasing sound when they clack together, and they feel nice to the touch, especially in contrast to games on phones.
- The tradition – Playing the game your mom played with her friends.



■ Brian Simon

snacks his mother had prepared for the big mah jongg game and his continuing efforts to sneak downstairs and steal some from the table. I can't tell you how much joy this episode brought me. When I found out the show's creator was named Greenblatt, well, there was even more joy.

### Pop culture references

Mahj has had its moments in popular culture. The family noodle restaurant in "Kung Fu Panda" (2008), was handed down to Po's father, from his father "who took it over from his father, who won it from a friend in a game of mahjong."

There's also a climactic scene in "Crazy Rich Asians" (2018), where the protagonist Rachel plays with her boyfriend's mother, Eleanor. I timed the scene, and it only took them two minutes and 29 seconds for both Rachel

and Eleanor to complete winning hands. Let me just say, when I've tried to play, it takes more than two and a half minutes to determine which way to pass the tiles next!

- The camaraderie – Beating your friends.
- The snacks.

Years ago, my son was watching a cartoon called "Chowder." This one episode featured the little boy being prevented from eating the delicious

snacks his mother had prepared for the big mah jongg game and his continuing efforts to sneak downstairs and steal some from the table. I can't tell you how much joy this episode brought me. When I found out the show's creator was named Greenblatt, well, there was even more joy.

### Personal history

Sheila Laboda remembers watching her mother and her aunt play mah jongg in the 1940s.



"We lived in a two-story house, and I would sit at the top of the stairwell and listen to them click their tiles in the living room," Laboda said. She began a regular game with friends when the Labodas moved to Southwest Florida in the 1960s. Some of that original crew still gets together for games Judi Davis, Vicki Zellner, Arlene Agin, Noreen DiPlacido, Gene Harrison Seidler and Joan Pascotto

— but Laboda also has a game that includes her daughter Michele and her granddaughter Hannah. *L'dor v'dor*.

My mother still plays with her group. She remembers her mother playing, but Granny got frustrated with mah jongg, because every time she got close to winning a hand, someone else would win, so she switched to Canasta and Poker. I am my grandmother's child. Mindi has tried

teaching me the game, but I keep thinking of hands in terms of Rummy-Q, and that doesn't work.

As you might expect, mah jongg is big at Jewish Federation. Gail Margolis teaches the game on Thursdays. She and Karen Adelstein are organizing a big tournament in February. There will be food, too!

Margolis remembers her mother playing in the 1950s at home in New York and in the bungalow colonies in the summers. She calls playing mahj her happy place.

"When you love something, you want the whole world to love it," she explains.

Apparently, the whole world is learning to love it. Again. And if the fad fades again, we will still remember our mothers playing. And now maybe our daughters, too. 🍵



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## CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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# Holiday reflections, upcoming events and more

By Cheryl Fulmer, Ellen Feingold and Marcia Rudin

The very first day of October starts with our most solemn holiday of the Jewish year, Kol Nidre, beginning Wednesday evening, Oct. 1. The next day, Oct. 2, is Yom Kippur, a day devoted to praying, fasting, contemplating the eternal, appraising our behavior, taking stock of our relationships and gaining insight into how we might do better for ourselves and our community.

Four days later, on Monday evening, Oct. 6, the holiday of Sukkot begins. This is the holiday when we “dwell in huts” to remind us of the exodus from Egypt in the 13th century B.C.E. The last Torah portion, *Parshat V'Zot Haberukah* (And this is the Blessing; Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12) is read on Simchat Torah, Oct. 15. And then we begin the cycle of Torah readings all over again on Shabbat, Oct. 18, with *Beresheit*, in the beginning.

Chavurat Shalom wishes everyone an “easy fast” for Yom Kippur and a joyous Simchat Torah.

### August and September events

As the High Holidays approached, Chavurat Shalom member David Berger sounded the Shofar at each of our Shabbat Services beginning Aug. 29 during the Hebrew month of Elul, leading up to Rosh

Hashanah and the month of Tishrei. We thank him for his participation and making the approach to the Holy Days period more authentic for us.

We held our annual memorial service on Sunday, Sept. 28, at 10 a.m., led by President Cheryl Fulmer.

On Tuesday, Sept. 30, guest speaker Rabbi Danny Schiff presented a thought provoking program, “Teshuvah Today: Its Meaning for Israeli and American Jews.” Rabbi Schiff is the Gefsky Community Scholar with the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. Born in Sydney, Australia, he grew up in Melbourne and earned a B.A. from the University of Melbourne. He received ordination, as well as his master’s and doctor in Hebrew letters degrees, from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR). He divides his time between the U.S. and Israel.

### Contributions

Several times a year, Chavurat Shalom’s Tzedakah Committee solicits donations from members.

In June 2025, the committee donated to Soroka Hospital of Beersheva (to help with emergency repairs from bomb damage), Friends of Lone Soldiers Center,

Inc., Friends of Yashar L’Chayel (Straight to the Soldier), American Friends of Leket Israel, and Hillel International Foundation for Jewish Campus Life (to fight antisemitism on college campuses).

In the past, the committee has contributed funds to: Jewish Federation of Los Angeles (to aid victims of the wildfires); 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 (Sanibel); Gladiolus Food Pantry; Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties; St. Matthew’s House (Naples); Harry Chapin Food Bank (Fort Myers); 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 (funds specifically designated for Ukraine).

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

### Upcoming services and events

Chavurat Shalom holds weekly Friday evening Shabbat services every **Shabbat** throughout the year at 7:30 p.m. 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, Marcia Rudin hosts an informal “Schmooze” session.

On the second Tuesday, Dr. Ellen Feingold leads our “Torah Talk” discussion of the current Torah portion.

The third Tuesday is Len Minsky Current Events coordinated by Dr. Don Bachman with other participants.

On the fourth Tuesday, we enjoy talks and discussions by Chavurat Shalom members and outside speakers. These sessions are planned and coordinated by Irene Skolnick, Barry Fulmer and Renee Minsky.

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. 

501 (C)(3)

## CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

*Solidarity With Israel Coalition, Inc.*

*has been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3), and by Florida as a nonprofit tax-exempt entity.*



Solidarity With Israel Coalition (SWIC) started out as a group of interfaith citizens from Naples who became outraged after learning of the October 7th terrorist attack upon innocent Israelis at a music concert, kidnapping 251 people, and brutalizing men, women, children, and babies.

To show support for the Israeli people, a series of four rallies were held with the theme “Bring the Hostages Home.” Following the successful rallies, SWIC added to its focus programming to combat false narratives about Israel and its people and antisemitism wherever they exist.

Our vision is rooted in unity — a world where Jewish communities thrive, where Israel flourishes as a source of inspiration, and acts of kindness echo across generations. With your generous assistance, we are one step closer to making this vision a reality. We welcome the support and participation of any who shares our goals and likes to work in a collaborative environment.

[SolidarityWithIsraelCoalition.com](http://SolidarityWithIsraelCoalition.com)

**GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**  
genshoah@hmcec.org

# GenShoah programs inform, engage and bring friends together

By Ida Margolis and Shelley Lieb

A variety of programs will be presented for members and the community this season. We hope you find programs that inform and engage you. We hope you come to see old friends and meet new ones. Please mark your calendars, submit your RSVPs, and take note of the locations.

## “Movies that Matter”

Beginning the season is “Movies that Matter,” the human rights film series held in memory of Steve Brazina. Presented at the Museum on Thursdays, Oct. 23, Oct. 30, and Nov. 6 at 2 p.m., with expert panel discussions to follow. For film titles and descriptions see page 5. RSVP is required at hmcec.org.



Ida Margolis and Shelley Lieb

The discussion will be held Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 11 a.m. at the Museum, in coordination with their exhibition “Painting Irena Sendler” by Bill Farnsworth. RSVP is required at hmcec.org.

include a presentation of “They Were Children: Rescue as Resistance” by Emily Murray. RSVP is required at hmcec.org.

## Special event at Beth Tikvah of Naples

A special event to recognize GenShoah at Beth Tikvah of Naples will include Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center President and CEO Erin Blankenship. She will present her experience creating Dimensions in Testimony™ interviews on Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2026, at 7 p.m..

Hear Blankenship relate her experience with the USC Shoah Foundation project that enables people to ask questions that prompt real-time responses from prerecorded video interviews with Holocaust survivors and other witnesses to genocide. RSVP is required by emailing office@bethtikvah.us.

## Genealogy Workshop

The annual Genealogy Workshop will be presented by Hank Bitterman on Sunday, Feb. 15, 2026, at 1 p.m. at private residence. RSVP is required by emailing liebro@gmail.com.

RSVP is required by emailing liebro@gmail.com.

## A time to share

“Our Stories” GenShoah Member Get-Together provides an opportunity to talk with survivors and descendants about themselves and their family experiences. The tentative date is March 1, 2026, at 1 p.m. at a private residence. RSVP is required by emailing liebro@gmail.com.

## Special program

Generations After of The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee have invited our members to a special program in Sarasota on Sunday,



Emily Murray

March 8, 2026, at 1 p.m. Details to follow.

## Author Agnes Schipper events

The GenShoah Readers & Learners book discussion of “Sabine’s Odyssey: A Hidden Child and Her Dutch Rescuers” by Agnes Schipper will take place Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 11 a.m. at Beth Tikvah. “Sabine’s Odyssey” is a memoir written by Schipper in honor of her mother’s life during WWII, and of her father, a member of the Dutch Resistance. Schipper retells the story of her mother’s struggles.

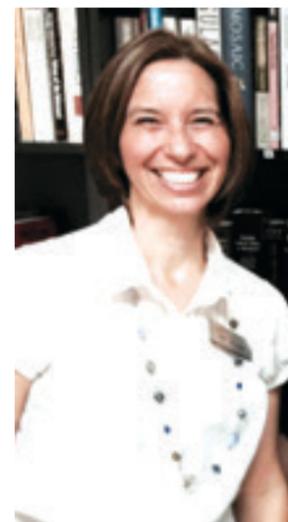
Author Agnes Schipper will appear Wednesday, March 18, 2 p.m. at the Holocaust Museum. Schipper, raised as a Catholic, first learned about her mother’s hidden Jewish ancestry when she was 20 years old. RSVP is required at hmcec.org.

## Yom HaShoah Commemoration

Our community Yom HaShoah Commemoration, a program of Holocaust remembrance, will be held Sunday, April 12, 2026, at 11 a.m. at Temple Shalom in Naples. A post-event reception will take place at noon. RSVP required at jewishnaples.org.

## Remembering Amy Snyder

It is with great sadness that GenShoah SWFL learned of the passing of Amy Snyder, former education director and executive director of the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center. Snyder was a great supporter of GenShoah and its programs. She had a special place in her heart for our local survivors, and her smile warmed the hearts of all who knew her. 🕊️



Amy Snyder



## Kristallnacht Commemoration

Catholic Jewish Dialogue presents the annual Kristallnacht Commemoration on Sunday, Nov. 9, 2:30 p.m., at Temple Shalom. RSVP is requested at jewishnaples.org.

## “Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project”

The GenShoah book group, Readers & Learners, will discuss the powerful story, “Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project” by Jack Mayer. Facilitator 2G Estelle Kafer welcomes all who are interested in the story of Irena Sendler, the Catholic rescuer of Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto.

## Brunch Potluck

The GenShoah Member Brunch Potluck is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 21, at 11 a.m. at a private residence. We will review the book “Hanna’s Suitcase: A True Story” by Karen Levine. This is an opportunity to come together in an informal setting. You do not need to have read the book to appreciate the book talk by Linda Denning. RSVP is required by emailing liebro@gmail.com.

## Open House/ New Member Reception

An Open House/New Member Reception for all GenShoah members/survivors will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026, at 10 a.m. at the Museum and will

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**HADASSAH Collier/Lee Chapter**  
(732) 539-4011

# Being Jewish in troubled times

*How we take care of our people*

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

In Hadassah, we are proudly Jewish and respectful of the history of Jewish values and contributions to civilization told through the Old Testament and Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish writings.

As a people, Hadassah members have come together to pursue goals to move our way of life forward. National Hadassah's main areas of focus impact our everyday lives and the Collier/Lee Chapter is in the forefront of activity in our community.

### Israel programs

We support our programs in Israel as an expression of our commitment to the country and services we bring to its people — our people. The heart of the state of Israel is in Jerusalem where our hospitals are located. Our U.S. programs advance a deeper understanding and connection to Israel for adults and young Jewish children. Our advocacy supports Israel's security and strong U.S.-Israel relations to help our people live safe and healthy lives. Our hospitals and youth programs, Young Judea and Youth Aliyah — at-risk



Diane Schwartz

teen residential villages in Israel — create a better future for the children involved.

### Global humanitarian efforts

Another focus for Hadassah's work is global humanitarian efforts advancing health care and medicine through partnerships with more than 50 universities and research hospitals

around the world. Our hospitals treat 1 million patients who come from around the world and are treated regardless of race, religion and nationality. Our hospitals send medical groups where needed around the world. National Hadassah built the Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) which oversees those two hospitals — Mount Scopus and Ein Karem and the Gandel Rehabilitation Center — all in Jerusalem.

Hadassah's Collier/Lee Chapter is happy to have received an award for the 2024 Women's Health Symposium dealing with gynecological health care. We have been invited to join a collaboration of local groups planning a Women's Health Symposium in spring 2026.

### Educational programs

Hadassah's Collier/Lee Chapter has planned and hosted several educational programs dealing with antisemitism and how it impacts us personally. Our Chapter successfully led all of the Florida Hadassah Chapters in the petition drive to put the reproductive choice amendment — Florida's Amendment 4 — on the ballot.

Now, we are looking at how we can be helpful on college campuses through educational sessions.

All in all, Hadassah and its 500 chapters across the country have never faltered. There are many ways to make a difference in the U.S., around the globe and to support the country for our people known as Israel. *Am Yisrael Chai and Shana Tova.* 

## You Are Invited

**Nov. 17** – Fall Luncheon Meeting featuring our annual Artisan Vendor Showcase. We are highlighting the showcase so you can start your Chanukah shopping now. The program, “Beauty & Bravery,” features former Miss Israel and IDF Combat Medic Noa Kochva and is sponsored by Israel Bonds, featuring Double Mitzvah Bonds.

**Dec. 14** – Donor Recognition Luncheon to welcome Hadassah National President Carol Ann Schwartz

**January 8, 2026** – Installation of Officers with the National Hadassah HMO chair as our guest speaker

**March 15, 2026** – Inspiring Women 2026

Watch your email for further information.  
For questions, contact [clhchapter@gmail.com](mailto:clhchapter@gmail.com).  
Please include your issue or topic in the subject line.




## Open House

Come meet our team, connect with community, and get a sneak peek at the exciting events and programs we have planned for the new season.

Wednesday, October 29, 2025  
12:00 ~ 2:00 P.M.

Jewish Federation  
9701 Commerce Center Court | Fort Myers

*Enjoy small bites and good conversation — all are welcome!*

Register at [jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar](http://jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar)

**"Love movies?"** Want to attend the hottest Film Festival in town? Attend our Open House and you will be automatically entered for your chance to win a **FREE** Festival Pass valued at \$130.

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

# October history

By Marina Berkovich, JHSSWF President

Over the 20 years of British rule, Florida's Jewish presence expanded from under 100 people to approximately 2,500. When the Treaty of Paris ended the American Revolutionary War on Oct. 3, 1783, Britain formally ceded Florida to Spain; most Jews faced extreme persecution and fled. On Oct. 27, 1795, the Treaty of San Lorenzo defined Spain and U.S. territorial borders, setting Florida's northern boundary as the 31st parallel.

The United States took control over the Florida territory in 1821, and in 1841, the Florida territory received representation in Congress when David Levy, a Whig who later became a Democrat and is known as the "father of Florida's railroads," was elected. The election of a Jew to high office was immediately contested, because he wasn't a citizen. In 1842, Levy was able to retake his seat, after successfully winning his defense arguments and demonstrated his allegiance to the U.S.

A staunch supporter of slavery, Levy then worked simultaneously on two principal issues: gaining Florida statehood (1845) and protecting expansion of slavery in other newly admitted states. In



Marina Berkovich

1845, he won reelection but refused to be seated in favor of becoming the first ever U.S. senator from Florida. It was then that he switched to Yulee, a less Jewish-sounding last name that came from his Sephardic roots. He resigned to support the Confederacy in 1861.

Of Florida's total population of 140,424 in 1860, 77,747 were white, 61,745 were slaves and 932 were free Black residents. Jews were generally counted separately from white Christian population of the South.

Lee County was not formed until 1887. Collier County, not until 1923. In October 1895, there was a torrential rainfall in southern Florida that drastically affected Naples; a year later, October 1896, another one hit Fort Myers. Florida's population at that time was approximately 450,000, 943 of which lived in Fort Myers and few in Naples or Everglades City, although numbers for the latter two are not readily available.

In Punta Gorda, the seat of future Charlotte County (est. 1921), Jacob Wotitsky opened a store in the 1880s, but no other Jews were around. The Korshanian community in Estero is associated with Jewish roots, but it never openly

claimed that. Most of Southwest Florida was generally uninhabitable due to the absence of roads and the abundance of snakes, alligators and mosquitos.

Although, like the Wotitskys, Jewish families settled here and there, it was not until the mid-20th century, after WWII, that a notable Jewish migration to the region occurred. Jews were not viewed favorably. In fact, and partly due to the known antisemitic propaganda by Southwest Florida's most famous seasonal resident, Henry Ford, Jews were prohibited from settling in certain areas and chased out, if not literally, then through refusal to support their businesses.

Too many people resettling in Florida in the 21st century do not stop to think about how relatively recent those events are. Barely a century later, Southwest Florida boasts multiple established Jewish communities, Jewish centers, Jewish religious schools and preschools, as well as traditional Jewish activities and cultural programming. The Jewish population of Florida in 2024 was 753,865, including 8,000 in Lee and Charlotte counties and more than 10,000 in Collier County.

Henry Ford and his principal antisemitic at *The Dearborn Independent* in the 1920s, Boris Brasol — of the Mendel Beilis infamy, about whom we previously wrote — would likely not be resting easier today. Nor would John Glenn Sample, founder of Port Royal in Naples in the 1960s, or those who opposed real estate sales to Jews in Southwest Florida as late as the 1980s. Even those who yelled out, "You build it and they will come," at the startup of the Naples Philharmonic (now Artis—Naples) would probably be surprised.

We came, we thrived, and we've brought our particular influence to this

area. Most of it is good, and let's keep it that way. Despite escalating antisemitism all around, our Southwest Florida enclave unites Jews and Christians in the efforts to prevent its spread.

This and other information will be presented during our Fourth Annual Local Jewish History Film Festival; see the events section for more details.



David Levy

Jewish Federation of Greater Naples is the principal sponsor.

Note: Please correct our mailing address to direct all correspondence, including contributions and renewals, to:

The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida

P.O. BOX #10075

Naples, FL 34101

Call 833-347-7935 (833-JHS-SWFL) or visit [www.jhsswf.org](http://www.jhsswf.org) for additional information.

*The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida is a section 501(c) 3 charitable organization. Contributions are deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.* ☺

## 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 Elizabeth Elba  
to sign up

or for more information:  
[Elizabeth@jfedlcc.org](mailto:Elizabeth@jfedlcc.org)

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



Jewish Federation  
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

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

Send an email to  
[debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org](mailto:debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org)

**BBYO**  
Naples/Fort Myers

# BBYO – Looking Forward and Looking Back

By Hailey Dalby, Jewish Federation of Greater Naples' Youth & Family Program Manager

The school year is well underway, and for many BBYO seniors that means preparing for their next chapter: college. But as our seniors are looking ahead, they are also looking back. Ensuring that the next generation of leaders will continue to carry on the spirit of BBYO.



Hailey Dalby

BBYO is the preeminent pluralistic Jewish teen organization for grades 8 through 12. With chapters across North America, BBYO brings together young people from around the world to connect with their heritage, develop leadership skills, and build life-long friendships.

Next fall, Naples and Lee/Charlotte Counties BBYO will open its doors to new members. We graciously invite all Jewish teens currently in grades 7 through 11 to **Find Yourself Here**. Whether you bring your friends, or meet new ones, there is a place for all. BBYO isn't just about activities, it is about finding and forging your path. Amongst AZA (boys)



and BBG (girls) alum, you will find gold medalists, humanitarians and politicians. If this sounds like you, or a teen that you know, reach out to me at [hdalby@jewishnaples.org](mailto:hdalby@jewishnaples.org) for more information!

From community service to holiday celebrations and social events, BBYO offers opportunities for everyone. Members not only grow within their chapter, but also gain access to regional and international programs, connecting with a worldwide network of Jewish teens.

Local teens currently in grades 8 through 12 are invited to join today! To begin your BBYO journey, contact me at [hdalby@jewishnaples.org](mailto:hdalby@jewishnaples.org). This is your opportunity to **Make It Yours!** Should the membership fee pose a hardship for any family, financial assistance will be available.

Scholarships to attend BBYO conventions and summer programs are also available through both Jewish Federation of Greater Naples and Temple Shalom Men's Club. 



Jewish Federation  
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

## JOSEPH HOROWITZ Israel Travel Grant

 *Is available*

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

 *Our Hope*

is that this program will enhance Jewish knowledge and identity in preparation for participation in American Jewish life.

 *This Grant*

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

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION

 [JewishFederationlcc.org/scholarships](http://JewishFederationlcc.org/scholarships)



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## Candle lighting times:

Oct 3: 6:53 p.m.

Oct 10: 6:45 p.m.

Oct 17: 6:39 p.m.

Oct 24: 6:32 p.m.

Oct 31: 6:27 p.m.



# JFED HITS THE ROAD

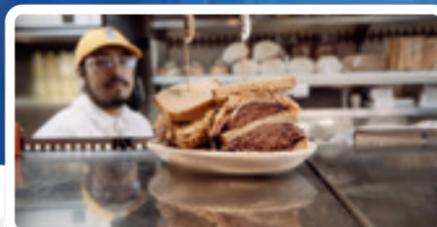


The Florida Holocaust Museum, St. Petersburg  
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NOV | 05 | 2025

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Lunch at Jo-El's Kosher Deli (on your own).



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Jewish Federation | 9701 Commerce Center Court | Fort Myers

Register: [jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar](http://jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar)



**TEMPLE JUDEA RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**  
**Fort Myers**  
*Tehila Cherubino, Director of Education*

After a summer of planning and preparing, it fills my heart with joy to see our Religious School growing and our building come alive with energy, smiling faces and eager learners. The joyful sound of Alef-Bet songs drifts through the hallways, and classrooms are busy with holiday learning, Hebrew, prayers,

engaging crafts and lively music. It truly feels like a season of new beginnings, with each child bringing their curiosity and enthusiasm to our community of learners. Our Religious School is growing, and registration is still open! If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact me.

We also had the pleasure of celebrating our first Shabbat B'kef of the year! Families with children of all ages joined us for a warm and meaningful Shabbat experience. Together, we read a story, sang Shabbat songs, decorated challah covers, and recited the blessings over candles, wine and challah — a truly beautiful moment of community, tradition and connection. Each family left with a special Shabbat bag filled with everything needed to celebrate at home: freshly baked challah, grape juice, candles, a blessings card and, of course, the challah covers that the children decorated!

We look forward to welcoming everyone again for the next Shabbat B'kef events on:

- Friday, Oct. 17 at 5:30 p.m.
- Friday, Nov. 7 at 5:30 p.m.
- Friday, Dec. 19 at 5:30 p.m.

Please RSVP at [tjswfl.org/ShabbatBekef](http://tjswfl.org/ShabbatBekef). We can't wait to share more joyful moments together!

May the excitement of learning and the warmth of Shabbat continue to inspire and uplift our community throughout the year ahead. 🌟

**TEMPLE JUDEA PRESCHOOL**  
**Fort Myers**  
*Suki Kelly, Preschool Director*

As we settle into the new school year, our children are becoming more comfortable with their daily routines and thriving in their new classrooms. This month, we are embracing the beauty of fall with activities that spark creativity and curiosity — everything from seasonal crafts and preparing the garden for our planting season to learning about the High Holidays that celebrate the changing season.

**Annual fundraiser and 35th anniversary celebration**  
 We look forward to our Annual Live and Silent Auction on Nov. 8 at the Plantation Golf and Country Club, a key fundraiser supporting our preschool programs. This year's event will also mark our 35th anniversary, a milestone honoring decades of our preschool's success and building a strong community of past and present families.

**Celebrating 35 years of learning and growth**  
 This year, we are celebrating our 35th anniversary of Temple Judea Preschool being a part of the community. What once started as a little school of six children, flourished into what it is today. We are celebrating 35 years of serving our community and the great families that came through our school. If you have ever been a part of our school and have pictures or memories you would like to share, please send them to [templejudea-preschool@gmail.com](mailto:templejudea-preschool@gmail.com). We would love to hear from you!

We will take this special opportunity to recognize those whose dedication and generosity have shaped our school's journey. Our theme this year is "Thanks FOR Giving," showcasing our love and appreciation to those who have supported our preschool throughout the years. If anyone is interested in sponsoring or donating to our event please email the preschool at [Templejudea-preschool@gmail.com](mailto:Templejudea-preschool@gmail.com).

**Rosh Hashanah celebration**  
 Our students recently enjoyed celebrating Rosh Hashanah with Rabbi Arias. Together, we welcomed the new year with joy, learning and sweet traditions that bring meaning to this special holiday. The children also enjoyed many apple projects such as apple stamping, apple tasting, and counting and sorting different kinds of apples!



opportunities for hands-on learning. Children especially love picking vegetables to enjoy during snack time — a wonderful way to connect healthy habits with nature. We are also excited to share that work is underway to build an outdoor classroom within our garden from funds raised at the last auction. Once complete, students will experience circle time and lessons outdoors, enhancing their learning environment and fostering a deeper connection to the natural world. Research shows that outdoor learning supports overall child development. Studies indicate that time in nature strengthens cognitive skills, boosts creativity and reduces stress, laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

**Enrollment open for Infant and Transitional Rooms**  
 We are pleased to announce that enrollment remains open in our Infant and Transitional Rooms. Families seeking a warm, nurturing and high-quality learning environment are encouraged to contact us for details. Spots are limited!

**Trunk or Treat event**  
 On Oct. 24, our preschool will host the annual Fall Festival Trunk or Treat. It will be a fun-filled afternoon of costumes, candy and a friendly trunk decorating competition. The first place winner of the trunk decorating competition will win two tickets to our annual fundraiser!



**Garden expansion and outdoor classroom project**  
 Our preschool garden has recently been expanded to grow more fresh vegetables and vibrant flowers, creating even more

We also have limited spots available for the Terrific Twos and Pre-K classrooms. Spots are filling up quickly so be sure to call us to schedule a tour! 🌟



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**TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

**Fort Myers**

*Allison Fego, Religious School Coordinator*

As the academic year progresses, our Religious School continues to provide students with opportunities to engage deeply in Jewish learning and practice. From strengthening Hebrew vocabulary to preparing for the High Holy Days, students are connecting with Jewish traditions in meaningful and age-appropriate ways.

**Building a foundation with Jewish Life Vocabulary**

Students have begun expanding their knowledge through Jewish Life Vocabulary letters, designed to introduce key Hebrew words and concepts connected to Jewish living. Our classes have worked on the Hebrew letters *Bet*, *Tzadee* and *Reish*. Each letter that our teachers include in their lessons follow along with a phrase relating to that letter. For instance, *Boker Tov* (Good Morning), *Tzadakah* (Charity, Righteousness), and *R'fuah Sh'leimah* (Complete Healing).

**Focusing on the value of Teshuvah**

In preparation for the High Holy Days, students have been exploring the core Jewish value of Teshuvah — the process of reflection, repentance and return. Emphasis has been placed on understanding Teshuvah as more than an apology; it is a holistic process of taking responsibility, seeking forgiveness and committing to personal growth.

Class discussions and activities encouraged students to think critically about how they can incorporate this value into their daily lives. Our youngest students did an activity where they drew a mistake they had made and let it soak in water to throw away their mistakes. Afterwards, they redrew the picture doing the right thing this time.



**The significance of Shabbat**

Students also spent time studying Shabbat, the weekly day of rest and renewal. Lessons highlighted the rituals of candle lighting, kiddush and blessing challah, along with the broader spiritual meaning of setting aside time for reflection, family and community. By engaging with both the practical and spiritual dimensions of Shabbat, students gained a deeper appreciation for its role



in Jewish life. Each week our students are doing their blessings over the grape juice and challah. The improvement each week with our younger students is amazing to see how they can either sing or say the prayers.

**Preparing for the High Holy Days**

Our curriculum has also introduced students to the key themes and practices of the High Holy Days:

Rosh Hashanah – The Jewish New Year, a celebration of renewal marked by the sounding of the shofar and the

Through classroom discussion and hands-on activities, students have begun to appreciate the richness and depth of these observances, while understanding their relevance in contemporary Jewish life. With the High Holidays approaching, along with learning in the classrooms, our students have been actively working with Moreh Nathan to relearn our songs that we will be singing with Cantor Marshall Portnoy during services. They truly enjoy singing “Shofar Blast” (especially when they see who can hold *tekiah gadolah* the longest) and “*Hineh Mah Tov*.” We are super excited that the

sharing of sweet foods symbolizing hope for the year ahead.

Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement, a solemn and reflective time devoted to prayer, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Tashlich – A symbolic ritual performed during Rosh Hashanah in which individuals cast bread crumbs or small stones into flowing water, representing the release of past mistakes and the opportunity to begin anew.

congregation enjoys seeing our students taking part in High Holy Day services.

**Looking ahead**

The opening weeks of Religious School have already set a strong foundation for the year ahead. By combining language, values and tradition, our program continues to strengthen students’ Jewish identity and inspire a deeper connection to community and faith. We look forward to building on this momentum as the year unfolds.

If you are interested in joining our fabulous school, please contact Religious School Coordinator Allison Fego at [religiousschool@templebethel.com](mailto:religiousschool@templebethel.com).

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## And now what?

By Rabbi David Arias

So here we are about to finish the High Holidays' season. And now what?

Perhaps the best answer to this was written by the late Naomi Shemer, one of Israel's most prolific and influential composers. In her wonderful song "HaChagiga Nigmeret" (The Party's Over), the chorus says: "To wake up tomorrow morning, with a new song in our hearts, to sing it with strength, to sing it with pain, to hear the flutes in the free breeze, and to start — from the beginning."

As usual, in Hebrew, it sounds much better!

I learned a few years ago from one of my teachers that each sentence in that text can be related to one of the



■ Rabbi David Arias

stages of this long season, which started with Elul almost two months ago.

"To wake up tomorrow morning" symbolizes the days of Selichot, which are typically recited early in the morning, even before sunrise.

"With a new song in our hearts" reminds us of the beginning of the new year, Rosh HaShanah, as well as "to sing it with strength," as the Psalmist declared, "Kol HaShem Bakoach," "God's voice is in the strength." Whenever we hear the blast of a Shofar, we hear God's voice.

"To sing it with pain" is what we do on Yom Kippur, as our bodies feel the affliction of the fast. And only four days later, we "hear the flutes in the free breeze." The flutes were the primary

musical instruments used during the Temple's rituals for Sukkot, over two thousand years ago.

And finally, the last verse of the chorus says in Hebrew, "Uleathil miB-ereshit," meaning "to start from the beginning." We will start all over again, reading the Torah on Simchat Torah.

During these weeks, we pray, eat, dance, fast, read and study together. The month of Tishrei is a summary, a concentrated dose of all that we do during the year. And now what? Now we start all over again.

**During these weeks, we pray, eat, dance, fast, read and study together.**

However, after Simchat Torah 5784, on Oct. 7, 2023, it is impossible to start from the beginning; we have lost so many precious lives, and so many *Neshamot* (souls) have left us, that celebrating all these *Hagim* (festivals) puts us in a dilemma. By the time I'm writing these words,

there are still 48 hostages in Gaza, and it is my hope that we will be able to start from the beginning when each of them comes back home.

Rabbi David Arias serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers. 

## L'shana Tova!

By Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

The month of Tishrei is the month of holidays. Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, and the intermediate days between. No wonder that by the time we reach the next month of Cheshvan, rabbis, cantors and Jewish professionals are grateful for a month with no holidays.

Each holiday contains unique lessons for living. One of the important lessons of Sukkot, which begins Monday, Oct. 6, is the essential unity of the Jewish people. No matter our different political views, how we practice our Judaism or how we engage with Zionism, Sukkot teaches us that it takes all kinds of Jews to make a complete nation of Israel.

When we place together the leaves and branches of the *arba minim* (the Four Species) and wave these special bundles with the proper blessings, we make a statement of Jewish unity. Three of these — the *etrog* (citron), *lulav* (date palm) and *hadass* (myrtle) — come from trees that produce either a sweet smell, a delicious fruit or both. These represent those Jews who study the Torah, do good deeds or both.

But the fourth branch is from the *aravah* (willow tree), which has neither a



■ Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

pleasant fragrance nor a fruit. This branch stands for the Jew who neither does good deeds nor studies Torah. Yet, if we leave this branch out, the bundle is considered incomplete, and we can't fulfill the mitzvah of shaking it.

This teaches us that God wants the Jewish people to "bundle" themselves together and all get along. Even those among us who seem, like the willow, to have nothing to offer, are important and beloved by God. And while some people may be better at some things than others, it doesn't make them better people. Only all of us together can make the Jewish people complete.

Whether we live in the United States, Israel or anywhere in between, we all have a stake in creating the world that will usher in the long promised "heavenly days here on earth." The actions of one group of Jews affects the lives of all Jews. Therefore, we all

must engage, with love and tolerance for diverse opinions, in the continual evolution of our faith and our nation. We all have a stake. There are no extras.

*Yisrael Aravim Zeh Bah Zeh.* All of Israel are responsible for each other.

Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer serves Bat Yam Temple of the Islands. 

**Only all of us together can make the Jewish people complete.**

## 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](mailto:debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org)



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# Strengthening our security and welcome

By Rabbi Nicole Luna

Deuteronomy 11:26 opens with a stark choice: “See, this day I set before you a blessing and a curse.” The Hebrew translation begins with that single, urgent word: *Re’eh* (See). Pay attention to what leads to blessing, and what may bring harm.

In the chapters that follow, the text emphasizes vigilance: rooting out idolatry, warning against false prophets and taking care to live out the commandments. For Jewish communities today, the theme of vigilance resonates powerfully with the issues of security in our congregations. Just as our ancestors were instructed to *re’eh* (see clearly) the realities around them, we too must keep our eyes open to threats and risks.

## Tabletop simulation exercise

A few weeks ago, I joined our Temple Beth El president and security committee members at a tabletop simulation exercise at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties, led by the national Jewish security organization,



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

Secure Community Network. Also in attendance were representatives from the Federation and other synagogues, as well as Commander Tim Lalor, the precinct commander for Lee County Sherriff’s Office, his two deputies and an FBI special agent from the Fort Myers office.

During the exercise, we walked through a series of simulated scenarios: a hurricane, a protest and an active shooter. In each scenario, we discussed potential threats, identified communication gaps and thought through everything from property lines and cameras to power outages and lockboxes.

The exercise was designed to address real-world crises in a safe, discussion-based format, helping to strengthen our preparedness. It was sobering and serious work, but it also reminded me we are not alone — we are connected to the wider Jewish community, to law enforcement and to a national network committed to our safety. In Lee County, we are fortunate to have a wonderful

Federation, strong relationships with the Lee County Sherriff’s Office and the local FBI office, and an expert regional security advisor from Secure Community Network.

**... security is not only about doors, guards or cameras; it is also about the spiritual strength of a community bound together in responsibility and care.**

The verses in Deuteronomy do not only warn of dangers — they also call us to see, to envision and to create a community built on compassion, generosity and trust in God. The laws of *tzedakah* and care for the poor in this portion remind us that security is not only about doors, guards or cameras; it is also about the spiritual strength of a community bound together in responsibility and care.

And that is why, even as we strengthen our security, we are also strengthening our welcome.

## High Holy Day tickets

This year, Temple Beth El is offering complimentary High Holy Day tickets to anyone in the Jewish community for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. For security reasons, we do ask that everyone register in advance, but there is no set cost. Come experience the warmth of belonging and the ancient call of our tradition. The Jewish community is more than what we hear on the news. Our Jewish community is joyful and strong, secure and flourishing.

Our call as Jews today is the same call to the Israelites in Deuteronomy — *Re’eh* (See). Pay attention to what may bring harm and what leads to blessing. We are vigilant and aware; we are committed to the covenant and to living out our Jewish life.

May our synagogues always be both watchful and warm, safe and sacred.

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

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# A land that devours its Jews: A saving remnant

By Rabbi Bruce Diamond

When the 12 spies returned to report what they'd seen reconnoitering Canaan, 10 reported it was "a land that devours its inhabitants" (Numbers 13:32), meaning a very dangerous place.

America is also a land that devours its distinct immigrant populations, including the massive wave of Eastern European Jews (most of our recent ancestors). Here, though, the connotation is different. It is relative safety and, by and large, acceptance that we Jews have found here for more than 400 years that has been devouring us.

We are also experiencing the same fate that befell the earlier waves of Jewish immigrants that preceded us — the Sephardic Spanish-Portuguese in



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

the 17th and early 18th centuries, and the German Central European Jewish influx in the decades preceding the Civil War. Both made significant contributions to a Jewish future in America before diffusing into the general population and disappearing as identifiable Jewish communities.

The atrophy of American Jewish organizations, the contraction of the Conservative and Reform Movements, and rapidly dissipating synagogues have little to do with the short-sighted mediocrity of its leader, lay and clergy. The absence of dynamic leadership is a symptom, not a cause. The "best and brightest" have lost interest in us and have moved on.

As the great Imogene Coca, a comic actress played against Sid Caesar on The

Sid Caesar Show often quipped, "Sid, it's bigger than the both of us!"

By their third generation, most immigrant group identities are fraying at their edges; in the fourth, they are rapidly dis-

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**The absence of dynamic leadership is a symptom, not a cause.**

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solving into, at best, a nostalgic heritage. Think of St. Patrick's Day or Columbus Day for those with Irish and Italian roots. That will be us in the foreseeable future — barring some dramatic, undesirable change in American political culture that might force us together again.

This is not pessimism; it's fact. Likewise, it's neither good nor bad. It just

is, no matter what the band is playing on the deck of the Titanic.

Best to follow the engineering maxim: Good planning is cooperation with the inevitable. It is not so different from what many of us of a certain age are already doing — facing reality, tidying our affairs, decluttering and doing what can to leave a useful legacy for those who follow.

Consciously or not, that is what the Spanish-Portuguese and the German Jews did for us. The question now is what should we be doing to leave a useful legacy for the next wave of Jewish migration, whenever — and whoever — it may be?

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

## "And you shall draw water with joy ..."

By Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

The Book of Isaiah (12:3) states, "And you shall draw water with joy from the springs of salvation."

From this verse, one might mistakenly conclude that the only water allowed to be poured upon the altar in the Holy

Temple (on the second night of Sukkot) had to come from a spring. But according to Jewish law, if for some reason it was impossible to obtain water from the "spring of Shiloach" near Jerusalem, water from the Temple's basin could

be used instead. This water was *mei mikva*, water that met the requirements for use in a mikva.

From this, we learn that if the water was collected with the specific intent of performing this mitzva in a joyful manner, it was considered to be on the higher level of spring water. In other words, the source of the water was unimportant; the main thing was that it be drawn with joy.

Why is spring water superior to water which is obtained from any other source? The answer is that the water of a natural spring flows spontaneously and directly from its source; for this reason, there are no limits to its power to impart ritual purity.

By contrast, the water of a mikva must meet several stringent conditions before it can purify the person who immerses himself in it. The quantity of water in the mikva is likewise important; if less than a certain amount has been collected, the immersion is invalid. Spring water, on the other hand, purifies in any amount, even if it is still flowing, and even if it has not been accumulated into a receptacle.



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

Water is intrinsically tasteless; wine has a taste, a sweet flavor. Wine is therefore symbolic of the pleasure that is derived from a rational comprehension of Torah and mitzvot. Water, which has no taste, is symbolic of our performance of mitzvot purely and simply because G-d has so commanded us.

The commandment to pour water upon the altar — "And you shall draw water

with joy ..." — thus alludes to a Jew's unconditional obedience to G-d, his pure acceptance of the yoke of Heaven. At the same time, our total submissiveness to G-d engenders a feeling of joy, delight and gratitude in being able to carry out His will.

When a Jew rejoices in the performance of a mitzva, he merits that his "water," his nonintellectual acceptance of G-d's will, is transformed into the "springs of salvation." For just as a spring is perpetually connected to its source, so too does

he become perpetually bound to G-d, meriting salvation in all his endeavors.

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida. 🇺🇸

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**Why is spring water superior to water which is obtained from any other source?**

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# Sukkot: What does it really mean?

By Cantor Barry Butensky

The festival of Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, calls us to dwell in *sukkahs* (fragile shelters) that remind us of the Israelites' desert wanderings and G-d's protective embrace during their 40-year journey.

Celebrated on the 15th of Tishrei, typically in September or October, this seven-day festival (eight days in the Diaspora) weaves together gratitude for the harvest, historical memory and messianic hope. Its rituals — dwelling in the *sukkah*, waving the Four Species (*etrog, lulav, hadassim, aravot*) and reciting *Hallel* — invite us to live with joy, humility and purpose. Yet, Sukkot's deepest message speaks to our ability to find balance between life's impermanence and the enduring strength of faith; a lesson that resonates in every generation.

The *sukkah*, with its walls of wood or cloth and roof of *s'chach* (branches) that offer shade but reveal the stars, embodies life's fragility. We leave sturdy homes to live in a structure vulnerable to wind and rain, recalling the Clouds of Glory that shielded our ancestors after the Exodus.

The *sukkah* teaches that true security lies not in material permanence but in



**Cantor Barry Butensky**

trust in G-d. As we eat, study or sleep under its canopy, we embrace vulnerability, affirming that Divine care transcends physical walls.

The Talmud emphasizes the *sukkah* as a temporary dwelling, urging us to prioritize spiritual comforts over material ones. In a world obsessed with stability, Sukkot challenges us to find peace in the transient.

Agriculturally, Sukkot celebrates the harvest. Deuteronomy 16:13 calls it the Feast of Booths, when we gather produce from the threshing floor and winepress. Ancient farmers lived in field huts during the harvest, and the *sukkah* evokes gratitude for G-d's sustenance.

The Four Species — *etrog* (citron), *lulav* (palm), myrtle and willow — represent the land's bounty and human diversity. The Talmud interprets them as parts of the body or types of Jews: the *etrog*, with both taste and fragrance, symbolizes Torah and deeds; the *lulav*, taste without fragrance, symbolizes Torah alone; the myrtle, fragrance without taste, symbolizes deeds alone; and the willow, neither taste nor fragrance, symbolizes simplicity. Waving them in six directions unites us

in acknowledging G-d's presence everywhere, reminding us that our differences strengthen our collective purpose.

Sukkot's joy flows from gratitude and communal connection. The Temple's *Simchat Beit HaShoevah*, a vibrant water-drawing ceremony, celebrated Divine blessing and prayers for rain. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation, tied this rite to spiritual renewal and messianic hope. Today's festive gatherings echo this, fostering unity.

**In a world obsessed with stability, Sukkot challenges us to find peace in the transient.**

The *Ushpizin* tradition, inviting spiritual guests like Abraham or Rachel into the *sukkah*, connects us to ancestral virtues — kindness, courage, devotion — while some communities invite modern figures, rooting the ritual in our time. Historically, Sukkot recalls the Exodus, but its vision is universal in celebrating Sukkot in the messianic era, sharing in Divine unity. The 70 bulls offered in the Temple symbolize prayers for all

humanity, decreasing daily to signify a world moving toward peace.

*Hoshana Rabbah*, the seventh day, intensifies this hope with seven circuits and prayers for salvation; its beaten willows signaling humility before G-d. Sukkot's message is to embrace life's impermanence with joy and faith. The *sukkah's* fragility mirrors our own; we face uncertainties, yet we build, feast and sing.

In a world of division, the Four Species teach that unity in diversity is sacred. In times of instability, the *sukkah* reminds us that G-d's presence is our true shelter. As we gaze through the *s'chach* (stars above), we are called to live lightly, love deeply and trust boldly. Sukkot invites us to step out of our walls — literal and emotional — and create spaces of connection, gratitude and hope.

Whether welcoming *Ushpizin* or sharing meals, we build not just *sukkahs* but a world where vulnerability becomes strength and faith transforms fleeting moments into eternal meaning. As we dwell in these booths, let us ask, "How can we carry Sukkot's joy and openness into our lives, making every day a step toward redemption?"

*Chag Sukkot Sameach*

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

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Temple Shalom is looking forward to a healthy, happy, prosperous New Year 5786 and wishing all of you the same.

We are excited that Rabbi Marc Klein will lead our free High Holy Day services. Cantorial Soloist Dr. David Katz will enrich the liturgy with his beautiful

voice. Because of Dr. Katz, we will offer a new, interesting sequence of Shabbat services, including every first Shabbat of the month as our Shabbat music service.

Exciting events are happening at the Temple. As a part of our High Holy Day services, we will continue with Rosh Hashanah, Break the Fast, Tashlich

services, and our annual Break the Fast for Yom Kippur.

We had an eventful summer with our Hot Dog Day and our Sundae Sunday! New this year is arts and crafts for "children of all ages." This will begin as we celebrate Sukkot on Oct. 13. On Oct. 5, the community is invited to make decorations for the Sukkah at 2 p.m., followed by decorating the Sukkah at 3 p.m., a service, and a dairy-free meal. All members of the community are invited to help us celebrate!

We're also excited that Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

will come to Port Charlotte and offer a Challah/Chanukah activity for children on Nov. 9.

Our second annual Sock Hop will have a cruise/Italian theme in February with another adults-only event when we actually cruise the Caribbean in March!

We continue to pray for Israel. We continue to pray for the hostages. We continue to discuss and write petitions fighting antisemitism. We continue to fight for peace.

Wishing you a wonderful "Shanah tovah u'metukah" (שנה טובה ומתוקה).

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The synagogue meets on the Unity Campus (11120 Ranchette Road). Everything is free and open to all. All Days of Awe events will also available via Zoom, with easy access via the CFS website, [fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://fortmyerssynagogue.com).

Yom Kippur eve worship begins Wednesday, Oct. 1 at 7 p.m. Yom Kippur morning starts Thursday, Oct. 2 at 10 a.m., including *Yizkor*.

The rabbi's class on God is available via Zoom from 1:30 to 3 p.m. on Yom Kippur day; *minhah-ma'ariv-ne'ilah*

resumes at 4:30 p.m. with a light break-the-fast to follow.

Weekly Sabbath eve 6 p.m. dinners resume on Friday, Oct. 3, followed by *gabalat shabbat* at 7 p.m. and concluding with a social hour. Bring a non-dairy dish or wine for dinner or a dessert for the social hour. The rabbi bakes the *hallah*.

Sabbath morning Torah Study begins every week at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom. Since its start in August 1997, Torah Study with the rabbi has become the longest running continuous Jewish Adult Education program in Southwest Florida.

The annual sukkah "topping off" starts Monday, Oct. 6, at 5 p.m., the eve of the Festival of Sukkot. This year the synagogue *sukkah* will be erected next to the rabbi's home (7210 Falcon Crest Court, Forest Country Club). All are welcome to come help complete the *sukkah* and then fulfill the *mitzvot* of "dwelling in the *sukkah*" with bread, wine, *lulav* and *etrog*.

Now in its 21st year, CFS is a God-centered, open-community resource whose purpose is "Study, Worship and Benevolence."



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**A**s we begin October, we wish everyone Yom Tov.

With the High Holidays upon us, there still is time to join us for our Kol Nidre, Yom Kippur, N'eilah services, and our "everyone welcome" break-the-fast. Contact the office at 239-433-0018 for last minute tickets if you are unaffiliated, new in town, visiting or just have not yet made arrangements.

Then, please join us for Sukkot, Sh'mini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah services and activities. All the dates and times are listed on the home page of our website, [templebethel.com](http://templebethel.com).

**Upcoming events**

Our Sisterhood's ever-popular Ladies who Lunch is on Oct. 1 at noon at Bucket's Wings & More (South Pointe Blvd., Ft. Myers). Remember, you do not need to be a Temple or Sisterhood member to join us. Please RSVP and enjoy!

Our middle-eastern designed and spacious sukkah is unique. You can enjoy Sukkot in our sukkah with Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties Lunch Bunch on Wednesday, Oct. 8 at noon.

Please RSVP to the Jewish Federation at 239-481-4449.

Our TBE Sukkot experience will be during Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Luna in the sukkah on Thursday, Oct. 9 at noon. Smell the citrus *etrog* and shake the *lulav* with friends and our Temple community. We had a great time last year. Please join us this year.

On Oct. 12, join us for Simchat Torah dinner at 5:30 p.m., followed by reading the Torah to its very last sentence, and then immediately start reading again from the beginning, "*Bereshit bara Elohim ...*" The celebration in the sanctuary begins at 6:30 p.m.

Animal lovers, save the date for our annual pet blessing on Sunday, Oct. 26 at 9:30 a.m. for great fun and photo ops.

**Please note**

Our Shabbat service will **not be held** on Oct. 31, Halloween. We will have Saturday Shabbat services followed by a Kiddush Luncheon on Nov. 1 at 11 a.m. Please join us!

Religious School is in full swing, and our enrollment is growing. Please

follow us on Instagram @tbereligious schoolfm.

**Save the dates**

- Nov. 4 – Sisterhood Fashion Show, noon at the Dubin Center
- Nov. 4 – Please vote! It's election day!
- Feb. 14, 2026 – Fabulous Fifties Sock Hop – a real blast!

**Recurring programs**

Our recurring Temple Beth El programs continue include:

- Drop off nonperishables and personal health items in the Temple lobby shopping cart whenever the building is open.
- Saturday morning Torah study is available via Zoom at 9 a.m.
- Book Club on Oct. 8, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. October's book selection is "What to do about the Solomons" by Bethany Ball. As a heads up, November's book selection is "The Two-Family House" by Lynda Cohen Loigman. Book Club meets the first Wednesday of each month.
- Tot Shabbat, a kid-friendly service, will be held Oct. 10 at 6 p.m., featuring fellowship, pizza, and fun. Call 239-433-0018 to RSVP to be sure we have enough food. **Please note the date change due to the High Holidays.**
- History & Heritage of Our People is the third Tuesday of the month, Oct. 21, at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

• Shabbat services are open to all on Fridays at 7:30 p.m. We are live in the Sanctuary, via Zoom, and streaming on Facebook.

• 12-Step Recovery Group: Experience the 12-Steps from a Jewish perspective, seeking a path to recovery through Judaic spiritual principals, every Saturday at 11 a.m. via Zoom. We use the book, "Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery" by Rabbi Olitzky and Stuart Copans, M.D., second edition.

• Are you a recent convert, exploring conversion or seeking to reconnect with Jewish roots? "Jews by Choice" is a relatively new group that meets online the last Thursday of every month from 8 to 9 p.m. Discuss the delights and challenges of converting and reconnecting in a confidential and safe setting. Zoom details are on our calendar.

There are more programs: Current Events, Coffee & Chat, Theology & Life, Francophone & Hispanophone Groups, the Today & Tomorrow Giving Committee, Caring and Visitations, and more.

Follow us on Facebook @TempleBethElFortMyers and on Instagram @templebethelformyers. Questions? Call 239-433-0018.

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**KUSHNER & KUSHNER**  
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**Lowell S. Schoenfeld**  
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Trusts & Estates Attorney

1380 Royal Palm Square Boulevard  
Fort Myers, Florida 33919  
**239-936-7200**  
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**CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**  
Fort Myers(239) 433-7708 • [www.Chabadswf.org](http://www.Chabadswf.org)

Please feel free to join Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida (5620 Winkler Rd., Fort Myers, FL 33919) for the Month of October 5786 (2025).

Friday evening – Welcoming the Shabbat service at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday morning – Kabbalah class at 9 a.m.; Schacharit (Hodu) at 10 a.m.; Kiddush at noon

**High Holiday schedule:**

Wednesday, Oct. 1 – Kol Nidre/Yom Kippur services, 6:30 p.m.; Children's program, 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 2 – Regular services, 9 a.m.; Yizkor, 10:45 a.m.; Children's program, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; Concluding Yom Kippur services, 5:30 p.m.; Break-the-fast meal, 7:47 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 6 – Sukkot service, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 7 – Sukkot day one Kabbalah, 9 a.m.; Services, 10 a.m.; Children's program, 10 a.m.-noon; Evening service, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 8 – Sukkot day two Kabbalah, 9 a.m.; Services, 10 a.m.; Children's program, 10 a.m.-noon; Evening service, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 13 – Shmini Atzeret services, 6:30 p.m.; Rabbi's birthday party

Tuesday, Oct. 14 – Sukkot/Shmini Atzeret Kabbalah, 9 a.m.; Services, 10 a.m.; Yizkor, 11 a.m.; Children's Program, 10 a.m.-noon; Services, 6:30

p.m., followed by a Grand Simchat Torah Party

Wednesday, Oct. 15 – Sukkot/Simchat Torah Kabbalah, 9 a.m.; Services, 10 a.m.; Children's Program, 10 a.m.-noon; Services, 6:30 p.m.

*Shana Tova.* May you all be written in the Book of Life and have a year infused with blessings for prosperity, health and all that your heart desires.

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 BETH SHALOM**  
Cape Coral(239) 772-4555 • [www.templebethshalomcc.org](http://www.templebethshalomcc.org)

Welcome to October! October brings the Jewish holy days of Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. No other month has as many dates important to we Jewish people. I would like to focus on Sukkot in this article.

Sukkot means booths. During the 40 years of wandering in the desert we lived in Sukkot. We are commanded in the Torah, "You shall dwell in booths for 7 days ... so that your generations will know that I caused the Children to dwell in booths when I took them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your G-d."

We are commanded to make our *sukkah* our main dwelling place to eat, sleep, learn Torah and spend our time there. If being in the *sukkah* is not wise because of rain, snow, heat, humidity or cold, we are free from the obligation to dwell there. However, we must make every effort to at least eat in the *sukkah*, especially on the first night.

Living in a *sukkah* puts life into perspective. Our possessions are transient and our lives are even more transient than our possessions. The experience of living in a *sukkah* puts all things into place and encourages us to trust in G-d.

Another special commandment for Sukkot is to take the Four Species (*etrog*, *lulav*, *hadassim*, and *aravot*) and wave them in the four directions of the compass, as well as up and down, to remind us that G-d is everywhere.

These Four Species are symbols of four types of Jews: the *etrog* (citron) represents those Jews who have both Torah wisdom and good deeds; the *lulav* (taste of dates) represents the Jews who have Torah wisdom but no good deeds; the *hadassim* (myrtle branches) represent Jews who have good deeds but no Torah wisdom; and lastly, *aravot* (willow branches) represents Jews who have neither Torah wisdom nor good deeds. We symbolically blend together these species to recognize that every Jew is an important part of the Jewish people.

Building a *sukkah* and decorating it shows the importance of the *sukkah* to us, our family, our friends and all who

join us inside. We show our children and grandchildren the love and respect we have for our Jewish heritage and the happiness the experience brings.

We cannot decree that our children and grandchildren will have our love for our Jewish heritage. However, by showing them our commitment to Judaism, we are teaching by example, and we encourage them to have their own love for Torah, the holidays and all that is Jewish. That is what I call Joyous Judaism.

Temple Beth Shalom invites you to join us as we celebrate the mitzvah of eating in our *sukkah* with our members and the wonderful Cantor Barry Butensky.

We would be honored to have you with us for the High Holy Days and to celebrate Sukkot.

Please call Temple Beth Shalom, the only Reform temple in Cape Coral, at 239-772-4555 for more information.

**TEMPLE JUDEA**  
Fort Myers(239) 433-0201 • [www.tjswfl.org](http://www.tjswfl.org)

Join us for all of the holidays during October!

Wednesday, Oct. 1 – Kol Nidrei at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 2 – Shaharit Yom Kippur, Yizkor at 9:30 a.m.; Mincha and Neila at 5 p.m.; Children's services and activities are available. Visit our website to register.

Sunday, Oct. 5 – Sukkah building at 9:30 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 6 – Sukkot evening service at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 7 – Shaharit Sukkot – The Four Species at 9:30 a.m.; Special activity and dinner at *sukkah* with Religious School and Young Families at 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 9 – S-S-S: Steak and scotch in the *sukkah* at 6 p.m. RSVP required.

Friday, Oct. 10 – Friday evening service and dinner in the *sukkah* at 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 13 – Simhat Torah evening, dancing with the Torah at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 14 – Simhat Torah Shacharit, Yizkor at 9:30 a.m.

Friday, Oct. 17 – Shabbat B'Kef for Young Families at 5:30 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 20 – Monday Minyan is back at 9 a.m.

Friday, Oct. 24 – Musical Shabbat and Shabbat dinner at 6:30 p.m. with Cantor Andy Levy and Rabbi David Arias. RSVP is required. Tickets are available online.

Saturday, Oct. 25 – Musical Shacharit with Cantor Levy and Rabbi David Arias at 9:30 a.m.; Cantor Andy Levy live concert at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available online.

**Special weekend services**

Join us for a special weekend of prayer, unity, song and celebration with Cantor Andres Levy Oct. 24 and 25.

Musical Kabbalat Shabbat – Friday, Oct. 24 at 6:30 p.m., followed by Shabbat dinner. Dinner is \$36; RSVP is required.

Shacharit services – Saturday, Oct. 25 at 9:30 a.m., led by Cantor Andres Levy and Rabbi David Arias.

Live concert – Saturday, Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m. An uplifting evening of Jewish music for the Neshamah! Tickets for the concert are \$36. Combined tickets are \$60.

**Temple Judea Preschool events**

Be sure to save the date for these Temple Judea Preschool events:

- Friday, Oct. 3 – Parents Night Out
- Friday, Oct. 24, 3-4:30 p.m. – Trunk or Treat
- Saturday, Nov. 8 – Live Auction

**Women's Chaverot events**

Temple Judea's Women's Chaverot planned two opportunities to make your own holiday cards!

• Sunday, Oct. 12, 1-3 p.m., led by Barbara Lewitt, \$7 for materials.

• Sunday, Oct. 19 1-2 p.m., led by Jodi Cohen, \$7 for materials. RSVP to Jodi Cohen at [jodi@jodicohen.com](mailto:jodi@jodicohen.com) or 608-513-9737 by Oct. 12.

**Ongoing programs**

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.

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

**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 resumes Monday, Oct. 20 at 9 a.m.

Co-president Jan Klein's Monday morning meetings from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. will resume after the holidays.

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

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

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**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

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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  
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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.

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E-mail: synfree@comcast.net  
Web site: fortmyerssynagogue.com  
Sabbath Eve Dinner every Friday at 6:30 followed by worship at 7:30 PM  
Torah Study on Zoom every Sabbath morning from 9:30-11:00  
Meeting Room ID 527 117 7864 passcode 435419  
Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D. cantoral soloist  
Traci Pavel

**CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SWFL  
CHAVURA**

PO Box 722  
Sanibel, FL 33957  
Chavuratshalom@gmail.com  
Web site: 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  
Learning Tree Preschool Director: Ronni Vega  
Ronnilearningtree@gmail.com  
President: Michael Altman  
Email: President@templebethel.com  
Phone: 239-433-0018  
Office Manager: Karen Kagan  
Email: manager@templebethel.com  
Web site: 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  
Religiouschool@templebethel.com  
Judaica Gift Gallery  
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**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  
Web site: 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  
Co-Presidents: Jan Klein & James Mann  
E-mail: giaof3@gmail.com  
Religious School Coordinator: Tehila Cherubino  
E-mail: tehila@tjswfl.org  
Preschool Director: Suki Kelly  
templejudeapreschool@gmail.com  
Phone: 239-433-0201 • Fax: 239-433-3371  
E-mail: tjswfl@gmail.com  
Web site: 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.  
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Phone: 941-625-2116  
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Web site: templeshalomfl  
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**SHALOM LIFE CENTER  
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Rabbi Lawrence Dermer  
Phone: 239-218-3433  
Email: info@shalomlifecenter.org  
Web site: 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
- Chevra Kadisha: Taryn Sasser
- Generations of the Shoah SWFL: 263-9200
- Hadassah - Collier/Lee Chapter: Joyce Toub - 518-330-1559
- 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
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