

L'CHAYIM

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Jewish Film Festival
sponsor reception



Federation's Senior Lunch
Bunch update



Jewish "Odd Couple" dramedy
To Dust in theaters March 15



Prime Minister Netanyahu
meets with Lone Soldiers

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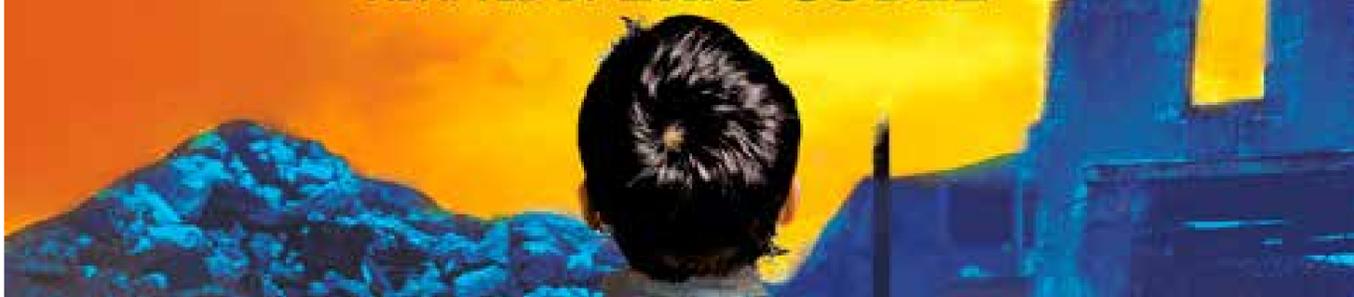
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To strengthen and enrich the Jewish Community by providing and supporting philanthropic, educational and social service programs locally, in Israel and throughout the world.

OUR VISION

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

L'CHAYIM

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 Partisan political opinions will not be published, but opinions on subjects affecting the Jewish community are welcome.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

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

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APRIL ISSUE

EDITORIAL DEADLINE:
Tuesday, March 5

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Program notes

By Debbie Sanford, Program Director

We rolled out the red carpet to thank our Jewish Film Festival sponsors of 2019. Event chair Andi Horowitz and Film Festival chair Sara Krivisky welcomed 60 people to the 2019 Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida's sponsor reception. On a beautiful day atop the roof at Society Restaurant, sponsors were welcomed with a red carpet, beautiful decorations and lots of balloons leading them to a delicious culinary display and bar. Special guest, author Beverly Gray, mingled with attendees before heading over to the theater to introduce the Opening Day film, *The Graduate*.

Debbie Sanford

We were so pleased to welcome many new individual and corporate sponsors. With the support of our sponsors, we are able to bring you the highly sought-after films we presented this year.

Special thanks to Society Restaurant for its generosity and amazing service.

To all of our sponsors: Thank you for your support of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties. We hope you had a great time and hope you will join us again next year!

A successful matinee on a rainy day!

On Sunday, January 27, as part of the 23rd annual Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida, approximately 80 people gathered at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel to view a special matinee of *The Oslo Diaries*. Gathered in a very nice screening room, filmgoers enjoyed the newly released film that brings to light the unsanctioned peace talks between a group of Israelis and Palestinians during the 1990s in order to bring peace to the Middle East.

Facilitator Sidney Picker opened the film and then moderated a Q&A session immediately following.

Thank you to all that support the Jewish Film Festival and a special thanks to Bat Yam for your hospitality.▲



Marsha Kistler and Jewish Film Festival Chair Sara Krivisky



Mindi & Brian Simon



Michele Laboda, Howard & Nancy Barrow, Eric Dochinger



Steve Zellner, Event Chair Andi Horowitz, Festival Chair Sara Krivisky, Vicki Zellner (photos courtesy Mike Shapiro)

Jewish Family Services update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

In January, there were several new clients at the Federation – at the food pantry and also requesting various kinds of assistance. We tend to hear from people when push has come to shove. Many clients who reach out to the Federation are in a financial crisis and often need support to talk about their situation as well as request financial assistance. It's a scary, difficult position for clients to be in.

I conduct an "intake interview" to gather information about the client and their current circumstances. Throughout the course of that conversation, I am sometimes able to direct people toward resources or organizations they may not have been aware of.

One of the resources that the Federation offers is a chance to meet with Federation members with financial backgrounds who can help clients better understand their financial situation, set up a budget if necessary, and think about how to manage their income, whatever it may be.

I'm receiving more calls from seniors' children who live out-of-state and want to know about senior living facilities and getting some help at home for parents who live locally. While some people have long-term care insurance, others don't but can afford to hire a home health care agency. There are providers I know and trust that I'm confident in recommending.

Many inquiries are for low-income situations. While the Federation does not provide home health

care services for seniors, we can guide you toward the appropriate resources. I cannot stress enough how important it is to research information about housing and home health care before any major life changes or transitions occur. If you have questions or want to discuss your situation, call me at 239.481.4449 x2.

The food pantry distributed food to 67 people in 14 households in January, with 29 of those people being kids under the age of 18. I'd like to thank the following food pantry volunteers for their help in January: Judith Yevick, Suzanne Orkin, Donna Cotler, Barbara Gribin and Laurie McConville. We could use more volunteers in the food pantry. While it's physically a small food pantry, there are enough donations and inventory to move, shelve and organize every week. We could use help on Mondays and Tuesdays for either a half hour or an hour. Please be in touch if you'd like to become involved.

Thank you to the people who see me out somewhere (restaurant, synagogue, meeting, senior lunch) and ask if they can load their food pantry donations into my trunk, who are so excited to tell me where they got the best BOGO (buy one get one) offers to donate, or who go shopping for themselves and dedicate one bag or a certain amount of dollars to groceries for the food pantry. Your contributions make it possible for the Federation to help fight hunger in Lee County.▲

Lessons from the past

By Brian Simon, Federation President

First, I want to publicly thank those of you who have been kind enough to tell me you enjoy reading this column. Thank you for noticing.

My intention is to use this space to promote what our Federation stands for and report what we're trying to accomplish. Or, in the case of last month, to tell jokes. Humor me! Forgive me if this month's column looks more like a book report. I promise I'm going somewhere with this.

I recently finished *Heirs of the Founders* by H.W. Brands. Whenever I read American history, I'm struck by how similar the issues of the present are to the issues of the past. Take, for example, this comment taken from a speech before Congress in February:

"(Political) parties, in their endeavors to obtain the one the ascendancy over the other, catch at every passing and floating plank in order to add strength and power to themselves. That is all I dread in the adjustment of the great questions which unhappily at this time divide our distracted country."

Did I mention it was February of 1850? The speaker was Henry Clay, the Great Compromiser. A divided country, heightening tensions between partisans, biased news? Sadly, we've seen it all before.

"What was once a constitutional, federal republic is now converted, in reality, into one as absolute as that of the autocrat of Russia and as despotic in its tendency as any absolute government that ever existed."

That was South Carolina's John Calhoun. He was concerned that the North, by virtue of its numerical majority in Congress, had more power in the federal government than the South. He would have fit right in on cable news.

Here is how Brands described the populist wave that swept Andrew Jackson into the presidency. Change a couple of names around and tell me if this wouldn't sound like a more recent election:

"They were farmers and shopkeepers, mechanics and day laborers, flat-boat men and sawyers, butchers and carpenters. Most had modest education, at best. Many were only recently enfranchised. They were strongest in the West and the South. As a group they resented the elites who had controlled the government since the founding. They claimed Andy Jackson – the backcountry orphan, the Indian fighter, the duelist, the scourge of the British and of John Quincy Adams – as their own. They put their hero in the White House, and they delivered Democratic majorities to the Senate and the House."

Here's a passage I found especially ironic, describing the start of the battle for Texas's independence from Mexico.

"Mexico's president and commanding general, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, alarmed at the unruliness of the Americans who poured into Texas in defiance of Mexican immigration laws (italics are mine), launched a crackdown that enabled the Americans to wrap themselves in the mantle of 1776 and claim spiritual kinship to the Americans who rose in rebellion against George III.

So what does any of this have to do with Federation? As you may know, I am deeply concerned about bipartisanship. *Tzedakah, tikkun olam* and *K'lal Yisrael* are values for both conservatives and progressives.

I look to history hoping to find a way through our struggles today. I am both comforted and troubled by the fact that we've done this all before. Comforted that it's nothing new. Troubled because it took a civil war to resolve some of the issues – and they're still not resolved!

What Clay accurately predicted was that "violent prejudices, embittered passions and implacable animosities" would create a "virtual dissolution of the Union" that would ultimately lead to war.

When I read those words, "virtual dissolution of the Union," I imagine a split that has already occurred. Although we are still one nation, there are people on each side of the political divide who see their political opponents

as enemies. And those who seek more power for themselves are happy to fan the flames of passion and animosity.

Let us not lose sight that we the people of the United States have common interests and common enemies. We stand to lose far more than we stand to gain from fighting each other.

I'll leave you with one final comment. This from Thomas Jefferson, in a letter written in 1820.

"I regret that I am now to die in the belief that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of '76, to acquire self government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be that I live not to weep over it."

Let's be kind to each other. Let's have some compassion for each other.



■ Brian Simon

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APPLICATION PROCESS: For guidelines and application process, visit our website at jewishfederationlcc.org

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

TRIBUTES

The board and staff of the Jewish Federation extend their condolences to Jean Kanter and her family on the passing of her husband, Yale Kanter

The board and staff of the Jewish Federation extend their condolences to Renee Lane and family following the recent passing of her father, Ronald F. Cox

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

The Jewish Federation Board and Staff want to extend a

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Together we **CAN** Make a Difference!

HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES SERVES



Local Jewish Education and Culture

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



Overseas

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



Local Seniors Services

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



Local Case Management Services

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

Local Emergency Services

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



Local Community Services

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



Jewish Community Foundation

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

Joseph Horowitz Israel Travel Grants Available

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

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

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

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



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

Senior Lunch Bunch update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach & Food Pantry Coordinator

Rabbi Devora Buchen and the kind volunteer members of Temple Beth Shalom welcomed the senior lunch bunch in February. Michelle Sargis from the Lee County Sheriff's Office came again this year to talk about senior safety tips. The most important thing, she said, was for people to have a back-up plan in place in case you run into any trouble throughout the course of your daily activities.

In other words, be prepared and don't let the first time you start thinking about your options for resources and responses be in the midst of a crisis.

Helene Glocer takes the wonderful photos you see with this column every month in *L'CHAYIM*, and as I was reviewing them I noticed how well Helene captures the joy and spirit of the people who attend.



The Federation's free monthly senior lunches have turned into a warm and welcoming event every month for Jewish seniors in the area, whether you're new to the community or have

been here for years. We nosh, kibbitz, enjoy a short program after lunch, and it's a terrific way to make friends and stay connected to your old friends. If you'd like to volunteer for the lunch, please be in touch with me. ▲



NEXT SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH:
Thursday, March 14 at noon
Temple Judea, 14486 A and W Bulb Rd., Fort Myers
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Jodi Cohen at 239.481.4449 x2 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org

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Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center update

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

Following up a very busy February, the March calendar at The Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center has a program planned nearly every day with School Field Trips, group tours and education programs. Expanded seasonal hours are in effect through April 30: Tuesdays through Fridays from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m., with two daily docent-led tours at 1:00 and 2:30 p.m. Weekend hours remain from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. with a 1:30 p.m. tour.

Three important events are also taking place this month: a "Celebration of Life" for the late Lorie Mayer on Sunday, March 3 at noon at Temple Shalom; the Museum's Annual Fundraiser, Triumph 2019, on Monday, March 4 at Grey Oaks Country Club; and Museum Oral Visual History Project Coordinator Hadassah Schulman is being honored with the Capolino 2019 Diamond Volunteer Award.

Jane Goodall, the famous English primatologist and anthropologist, said, "What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make." We all

make a variety of decisions each day. Some require little thought, while others make us stop and think. What kind of additional positive difference would we make if we took a moment to think through those automatic actions and realize how our words or actions might impact someone?

Each of the three individuals being highlighted at the March events made the decision that Dr. Goodall described.

On March 3, we will honor the life of Lorie Mayer, a co-Founder and Founding Curator of the Museum. When Lorie decided to become involved in the formation of the Holocaust Museum, she did so with deep personal knowledge of the Holocaust and its effects on her family. Designing the Museum from scratch, Lorie meticulously ensured each exhibit presented accurate, verified information so that students and visitors would be able to refute misconceptions espoused by Holocaust deniers they might encounter. Through the addition of exhibits of photos, artifacts and documents donated or on permanent loan from local residents who were Holocaust Survivors, Camp Liberators and WWII Veterans, Lorie informed visitors of the personal costs of the Holocaust. By "making history personal," Lorie knew that a connection between past and present from a person-to-person perspective would create

a more memorable and long-lasting experience for each visitor. Little did Lorie know when she decided to educate people about the lessons of the Holocaust that her Museum would eventually make a difference to over 200,000 students, teachers and visitors from all 50 states and 45 countries.

As a young man, our featured speaker at Triumph 2019 was the polar opposite to Lorie in his beliefs and work. He sought to break down, not build up, a society striving for empathy for others. Christian Picciolini was a violent extremist who was dedicating his life and successful music career to encouraging other young people to join his racist and bigoted organization. He despised those who looked, spoke and thought differently than he and his fellow violent extremists did. He literally could not have been living a life more different than Lorie Mayer's. And yet, through a remarkable personal transformation, he has rejected a life filled with hate to become instead an advocate for peace and respect for each other. Like Lorie, he is encouraging others to get beyond hate by seeing each other from a person-to-person perspective in his work around the world.

The Capolino 2019 Diamond Volunteer Award honoring Hadassah Schulman recognizes the longtime contributions Hadassah has made to the

Museum. In addition to helping staff and run the Museum in its early days, perhaps Hadassah's greatest contribution is acting as the Coordinator of the Oral Visual History Project. It is thanks to her efforts that the wartime experiences of nearly 100 local Holocaust Survivors and Camp Liberators are preserved for future generations. The Award is sponsored by local Realtor Kelly Capolino to recognize an outstanding non-profit organization volunteer.

With the rise in hate and anti-Semitic incidents around the world, the Museum's work is critically important. By inspiring and encouraging students and visitors to action against bigotry, hatred and violence, we are sowing the seeds for a better world, both now and in the future. Our world needs more people like Lorie Mayer, Christian Picciolini and Hadassah Schulman.

If you would like to hear about the variety of options available for you to support our Education programs, please contact me at 239.263.9200 or Susan@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org. We hope to see you at the Museum soon!

P.S. Construction update: Based on current schedules, the move to the Museum's future quarters will happen in Summer 2019, with a Grand Opening event in the Fall. Until then, we invite you to visit our current location, 4760 Tamiami Trail N., Ste. 7, Naples.▲



■ Susan Suarez




ANNUAL MEETING

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7:00 P.M.

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23rd annual Dr. Talbot Spivak Holocaust Memorial Week

By Professor Cindy Campbell and Dr. Rona Axelrod

Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW) will observe the 23rd annual Dr. Talbot Spivak Holocaust Memorial Week, March 25-29, with a series of events. This year's theme, "The Holocaust: Unheeded Warnings," will focus on the early warning signs that were ignored and how they led to the horrors of the Holocaust.

The mission of the Dr. Talbot Spivak Holocaust Memorial Week at FSW is to educate students and the community about the Holocaust, to honor its victims and survivors, to cultivate tolerance, and to promote awareness of modern-day genocide in support of the world's promise of "Never Again."

A major feature of the Holocaust Memorial Week at FSW continues to be firsthand commentary by Holocaust survivors. Our local community has been blessed to have a number of residents who are Holocaust survivors and are willing to share their personal Holocaust experiences with students and the community. Renee Beddouk, Marcel Fachler, Cesare Frustaci, Steen Metz, Rob Nossen and Irene Skolnick will present their individual Holocaust survivor stories. Steen, also, will present his heartrending story to the FSW Collegiate High School students. All of the survivor stories help our students realize how tragic the Holocaust was and to put a face to the victims. Renee Beddouk, Marcel Fachler, Cesare Frustaci, Steen Metz and Irene Skolnick will participate in a Round Table Luncheon where they are able to talk to students in a more intimate setting to tell their stories. This is a unique opportunity to meet

and get to know our local Holocaust survivors.

We are honored to offer several sessions with guest speakers. Sessions will include presentations by FSW faculty: Dr. Bruno Baltodano (Professor of Political Science), Dr. Wendy Chase (Professor of Humanities), Professor Sarah Gottwalles (Professor of History), Dr. Mark Herman (Professor of History), Professor Frank Kohn (Professor of Psychology), Dr. Lauren Madak, Professor Robbie Manauis (Professor of First Year Experience) and Dr. Sandi Towers-Romero (Professor of Hospitality Law). The FSW Writing Center's Book Club will hold a book discussion on Elie Wiesel's *Night*.

Gulfshore Playhouse will present the play *In Flight: The Story of Sabine Van Dam*. Sabine shared her story with FSW students many times over the years. Sadly, she passed away in November 2018. The Holocaust Memorial Committee is honored to be able to share her story with this production.

FSW Professor Steve Chase will present the film *Night and Fog*, a 1956 documentary made 10 years after the liberation of Nazi concentration camps.

In partnership with The Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center, the Holocaust Boxcar will be on display for educational tours in the Building N parking lot on the FSW Thomas Edison Campus from March 18 to April 1, and on the Charlotte Campus, Lot 4, from April 1-15.

The FSW Holocaust Memorial Committee would like to thank The Holocaust Museum, the Kenneth and

Mary Ruth Stegman Endowed Chair, FSW Foundation, Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties, and FSW Campus Student Engagement for their continued support.

Please visit <https://www.FSW.edu/holocaust> for more detailed event infor-

mation and to access archived videos from our Holocaust survivors.▲

Professor Cindy Campbell and Dr. Rona Axelrod are Co-Chairs of the FSW Dr. Talbot Spivak Holocaust Memorial Committee.

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

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Please contact Debbie Sanford to volunteer at 239.481.4449 ext. 4 or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

Thank you!

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

All are welcome as we commemorate

Yom Hashoah

Holocaust

Remembrance Day

Sunday, April 28, 2019

3:00 P.M.

Temple Judea

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The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties will commemorate Yom HaShoah with a Holocaust Remembrance program featuring survivor Pieter Kohnstam, a personal friend of Anne Frank, and the beautiful voices of the Temple Beth Shalom Choir. A candle lighting ceremony in memory of the Six Million will be held.

For more information, contact Debbie Sanford at 239.481.4449 x4. Free & open to the community.

Naples Fine Art Show feature artist

Renowned organizer Hot Works Fine Art & Fine Craft Shows is bringing two fine art and fine craft shows to Naples in 2019 – March 30 & 31 and December – at Galleria Shoppes at Vanderbilt. One of the artists whose work will be prominently featured this March is Bonnie ‘Zoey’ Ziskin of Minneapolis and Naples.

communications and has not had any formal art training. Her acrylic mixed media on canvas and fused glass are her main focus. Most of her art is in primary bright colors and is meant to put a smile of your face. Everyone who walks into her booth leaves with a smile. That means her mission was accomplished! “I can hardly wait to jump out of bed in the morning and start my art, even if I am still in a bathrobe,” says Bonnie.

Meet Bonnie and 75 other juried artists at Hot Works’ Naples Fine Art Show, March 30 & 31 at Galleria Shoppes at Vanderbilt, located on the corner of Airport-Pulling and Vanderbilt Beach Roads. Event hours are Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. All disciplines are original and personally handmade by the artist who is present at the show; all art is for sale including paintings, sculpture, clay, glass, fiber, wood, jewelry, photography and more. There is something for everyone, in all price ranges. \$1,500 in Professional Artist Awards is distributed on Saturday at 3:00 p.m.

Admission is free, but an optional \$5 donation supports Institute for Arts & Education, the associated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is dedicated to visual arts, cultural diversity, community enrichment and fostering art education among youth.

While at the art show, be sure to visit the Budding Artist Competition, a program integrated within a 10x20 area in the show. All young artists in grades 6-12 or ages 9-19 are encouraged to enter his/her art that is publicly displayed the entire weekend. The deadline to apply is Sunday, March 10. There is \$250 in Budding Artist Awards presented on Sunday at 3:00 p.m. under the tent labeled Budding Artists.

For more information about the shows, visit www.hotworks.org. See Art, Love Art, Buy Art, See You There! ▲



Bonnie is a 70-year-old woman who has been an accountant, a surgical nurse, and now an artist. She considers being an artist the most fun time of her entire life, and also the most prolific. Being a stage IV lung cancer patient and going through surgeries and treatments over the past few years, she has discovered



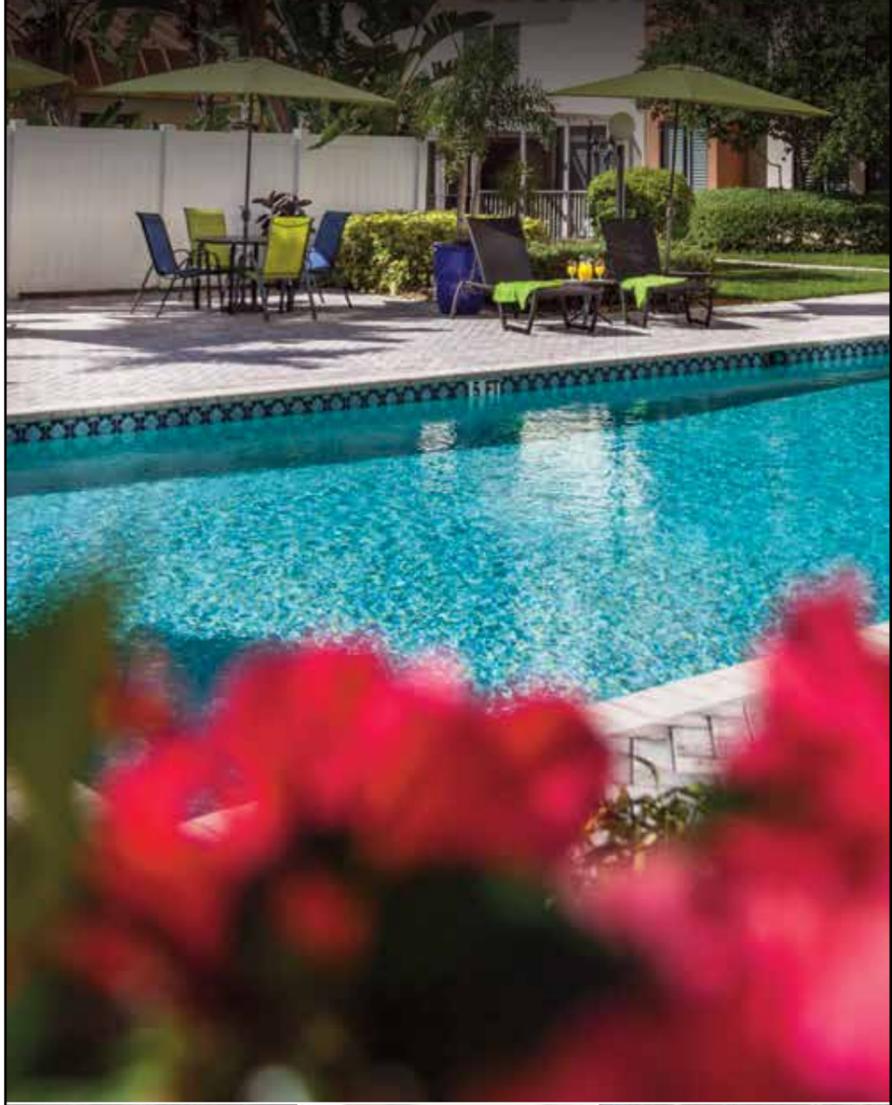
she no longer has a “fear of failure.” This gift of true “freedom” prompted her to try things she was always afraid of accomplishing. Art was something that just started flowing out of every pore, and it was almost scary producing enough to have her first show four months after her start.

Bonnie has her B.A. in Commu-

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Israel Connect

By Sarah Gordon, Director, Israel Connect

Temple Beth El's Mitzvah Committee stands on three pillars: a) Enhancing our temple community, b) Be a Jewish voice in Southwest Florida, and c) Strengthen our bond with Israel.

Currently, three of the temple's members mentor Israeli teenagers through the Israel Connect program. Whether or not a TBE member, every constituent of the Southwest Florida Jewish community can personally benefit by participating in the Israel Connect project. Conversing with an Israeli teenager for 45 minutes once each week has become the most anticipated, enjoyable and edifying time period of my week. We are teaching each other.

Today in Israel, university entrance exams are nearly 1/4 weighted toward English language proficiency. Without strong English language skills, students cannot get accepted to universities. Within Israel, access to English immersion experiences is strongly correlated with higher socio-economic status. The better their English skills, the more successful and affluent a person is likely to be. That's where Israel Connect comes in. Since 2013, thousands of Israeli students have been helped.

Israel Connect is a not-for-profit organization that partners hundreds of students across Israel with hundreds of volunteers in North America. The volunteer and student meet once a week, via video conferencing software. The purpose of these conversations is to provide an immersion experience to

Israeli students who otherwise would not have the access. At the same time, these conversations provide a wonderful social interaction for our volunteers, connecting them to our homeland. Due to the seven-hour time difference, these sessions take place in the North American morning while the students are finishing their school day in Israel. Every set of partners is given a consistent time and date on which they connect weekly. There is a curriculum that takes students and volunteers on a tour of Israel.

Israel Connect helps students improve their English language skills and their confidence in using them. They do better on university entrance exams and pave the way to a brighter future. Our mentors don't require any educational or teaching backgrounds. We provide them all the training they need.

Numerous studies have shown that immersion is one of the most effective, engaging and enjoyable ways to learn a language. Our volunteers provide that immersion experience, e-mentoring, tutoring and building relationships with disadvantaged youth whose hopes rest on a university education. Israel Connect works with Israel's Ministry of Education to flag underperforming schools in need of the program. Most of our students have graduated the program scoring over 90% on their English proficiency exam, unlocking the door to post-secondary education.

Should this opportunity be of interest to you, please email me at sarah@israelconnect.today.▲

Community Free Synagogue events and programs

March Adult Education Series: "American Jews and Israel"

The Community Free Synagogue adult education program continues with a 3-week series in March titled "American Jews and Israel." Rabbi Bruce Diamond will explore the history of America's Jews' attitudes toward Zionism, its subsequent relationships with the State of Israel including the current state of affairs, and then try to peer into the future of this increasingly complicated connection.

The classes will be offered from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Thursdays, March 7, 14 and 28 (with a break for Purim) in the synagogue's Community Hall, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers. Classes are free and open to all, although weekly readings are required. They can be found on the C.F.S. website at www.fortmyerssynagogue.com.

"PowerPoint Purim Celebration"

One and all are cordially invited to the Community Free Synagogue's annual



"PowerPoint Purim" Megillah reading and sing-along at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 21 in the synagogue's worship hall, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers.

Rabbi Diamond will chant and read the Scroll of Esther accompanied by hilarious scenes from the story featur-

ing C.F.S. participants photographed the month before. The between-scenes sing-along will include all the Purim favorites. Homemade hummentaschen and beverages will be served after the reading with complimentary "shalah manot" packages to take home.

The celebration, like all Community Free Synagogue events, is free and open to all.

Puppeteers Wanted for The Community Free Synagogue Young People's Passover Seder Lunch

The Community Free Players, directed by actors Scott and Roslyn Thomson, are looking for hand puppeteers for the C.F.S. Saturday, April 20 Young People's Seder Lunch. The puppet show will present the story of the Exodus and reenact the song "Had Gadya" for an audience of our area's Jewish children and their families. A Seder-style children's luncheon will follow. The show and luncheon are free and open to all families with children ages 5-8 and their siblings, with reservations opening at the beginning of April.

Now in its 2nd year, the Community Free Players, founded by the Thomsons, is a "pro-am" laboratory theater spinoff of the Community Free Synagogue, which does dramatic readings of contemporary plays with Jewish content.

Those interested in participating in the Passover puppet theatre can email C.F.S. at synfree@comcast.net.▲



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Matthew Broderick and Géza Röhrig star in Jewish "Odd Couple" dramedy *To Dust* in theaters March 15

Winner of the Audience Award for Best New Narrative at the Tribeca Film Festival, *To Dust* stars Géza Röhrig (Academy Award-winning film *Son of Saul*) as Shmuel, a grieving Hasidic cantor in upstate New York who is struggling to make peace with the recent death of his wife.

Breaking his own religious customs, Shmuel approaches a bungling science teacher, Albert (Matthew Broderick), to help him understand the process of decomposition and hopeful-



ly put a stop to the nightmares he keeps having. Albert is reluctant at first, but soon becomes Shmuel's unwitting partner as the two embark on a series of misadventures and outrageous experiments to better understand and come to terms with his wife's passing.

Critics are hailing the film: *New York Post* says, "Shmuel and Albert may be the funniest odd couple since Broderick and Nathan Lane's Leo Bloom and Max Bialystock;" *The Guardian* wrote, *To Dust* is "Quirky and poignant and funny. So much of it felt very universal too;" and *Cinema Siren* calls *To Dust* "darkly funny, and insightful."

Produced by renowned actors Emily Mortimer (*Mary Poppins Returns*), Alessandro Nivola (*Disobedience*) and Ron Perlman (*Sons of Anarchy*), *To Dust* is a quirky, unconventional dramedy about grief and acceptance.

Florida native Shawn Snyder directed and co-wrote *To Dust*. For one year, Shawn taught at his high school alma mater, NSU University School in Fort Lauderdale, where he met *To Dust* co-writer Jason Begue.

After graduating from Harvard University with a degree in religion, Shawn studied film at NYU and has been named one of *Filmmaker* magazine's "25 New Faces of Independent Film."

To Dust is Shawn's feature film debut.

To Dust is a quirky, unconventional dramedy about grief and acceptance. The film opens Friday, March 15 in Fort Myers at Regal Belltower 20. The film is rated R. For additional theaters

and to view the trailer, please visit the official website at <http://gooddeedentertainment.com/todust>.

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March 1939: Countdown to war

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

It might be said that the final countdown to war between Nazi Germany and the Western Allies began on March 15, 1939, exactly 80 years ago this month.

The Munich Agreement of the previous September saw Czechoslovakia lose its Sudetenland regions, handed across by Britain and France to Hitler on the grounds that they were peopled by German-speakers who could be “returned” to the Reich (notwithstanding that the Sudetenland had never belonged to Germany). At this time the Czechs also lost the backbone of their northern defenses, a carefully constructed state-of-the-art series of mountain fortifications and bunkers.

In the same grab for territory, Czechoslovakia’s other neighbors – the jackal states of Poland and Hungary – chipped in for their share, helping themselves to parts of the Czech state which they thought should also be theirs.

The relative ease with which Adolf Hitler managed to negotiate Czechoslovakia into this position – in which its territorial integrity was compromised impossibly – emboldened him to consider further adventures. While the Munich Agreement removed the immediate threat of war and gave Britain and France a breathing space to hasten their preparation for potential conflict, Hitler’s confidence that he could get what he wanted without war grew. He had never discussed a complete occupation of Czechoslovakia, though he (and other Nazi leaders like Hermann Göring) expressed continual racial

contempt for the Czechs and Slovaks.

However, with the occupation of the Sudetenland, Hitler considered that the rest of what was termed “rump Czechoslovakia” should also be occupied. Over the winter of 1938-1939 he became convinced that in light of their capitulation at Munich, Britain and France would not use force to resist any further German expansion.

The severely wounded Czechoslovak government now began to be undermined from within, through calls for the secession of Slovakia. Slovak People’s Party leader and Catholic priest Jozef Tiso received aid and encouragement directly from Germany for this purpose. And then, on March 14, 1939, after a period of agitation further undermining central resolve, Slovak parliamentarians voted in favor of a complete break with Czechoslovakia, with Tiso making a public appeal to Hitler to step in and guarantee the defense of what was now essentially a German puppet state.

Under these circumstances, Czech President Emil Hácha had little idea how to deal with the situation. He requested an audience with Hitler, who summoned him to Berlin and then used the opportunity to intimidate Hácha, threatening a Luftwaffe attack on Prague if he did not order the surrender of the Czechoslovak Army. During the meeting, Hácha suffered a heart attack, and had to be resuscitated by medical staff. Weakly, he eventually gave in to Hitler’s terms of total capitulation.

The Czech lands were henceforth to be formed into a new German Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia. This took place early in the morning on March 15, 1939, with German troops entering what remained of Czechoslovakia.

These actions were all in flagrant violation of the Munich Agreement, but no matter; that evening, Hitler made a triumphal entry into Prague and took up temporary residence at the Hradčany Castle, from which he could now look forward to becoming master of Europe. He installed Konstantin von Neurath, the former German Foreign Minister, as Reich Protector of Bohemia-Moravia.

Slovakia became an independent state under the leadership of Jozef Tiso, who established an ethnic nationalist, fascist, authoritarian, one-party dictatorship allied to Nazi Germany.

In Prague, German citizens turned out and waved swastika flags as German troops and military equipment marched in. For the powerless Czechs, however, the German takeover was as great a tragedy as could be imagined. Many gathered in Wenceslas Square, where they repeatedly sang the national anthem until this was suppressed. A portrait of the founder of the Czech state, Tomáš Masaryk, was placed on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This was later destroyed on the orders of the occupiers.

Hitler had not previously forecast an annexation of the rest of Czechoslovakia. He never mentioned it in *Mein Kampf*, and throughout his political career up to this point he repeatedly affirmed that he was only interested in uniting all Germans in a single Reich, which would, by definition, not include Slavs or other non-German peoples. On March 15, 1939, however, Ger-

many conquered seven million Czechs, sending Europeans everywhere into a panic regarding just how far Hitler’s appetite extended.

The Western surrender at Munich was supposed to end Hitler’s territorial ambitions in Europe and guarantee the future peace. The occupation of Czechoslovakia, however, showed that Hitler’s guarantees, in fact, guaranteed nothing. The invasion made it clear that Hitler could not be trusted to keep his promises, and from this point onwards Britain and France, with enormous reluctance, started preparing for war. They now declared that if Hitler set his sights on Poland that they would have little option but to defend it. Convinced – finally – that there were no limits to Hitler’s territorial ambitions, they saw little other alternative. They would have to prevent German domination of Europe. And if this had to be through force, then so be it. Appeasement was over, and the road to war lay open.

Established as a new state in 1918, Czechoslovakia managed only two decades of national existence before disappearing from the map in tears and sorrow. And in the six years that followed, of up to 320,000 Czech civilians who died during World War II, at least 275,000 were Jewish victims of the Holocaust.▲

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



■ Dr. Paul Bartrop

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Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Contributing Columnist

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

TV Catch-Up and Look Ahead

Larry Charles' Dangerous World of Comedy, a four-part series, started on Netflix on February 15. **LARRY CHARLES**, 62, wrote or co-wrote many *Seinfeld* scripts. He became somewhat famous when he directed the hit films *Borat* and *Bruno*, both starring **SACHA BARON COHEN**, now 47. In his Netflix series, he travels around the world and finds comedy in unlikely places: Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia and Saudi Arabia. Charles, by the way, grew up in a Brooklyn apartment complex called Trump Village (named after Fred Trump, Donald's father, who built it). Being raised in Trump Village is just fodder for any comedian today.

The Fix is a legal drama that will start on ABC on March 18 at 10:00 p.m. The premise is a lot like the O.J. Simpson saga and that's understandable. **MARCIA CLARK**, 65, is one of the series' creators and principal writers. She prosecuted Simpson at his murder trial. *The Fix* follows Maya Travis, who is living in obscurity in rural Oregon as the series begins. We quickly find out her past: she prosecuted an Oscar-winning actor for two murders. When he was acquitted, she was shredded by the press and moved from Los Angeles to Oregon. When the actor is accused of killing again (his girlfriend), Travis accepts an offer to join the team prosecuting the actor and returns to L.A. Veteran actor **SCOTT COHEN**, 57, has a supporting role as Ezra Wolf.

The Village is a "feel good" drama that begins on NBC on March 19 at 10:00 p.m. The publicity release says: "The people who reside in [this Brooklyn] building have built a bonded family of friends and neighbors." Two of the nine members of the series' ensemble cast are Jewish: **MORAN ATIAS**, 37, and **DARYN KAGASOFF**, 32. Atias, who was once a model, was born in Israel. Her parents are of Moroccan Jewish ancestry. She's co-starred in a couple of short-lived TV series. Kasagoff is best known for starring in the ABC Family TV series *The Secret Life of an American Teenager*.

LOGAN LERMAN, 26 (*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *Percy Jackson*) will co-star in *The Hunt*, a 10-episode Amazon original series. Also co-starring is Al Pacino, who is appearing in his first TV series. Details are sparse right now, but I know that Lerman plays a young man named Jonah Heidelberg (who I bet his Jewish). After his grandmother is murdered, Jonah tracks down the killer (who I bet is Nazi-connected). As he tracks the killer, he encounters a mysterious organization called the Hunt. It is dedicated to hunting down Nazis living in America. Pacino plays a Nazi hunter who mentors Heidelberg. The series start date is not yet set.

At the Movies: Opens March 15
The Hummingbird Project stars **JESSE EISENBERG**, 35, and Alexander Skarsgard as cousins of Russian Jewish background who, as the film opens, work in technical support for a nasty

Interested in Your Family's History?

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

So here's the deal:

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

company with an even-nastier boss (Salma Hayek). They realize they could make millions if they can lay a faster fiber-optical line from Wall Street's electronic core in Kansas to the Street's New Jersey data bank (it only has to be a bit faster than the existing line – the time it takes a hummingbird to beat its wings once). They go out on their own to build the line and face geographical challenges as well as legal attacks from their old company. Advance reviews are incredibly mixed (raves and pans). By the way, in 2017, Eisenberg finally married his on-and-off Jewish girlfriend, **ANNA STROUT**, now 41, and they now have a son. They reside part of the year in Bloomington, Indiana, her hometown. They are very involved in helping a domestic violence shelter in Bloomington. Strout's late mother was the head of the shelter for 30 years.

Another Yiddish Word in the Mainstream?
"Alta Kakas" (politely "old farts"),

a Yiddish term, recently burst into the "mainstream" when **MICHAEL DOUGLAS**, 73, used it when accepting a Golden Globe award, and when it was used as the title of a *Law & Order: SVU* episode. Now "tucas" is to follow. I was stunned when I stumbled on a Preparation H television ad about the sheriff of a town called Tookas. There were a lot of puns about how Prep H protects his tucas they way he protects Tookas. You can view it on YouTube; enter "Preparation H commercials." You'll see other funny Prep H ads – one with the song "Ring of Fire" in the background and another about a town called Kiester.▲

What do you think? Need to reach the editor of L'CHAYIM? Send an email to LChayim36@gmail.com.

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

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Can you imagine a making a life in the shadow of a rendering plant? A place where the stench of rotting horse carcasses and related animal decay is ever present? A place isolated from the Brooklyn shore though regularly supplied by barge visits bringing more and more disintegrating remains for the glue factory? Such is Barren Shoals, which like neighboring Barren Island is a last-chance place for poor immigrant families.

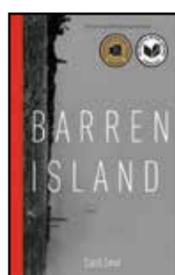
Zoref's narrator, 80-year-old Marta Eisenstein Lane, was born and raised in this repugnant place. Through Marta, the author traces the life of a neglected, impoverished community that is distanced in every way from the American Dream. Indeed, a critique of that dream is one level at which this exceptional and surprising novel operates.

There are many other levels. Zoref's book is truly an historical novel, taking us through the aftermath of WWI, the brief epoch of good times for many that followed, and the crushing Depression eventually to be relieved by the dawning of WWII. She explores how people outside of the mainstream receive news and process it: news about government programs, about the march of unionizing labor, and about the various utopian "isms" for redistributing power and wealth.

The heart of the novel covers Marta's life from the age of about seven through her high school graduation and her refusal to pursue an opportunity to enter Hunter College. It focuses on the Eisenstein family and other immigrant families (Greeks, Italians, etc.), reveal-

ing the hardships of their lives and the power of their passions. Its large cast of memorable characters includes Marta's mother, her best friend Sophia, her brother Noah and her teacher – the extremely wise, talented and effective Miss Finn.

Barren Island boils with moral issues, with parents aging and children maturing, with romance, humiliation, longing and desperation. Where do desperate people find hope? Can the horrors of their victimization be relieved by watching the graceful scavenging of beautiful birds? No, too many of the Barren Shoals residents are themselves scavengers.



A hopeful sign is the building of a community garden. It reveals a proper pride and successful productivity. With diligence and application, something can come of nothing. A less upbeat thread involves Mr. Eisenstein's frequent trips to the HIAS office in a futile attempt to bring threatened relatives from Hitler's Europe to the U.S.

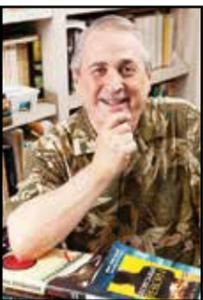
Barren Island is a brilliant coming-of-age novel; Marta's portrait of her youth is informed by the distance she has traveled and the experiences from which she has learned. And it is much more. It takes readers to places they have not been or even heard of before – places that are close geographically but distant in most other ways. This book is a grand testimony to the human spirit and a weighty reminder of the consequences of neglect.

Zoref's narrative is so beautifully written, so richly perceptive and so polished in matters of craft that it will surely add more accolades to its distinction as the Associated Writing Programs' (AWP) Award for the Novel.

In fact, since this review was first written, *Barren Island* won the National Jewish Book Award Goldberg Prize and made the National Book Award Longlist. ▲



Carol Zoref



Phil Jason



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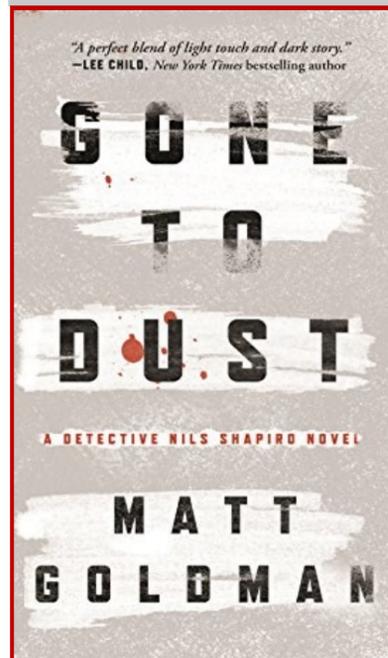
Philip K. Jason is Professor Emeritus

of English from the United States Naval Academy. He reviews for Florida Weekly, Washington Independent Review of Books, Southern Literary Review, other publications and the Jewish Book Council. Visit Phil's website at www.philjason.wordpress.com.



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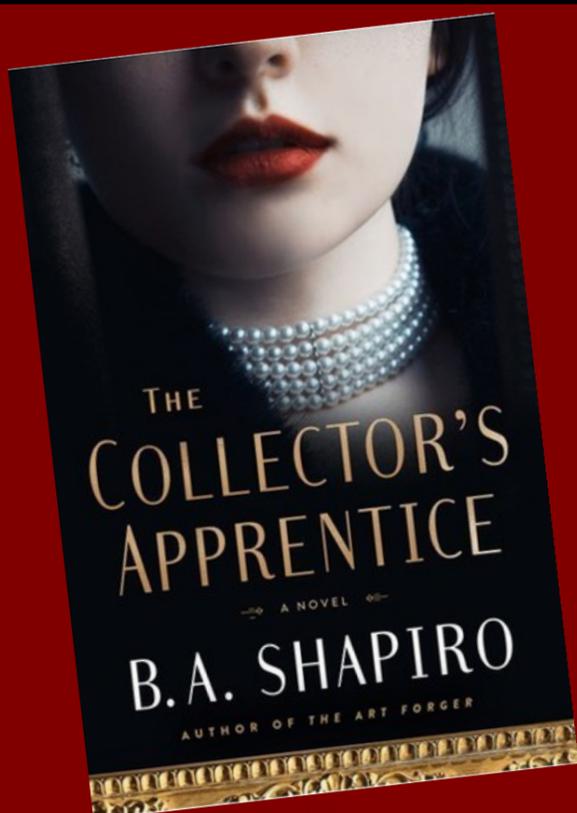
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Catching up

By The Wine Whisperer

As you know, we wine journalists receive sample bottles from wineries and their public relations firms, shipped to us in the hope that we'll swirl, sip and review their products favorably in our columns. When I first started writing this column, I knew the FedEx and UPS trucks would be unloading boxes at my office, but I was a bit unprepared for the flood of samples I'd receive.

This is not a complaint. I am delighted with the range and quality of the wines I'm privileged to sample and evaluate. I take the responsibility seriously and have a tasting panel of knowledgeable friends who join me in monthly sipping sessions. However, I get emails from wineries and their ad agencies asking, "Did you have a chance to try the Chateau Bonjour we sent?"

But, since my column is published monthly, and since I have room for three or maybe four reviews in each, I do get a bit behind and the bottles stack up. So every once in a while, I try to catch up a bit and offer you a range of new choices and recommendations.

When my wife Debi and I first fell down the rabbit hole into the wine world, I made myself one promise: I would never serve or recommend a wine I wouldn't drink myself. In fact, when the panel is finished sampling and evaluating the wines, we finish some of them off with dinner, and then everybody takes home a few bottles. We like them, so we continue to enjoy them. And on more than one occasion, I've tasted a sample bottle and

immediately ordered a case. Or two.

In order to get a bit ahead of the sample shipments, I'm happy to offer your new shopping list of excellent value wines. We liked them all. Most may be available locally, or can be ordered online and shipped to you.

Ranch 32 Cabernet Sauvignon Monterey 2015 (\$39) – The dark ruby color in the glass promises a full-bodied palate with exuberant black mixed fruit, leather and smoke. WW 88

Clos Pegase Estate Chardonnay Napa Valley Mitsuko's Vineyard 2016 (\$30) – After nine months in the barrel, this wine offers toasty oak on the nose with hints of vanilla and caramel. Melon and apricot flavors predominate, riding on a creamy texture from the malolactic fermentation. WW 89-90

Les Dauphins Côtes du Rhône Réserve Rouge 2016 (\$11) – A characteristic Rhone blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre with a rich ruby color. Black mixed fruit, with currant flavors and hints of spice, plum and smoke. Excellent value. WW 88

Fetzer Riesling Monterey County NV (\$10) – An off-dry example of this German varietal with a rich yellow color in the glass, a bit of characteristic petrol on the nose, and round mouthfeel with predominant melon flavors and a long finish. Great value for the price. WW 87

Gato Negro Sauvignon Blanc Chile 2017 (\$5) – A pleasant, light summer sipper, with pronounced lemon and grapefruit aromas and flavors, and a bit of a green note. Nicely balanced between the lively acidity and fruit flavors. WW 87-88

Scheid Family VDR Red Blend Monterey Hames Valley 2015 (\$20) – The "VDR" stands for "very dark red," and it is. An uncommon blend of Petit Verdot and Petite Sirah, there's nothing

petite about the flavors. Explosive blueberry, vanilla and pepper, along with deep plum and tobacco. Definitely a sipping wine. WW 93

Ask the Wine Whisperer

I was watching a few wine experts sampling and evaluating wines, and they slurped them pretty noisily from the glass. Why are we supposed to slurp wine? Caroline L., Port St. Lucie

Slurping has the same effect as when you swirl the wine in your glass

before tasting, only more so. Both swirling and slurping are ways to get oxygen into the liquid and help it to "open up," bringing out the aromas and flavors. So go ahead and slurp. It's the professional thing to do.▲

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

■ Jerry Greenfield




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Jerusalem bagel is coming to the U.S.

— recipe by Chef Dalia Hemed

Jerusalem is increasing in popularity as a tourist destination and was the “World’s Fastest Growing Tourist Destination” for 2018. Jerusalem is quickly becoming one of the food destinations in the world. It has a large number of incredible restaurants that pair a love for quality ingredients, slow food and a great ambience for the perfect dining experience.

Although most people plan a trip to Jerusalem, the world’s holiest city, to explore the many sacred Jewish landmarks or the ancient archeological sites, I have to admit that I was there mainly for the food. The first thing I learned visiting Jerusalem is that there is no such thing as going hungry there. And, I’d dare say, the chances of eating a seriously bad meal there are very slim. In Jerusalem, food is always fresh and full of flavor. You can find great food from simple bread or nuts from the Machane Yehuda Market, a quick meal in a local eatery, or a 4-course meal in an upscale restaurant.

No matter your reason for visiting, be sure to save plenty of time to explore the food scene when traveling to the Holy City.

The Israeli culinary scene is a creative conglomeration of cuisines from countless immigrants who migrated to Jerusalem, bringing their cherished family recipes from North Africa, the Mediterranean and other Middle Eastern countries. It’s amazing that even though half of Israel is desert, they still manage to produce some of the most succulent fruits and veggies (often organic) I’ve ever eaten. Just a few not-to-be-missed mainstays you’ll find throughout the city are falafel, hummus, olives, halvah, chopped veggie salads, local fish from the Jordan River, fresh-squeezed fruit

juices, fabulous breads and a variety of honey filo-dough desserts.

For me the best and most fun way to experience the real Jerusalem color is the Machane Yehuda Market.



All of Jerusalem meets in Machane Yehuda, from first-time visitors to residents filling their trolleys with fruits and vegetables. Market tables are laden with wheels of halvah (sesame-paste nougat), olives larger than thumbs, glistening poppy-seed pastries and almost everything that can be made or grown locally. At night, it reinvents itself as a restaurant and bar hub where local foodies and tourists hang out.

You can easily spend hours there, lost in a pleasurable sensory haze as you aimlessly nibble your way through the winding alleyways, but the Jerusalem bagel is a standout worth searching out. When I was little girl, the no-frills,

Jerusalem bagel kiosks were basically just a cash register surrounded by piles of Jerusalem bagels for sale with newspaper pouches of za’atar (a Middle Eastern spice mix) for dipping.

Jerusalem bagel is the bagel you need to dip, not schmear. If you have never heard of the Jerusalem bagel, get ready to fall in love because this bread treat is gaining popularity in the U.S. Jerusalem bagels are oblong sesame-coated breads that are baked in woodfired ovens sold by street vendors in the streets of the Old City.

Jerusalem-style bagel gained popularity in Israel after the 1967 Six-Day War. But other than this, the exact origins of the bagels in Jerusalem are somewhat a mystery. We do know that this style of bagel has been a popular street food in Jerusalem for some time.

Now you can pick up a few, or a bagful, at most open-air markets and bakeries, even at small roadside kiosks. I’ve also seen roaming vendors hawking fresh “bagaleh” at traffic lights – a quick munch while you’re waiting for the light to change.

The truth is, these bagels aren’t hard to make at home. They require few ingredients and not many steps, but they do need a little time. They are bread, after all. The bagels should be eaten as soon as they’ve cooled down, as they’re so light that they can dry out quickly.

To complete the Jerusalem experience when enjoying your bagels, find za’atar at Middle Eastern grocery stores. Or pick up some sumac, dried thyme, dried oregano and sesame seeds, and try your hand at making your own blend.

If you can refrain from devouring these bagels while they’re still hot, I admire your willpower.

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs bread flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons active dry yeast
- ¼ cup olive oil + 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup sesame seeds
- 1 to 2 tablespoons water (for brush)
- ▶ Put all the ingredients except the 2 tablespoons of olive oil, sesame seeds, and 1 to 2 tablespoons of water into the bowl of a mixer fitted with the dough hook.
- ▶ Mix on medium speed until the dough comes together in a soft and



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

pliable ball. Alternatively, mix in a large bowl and knead by hand until smooth and pliable. You are looking for soft, elastic but robust dough. Rub the dough with the remainder oil, cover the bowl with a damp dish towel or plastic wrap, and set aside to rise until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

- ▶ Once the dough has risen, gently punch down to release the air bubbles. Divide the dough into 12 equal-sized portions and place them



on a lightly floured work surface. Roll and stretch each piece into a log about 8 to 12 inches long, then attach the ends together to form a circle. Set aside to rest for 15 minutes.

- ▶ Preheat the oven to 450°F. Take each dough ring, brush the remaining water on top and dip it in the sesame. Gently roll and stretch the ring until you have a long oval shape, similar to a stretched out “0”. Repeat with each ring, and then set aside on a baking sheet to rest, about 30 minutes.
- ▶ Place the baking sheet into the oven on the lower level and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a deep golden color and cooked through. Set aside on a wire rack to cool.
- ▶ Serve warm with some za’atar, hummus dip or soft cheese (with za’atar and olive oil).▲



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Monday, March 25, 2019
Monday, April 22, 2019

A visit with Bob Dylan: Is he Christian or Jewish?

By Arlene Stolnitz

“All songwriters are links in a chain,” says legendary folk-singer Pete Seeger, “yet there are few artists in this evolutionary arc whose influence is as profound as Bob Dylan.”

Bob Dylan was born Robert Allen Zimmerman in Duluth, Minnesota, on May 24, 1941, and was raised in Hibbing, a mostly Catholic town nearly 70 miles away. Dylan’s mother, Beattie Stone, of Hibbing, had married a Duluth shop owner named Abraham Zimmerman. Abraham’s father had been a peddler and a shoemaker, who emigrated from Russia in the ’20s.

Dylan recalls that his life was built around the family in those years, since there “weren’t many Jews around.”

Always interested in music and an intrepid guitar player, Dylan attended summer camp at Camp Herzl in Webster, Wisconsin. He also learned Hebrew and studied Torah privately with a rabbi who was hired to tutor him for his bar mitzvah.

So how did a nice Jewish boy like Bobby Zimmerman become the Bob Dylan we know today?

That’s a long story which can best be told by referring to the son of a longtime friend of mine from my hometown, Rochester, New York.

Researching the background of Dylan, I came upon a familiar name I knew from years ago. Larry Yudelson, Associate Editor of the Rockland, New Jersey, *Jewish Standard*, is known in music circles as a Dylan scholar. He has created a web page dedicated to the religious/cultural journey of Bob Dylan. It didn’t take me long to find Larry’s email address, and suddenly I had more information than I had ever

expected. He was happy to share the information, which I have culled for the important and most interesting facts.

Some of the highlights of Dylan’s Judaic/religious journey include:

- ◆ Changing his name from Zimmerman to Dylan in the early ’60s... after poet and writer Dylan Thomas, whom he admired
- ◆ Considering moving to a kibbutz in the early ’70s and ’80s after several inspiring trips to Israel where he was once seen in prayer wearing tefillin and a tallit
- ◆ Converting to born-again Christianity in the late ’70s
- ◆ Studying with Lubavitch Hasidim in the early ’80s

We don’t think of Bob Dylan, known for his “music of protest” in the ’60s, as a particularly Jewish songwriter, yet Yudelson points to several references in Dylan’s lyrics which suggest a “Jewish” influence. In his song “Gates of Eden,” the reference to *bread crumbs* may refer to the *Tashlich* ceremony or the Passover holiday. In “Forever Young,” the phrase *May God bless and keep you always* are the words of the kohanim, Jewish priests, blessing the Jewish congregation. In “Everything is Broken,” the metaphor is from Kabbalistic theology: when God created the world, the vessels were broken and the flaws of the world were scattered throughout. Our job is to repair the vessels; until then, everything is broken.

Dylan also is reported to have been influenced by Sholem Aleichem and Sholem Asch in his lyrics.

Asked whether Dylan’s Jewishness is an important issue, here is the response from Dylanologist Yudelson regarding Shabtai Zisel ben Avraham v’ Rachel Rivka, a.k.a. Bob Dylan.

“I do believe that Dylan’s Jewishness has a lot to teach us. His spiritual searching has always been at the core of his music. But spiritual searching is not something the organized Jew-

ish community is particularly comfortable with. The Establishment freaks out when the younger generations (which still includes those, like Dylan, who have moved well past 50) make cracks about their synagogues, and tune out when they start to speculate that maybe we all indeed ‘have to serve somebody.’ Where Jewish leaders are preaching continuity, Dylan quietly raised five children, saw them to bar mitzvahs and Jewish weddings, but is most at home perpetuating the culture of Woody Guthrie and the old blues singers. At the same time, he has an intense desire for God and salvation, a tremendous awareness of man’s sinfulness, and an appreciation of how much compassion is required in this world. His is an intense,

spiritual emotional message, very Hasidic, with much to teach the Jewish world.”

Known for his quotes, here’s one that resonated with me: “Gonna change my way of thinking, make myself a different set of rules. Gonna put my good foot forward and stop being influenced by fools.” ▲

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



Arlene Stolnitz



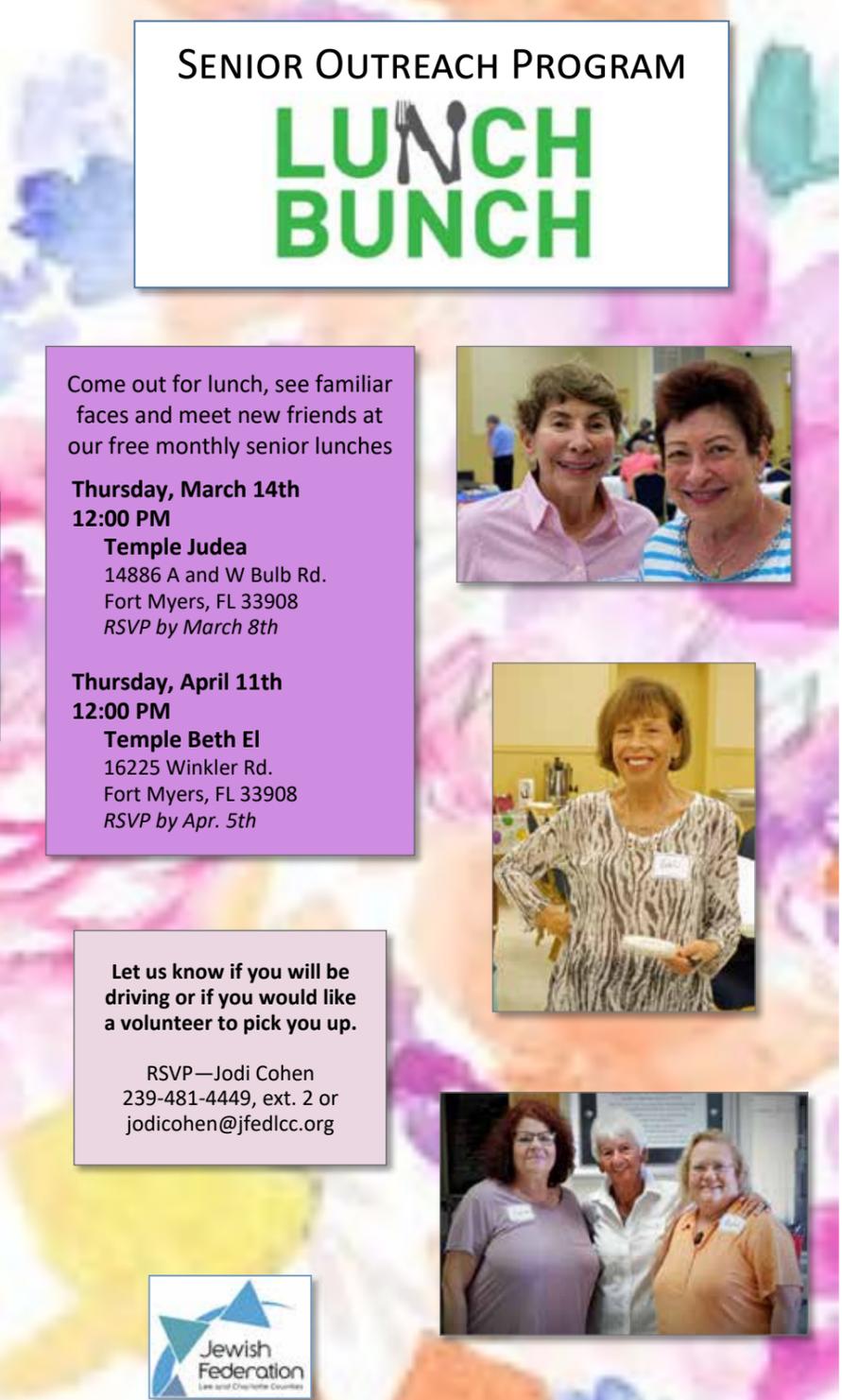
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Prime Minister Netanyahu meets with Lone Soldiers at 'Personal Errands Day' in Tel Aviv

Nefesh B'Nefesh and Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) hosted their Sixth annual "Yom Siddurim" (Personal Errands Day) for Lone Soldiers January 24 at Beit HaChayal in Tel Aviv. More than 1,600 Lone Soldiers – those who serve in the IDF without immediate family in Israel, many from the U.S. – attended the event and met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

More than 3,500 Lone Soldiers from around the world serve in the IDF, with over 1,000 from North America, including 946 from the U.S. About 1,600 Lone Soldiers from 70 different countries benefited from Nefesh B'Nefesh and FIDF's personal errands day. In 2018 alone, 393 Lone Soldiers immigrated to Israel through Nefesh B'Nefesh.

Organized with the IDF Human Resources Department, Errands Day



Personal Errands Day featured on-site driving tests, passport and ID assistance, and an employment workshop (photo credit: Nir Kafri)

acts as a one-stop-shop for Lone Soldiers to complete a wide range of errands, so that they can spend their days off relaxing rather than attempting to navigate the often-challenging Israeli bureaucracy.

The Errands Day, in cooperation with the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, Ministry of Interior, The Jewish Agency, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael, the Jewish National Fund-USA, and with the assistance of Yahad, brought togeth-

er all of the essential civilian agencies whose services Lone Soldiers require.

Featuring on-site driving tests, tax consultation, passport and ID assistance, and even an employment workshop, the event also provided Lone Soldiers the opportunity to receive personal consultation from Nefesh B'Nefesh and FIDF on acclimating into post-IDF life in Israel.

"Military service is hard and complicated for every soldier, and even more so for Lone Soldiers. Their decision to come to Israel and enlist in the IDF is a brave and noble act, one that is rooted in a deep sense of mission, determination, and love of the country. This is true Zionism," said Maj. Gen. (Res.) Meir Klifi-Amir, FIDF National Director and CEO. "FIDF supporters will continue to stand by their side and support all Lone Soldiers with a range of services during and after their military service, out of gratitude and profound appreciation for their contribution, and to ensure that not one of them ever feels alone."

Other dignitaries who attended Errands Day included Members of Knesset Yoav Galant (Likud) and Pnina Tamano-Shata (Yesh Atid), Minister of Justice Ayelet Shaked (New Right) and Minister of the Interior Aryeh Deri (Shas).

"This day is aimed at showing our appreciation to the thousands of dedicated Lone Soldiers who serve in the IDF for whom we are constantly exploring new ways to enhance our support and programming," said Rabbi Yehoshua Fass, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Nefesh B'Nefesh. "The Personal Errands Day was created to enable these soldiers to focus on their essential tasks of protecting and serving our country without having to worry about time-consuming personal matters during their army service."

Other participating agencies included Israel's Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, Student Licensing Office, Ministry of Housing, Automobile License Authority, The Jewish Agency for Israel, Yahad – United for Israel's Soldiers, Bituach Leumi, Discharged Soldiers Guidance Department, and Electric Company of Israel. Representatives of the FIDF IMPACT! Scholarship Program were also present to assist with inquiries about post-Army higher education.

"The fact that our youth come here and make the sacrifice to join the IDF and protect us and protect Israel is a spectacular thing. There is nothing more beautiful about the whole Aliyah process than the Lone Soldiers who come, who leave their families, who leave what they knew back where they were born, to come here to serve the Jewish people," said NBN immigrant and benefactor Sylvan Adams. "For me, the work that is being done here at this event is so important. To make these Lone Soldiers come here and feel like they are part of the Israeli family and help them integrate into Israeli life...it's a beautiful thing."

About the Nefesh B'Nefesh – Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) Lone Soldiers Program:

With the full support of the IDF, and in cooperation with the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, the Nefesh B'Nefesh Lone Soldiers Program was established in 2012, in order to assist and support the brave young men and women who choose to serve in the IDF, regardless of their country of origin. The program aims to provide a holistic solution that offers guidance, support and care for all Lone Soldier olim throughout their military service and after release from the IDF. Services provided include



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu takes a photo with an IDF Lone Soldier (photo credit: Shahar Azran)

financial aid, emotional support and adoptive families to its soldiers, as well as support provided for families of Lone Soldiers abroad. The program complements and supports the framework that the designated division of the IDF provides for Lone Soldiers, which includes many benefits to help them function optimally during their military service. For additional information, visit: www.nbn.org.il/lsp.

About Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF):

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

BRIEFS

ISRAEL OPENS NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT NEAR EILAT

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently inaugurated the new Ramon Airport near Eilat, named in memory of astronaut Ilan and pilot Assaf Ramon. Located 18 km. north of Eilat in the Timna Valley, the \$460 million airport will replace Eilat and Ovda airports for commercial flights. The airport is the first entirely civilian airport to open since Israel's independence. It will also serve as a backup option for large aircraft in the case of rocket fire or inclement weather at Ben-Gurion Airport.

Eilat has witnessed rapid growth in tourist demand. In 2015, there were

four weekly flights between Eilat and Europe. This winter there were 57 weekly flights. Due to the airport's proximity to the Jordanian border, a 4.5 km., 26-meter-high smart fence was constructed to protect incoming and departing aircraft from a range of cross-border threats, including missile fire. (Eytan Halon, *Jerusalem Post*)

ISRAEL RANKED WORLD'S FIFTH MOST INNOVATIVE ECONOMY

Israel has the 5th most innovative economy out of 60 countries, according to Bloomberg's annual Innovation Index. Last year Israel was ranked 10th.

Ahead of Israel were South Korea, Germany, Finland and Switzerland. (i24News)

SOARING INDICATORS SHOW ISRAEL'S ECONOMY IS STRONG

Israel's gross domestic product has been rising at an average annual rate of 3.69% since 2000, inflation has been 1.57%, and unemployment has fallen to 3.6%.

The nation of 8.4 million people has outperformed European stalwarts since 2009. Israel's GDP growth of 69% since then is more than 17 times what Austria managed and almost three times what Switzerland mustered.

Among the 36 developed economies that make up the OECD, Israel will be the 4th fastest growing (tied with Chile) this year with 3.6%, behind Slovakia, Poland and Slovenia. (Matthew A. Winkler, *Bloomberg*)

TOURISM TO ISRAEL CONTINUES TO RISE

The number of tourists who entered Israel in January 2019 represented an 11% increase over January 2018 and a 35% increase from January 2017, according to the Israel Ministry of Tourism. (*Jerusalem Post*) ▲

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Take some time and reflect on our great inheritance

Once upon a time, G-d came down to earth and spoke with the Pope, the Dalai Lama and the Chief Rabbi of Israel. His message was that, once again, people had become unbearably evil and He was going to destroy the world again by a flood. The Holy One urged these leaders to go on TV and speak to their legions of followers. And so they do: the Pope goes on TV and tells all of his followers that they have three days to accept G-d into their lives. The Dalai Lama follows him and urges all Buddhists to use the coming three days to pursue enlightenment. And the Chief Rabbi? He goes on TV and tells the Jewish world that they have three days in which to learn to live under water.

Obviously, this is a joke. Of course, nobody goes on TV anymore. They would simply send a tweet.

But the joke contains a beautiful

nugget of Jewish wisdom, perseverance and, maybe even genius. This past week, I was fortunate to see the last of the Federation's Jewish Film Festival's offerings. This film was called *Why the Jews?* and asked why, and how, have our people been so predominant in so many fields, especially in the last two centuries or so. For just one example, 40% of all chess grandmasters have been Jewish! We are 0.2% of the world's population but we are 40% of the grandmasters. But this preponderance is not just for chess and its devotees. You can find a large number of Jewish contributors in music and the arts, psychology and medicine, physics and literature.

Some people have said that Ashkenazic (European) Jews have a special level of genius. But then how do we explain the great contributions of Spanish Jews before the Inquisition, or Babylonian Jews arguing the Talmud? And whether you see the Torah as Divine or the Tanach as inspired, how do we account for the brilliance of Moshe Rabbenu, the rhetorical flourishes of

Amos and Isaiah, or the poetry of the Song of Songs?

You and I both know that most of us are not geniuses. That status is reserved for our daughters, sons and grandchildren. But the question it prompts for this writer is what are we doing to appreciate this wellspring under each of us? Imagine if we were living in Saudi Arabia and we didn't take the time to explore the oil deposits under our feet. What a waste it would be!

My prayer would be that we each take some time and reflect on our great inheritance: read a Jewish book, argue with someone, or even go to temple. And of course, for those of you gifted in this way, you might want to explore how we build an underwater city.▲

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



■ **Rabbi Michael J. Schorin**

Life is richer and sweeter when we drink together

Most people recognize a Jewish wedding by the beautiful chuppah above the couple and the dramatic final act of breaking the glass. Yet as I've been engaging in premarital counseling with upcoming wedding couples,



■ **Rabbi Nicole Luna**

another aspect of the Jewish wedding ceremony has seemed especially meaningful. During the ceremony, we say the blessing over wine twice and take a sip twice. Psalms 104:14 tells us that "wine gladdens the heart," and drinking wine or grape juice is a common ritual at Jewish holidays as a sign of joy.

At a Jewish wedding ceremony, the two wine blessings take on added

significance. Two individuals stand under the chuppah and commit to sharing a life together while maintaining their individuality and distinctiveness. Judaism honors the dignity of each partner with a wine blessing for each person. While they are becoming a married couple, a holy union, they still retain their own identities. Yet after each blessing, they drink from the same cup, sharing the cup with the promise to drink from the cup of life together, sharing its sweetness and bitterness as one.

In our marriages, relationships and friendships, may we maintain and honor our distinct personalities and passions while finding that life is richer and sweeter when we drink together. L'chaim!▲

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

What do you think?

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Send your letters & comments to LChayim36@gmail.com.

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Ideas do have consequences

There is a story of a man who spent most of the day in front of his television set watching one football game after another. Finally, he fell asleep and spent the night in his chair. When his wife arose in the morning, she was afraid that he would be late for work. "Get up, dear," she said. "It's twenty to seven." In an instant the man was fully awake. "In whose favor?" he asked.

We must not fall asleep in life so that we do not know the goals of living.

There is a school of thought which maintains that only that which is perceived through the senses is real. A chair or table is something we see and

touch. Foul or fragrant is something we can smell. Loud or soft is something we can hear. Bitter or sweet is something we can taste. But freedom, justice, responsibility and decency are literally non sense or nonsense. Judaism, however, believes just the opposite – that these very values give meaning to life, and without them life is nonsense.

In fact, that belief is the basic difference between an animal and a human. To an animal, morality and honor are meaningless terms, while to a human they are of supreme meaning. Values determine the direction and purposes of an individual, of a society. Human beings create concepts, goals and ideas. Human beings know that ideas have consequences.▲

Rabbi Solomon Agin serves at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte.

Nuancing Netanyahu

For the first time, thanks to the efforts of Federation Program Director Debbie Sanford, one of the movies in this year's Jewish Film Festival came to Sanibel. *The Oslo Diaries* brought out a large crowd and sparked an enthusiastic discussion.

When asked to comment on the film, I noted that I see it as a valuable perspective on a missed opportunity for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. It is a sobering reminder that there were sincere proponents for peace on the Palestinian side. I also noted that the movie is a "hatchet job" on Israel's current Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

A friend wrote that if it is a "hatchet job," it is a deserved "hatchet job." He then went on to ask rhetorically if Netanyahu's silence in the face of right-wing sentiment against Yitzhak Rabin and Netanyahu's words contributed to Rabin's death.

History has made Rabin the fallen crusader for peace, and indeed his death was a tragedy that set back progress to peace that has not begun to move forward since.

Still, to simply blame Netanyahu for the sorry state of current Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations or lack thereof is an oversimplification.

I wrote back to my friend: As you recall, I began my remarks about the film by saying, "I am no fan of the current Prime Minister of Israel." Further, I hope he will be indicted on criminal charges, and on more than one occasion I have publicly called for him to resign. I also believe history will hold him accountable, as your letter suggests, for his rhetoric in the days before Rabin's assassination. So I don't disagree that he "deserves" it.

But... We often make the same mistake with Netanyahu that opponents of President Trump make. In attempts to vilify them, people fail to apprehend and appreciate what makes

them popular enough with so many people that they are elected to the highest office in the land.

Netanyahu is now the person who has served Israel as prime minister longer than anyone else in its history. Is it only because Israelis are fools or greedy grabbers of Palestinian lands and oppressors of the Palestinian people? Or do we, from the safety of Sanibel, fail to grasp the existential threat to its existence, with which Israel has lived since well before it officially became a state? Do we fail to understand that most of Israel's population descends from those who fled as refugees from Arab countries that robbed their families of homes, possessions, fortunes and lives?

They arrived in Israel with the shirts on their backs, where they were absorbed, housed, taught a new language and the skills to make a living. They don't trust the Arabs or any promises they would make.

Another significant percentage are refugees or descendants of refugees from the former Soviet Union that backed the Arab world in their struggles against Israel. They, too, have no confidence that the Arab world will honor a commitment to peace with Israel.

Finally, there remain descendants of Holocaust refugees who are well aware that Azzam Pasha, Secretary General of the Arab League, joined forces with Hitler, and vowed to perpetrate the destruction of Israel in a way that will remind the world of the Mongolian massacres.

Netanyahu – whether we like it or not – effectively speaks to their fears, and if we ignore those fears, we can never understand Israel's reality, as we should.

So, just to say he "deserves it" should not blind us to the propaganda motive inherent in a film released just as an Israeli election campaign is getting underway.▲

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

History need not repeat itself

The August 1999 edition of L'CHAYIM included an article by syndicated columnist Douglas Bloomfield about Israeli politics. Ehud Barak, who ran on a platform of building "a new national consensus that will bridge the social and political chasm in Israel and strengthen the ties between Israel and the Diaspora," was prime minister. Bloomfield wrote about the deep divisions within Israel between the ultra-Orthodox Haredim and secular Israelis. He drew hope from the work of Rabbi Michael Melchior, a rabbi who founded Meimad, a progressive religious political party that was part of Ehud Barak's coalition.

Twenty years later, on the eve of upcoming elections in April, the divisions are still there – between Haredim and secular Israelis, and between Israel and the Diaspora. Again, there is reason for hope.

I learned recently about the Israeli organization Geshar (www.gesherusa.org). Founded in 1970 by Rabbi Danny Tropper, Geshar hosted seminars for students from secular and religious schools. Geshar, whose slogan is, "Be Different, Be Together," continues to run seminars and other programs that bring together secular, modern Orthodox and Haredi youth, future leaders of the country, to learn and discuss together.

Rabbi Tropper wrote, "Our Jewish identity, which should serve to unite

the diverse Jewish people in Israel, has instead been the cause of a deep rift between communities. This split has resulted in anger and alienation, and is tearing the nation apart. Healing the rift can only come by way of enlightened Jewish education that can become the common denominator for genuine dialogue between different sectors of the nation."

I am also encouraged by the candidacy of Michal Zernovitski, an ultra-Orthodox woman who is running for Knesset as part of the Labor Party. Another woman, Adina Bar-Shalom, the daughter of a founder of a Haredi party, is running on a social-justice platform.

There will always be divisions within the Jewish people. Disagreement, presenting multiple viewpoints and saying "they're both right," is part of Torah itself. (Think of two stories of Creation.) But while we celebrate debate, we also cling to the deep belief that we are one people who look out for each other. And when the divisions become too deep, we look for corrective steps that will bring our people back together.

I believe that is happening now. Israelis do not like the divisions within Israeli society, and influential people in both Israel and the U.S. Jewish community are not comfortable with the gaps between our communities.

In 1999, Douglas Bloomfield wrote about divisions in the Jewish world and Ehud Barak's efforts to unify Israeli society. Maybe this year's elections will be more successful.▲

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.



■ Rabbi Stephen Fuchs



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Doing something new and exciting for our kids

I love kids and really come to life around them. It's great to have opportunities where I can interact with them and their parents in ways that are fun and bring lots of joy to all of us.

And I don't mean in stifling old-fashioned Sunday Schools (which we Americans Jews long ago borrowed from our Protestant neighbors!), or sitting with bored, sullen 12-year-olds tediously trying to get them to master words and chants that they scarcely understand in order to impress their families at overproduced Bar and Bar Mitzvah celebrations.

I love kids, but I never really loved how we tried to squeeze them into two hours of Sunday morning sessions and maybe an hour or so once a week after school for Hebrew classes that made chloroform seem like a stimulant! I know we've tried to make it more "fun" for them in these settings, but the enterprise itself was usually a real slog.

Is it any surprise that our Jewish Millennials are choosing not to send their kids to synagogue Sunday and Hebrew Schools until the last minute in order to do "Bar and Mat Mitzvah prep," or maybe sadly not at all? Perhaps they remember the tedium of their own time in those classes. Or maybe the older generation that really cared about such things has passed on, and these parents don't feel the pressure to send their younger children to these truncated Jewish education offerings. And let's not even talk about the price of synagogue membership and tuition

for young families with other financial priorities!

The Millennial parents who really care about substantive Jewish education choose to live in areas where they can send their kids to highly effective Jewish day schools and start them in Jewish summer camps as soon as they can. Nowadays, the rest are mostly doing little or nothing.

So is it really much of a surprise that Sunday School enrollment of younger Jewish children, especially 5- to 8-year-olds, is inevitably plummeting around the nation? Even the best teachers, rabbis and education directors can't do much about it, since the model itself is no longer working (not that it worked that great in the past). Sure, they can occasionally reach some highly motivated parents and their children, but the successes are anecdotal, not systematic.

That's why it's time to go "all in" on coming up with something new around here for our area's Jewish youngsters aged 5-8 and their families. I've started enlisting lots of great help on developing something exciting and educationally effective that's more like a Jewish summer camp and less like a Sunday School, building on what's already working like our wonderful Federation's P.J. Library program.

We need to get at this not only for the sake of our American Jewish future. While nourishing our kids' souls and minds, we add life and vitality to our own. Doing something new and exciting for our youngsters will renew and energize us! ▲

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

Thoughts on Purim

Purim is a holiday for children and the children at heart. And why shouldn't it be? According to Jewish teachings, it was because of the Jewish children that the miraculous rescue of the entire Jewish people took place.

Let's backtrack a little in the Purim story, though, to get the whole picture. Haman had managed to get King Ahasuerus to agree to his evil plan of totally annihilating the Jewish people. He even had in his hand the decree with the royal stamp on it, rendering the ruling irrevocable. At this point, Haman once again encountered Mordechai, who was teaching Torah to a group of thousands of children.

As before, this time too, Mordechai did not bow or in any way humble himself to Haman. Feeling himself at the apex of his political power and prowess, Haman was more enraged than ever before. He vowed that the children would be the first to die.

The mothers of the children begged them to leave Mordechai, but they refused. They urged their children to break their fast – a fast which, at Esther's request, Mordechai had required of the entire Jewish people. The children, once more, refused. They would remain with Mordechai, studying Torah and praying to G-d with the firm belief that He would hear their sincere and pure prayers and redeem them from this catastrophe.

What was it that gave these children such faith and, more to the point, such hope, despite the seemingly help-

less situation?

The children had been studying with Mordechai laws concerning the Holy Temple. Though the First Temple had already been destroyed and the Second Temple had not yet been built, Mordechai taught the children about the Holy Temple. These teachings instilled within the children a strong belief, longing and hope that at any moment the Holy Temple could and would be rebuilt.

The children's prayers, tears and cries persuaded G-d to revoke the Divine Decree (thereby nullifying the earthly decree of Haman and King Ahasuerus). And what made their prayers so powerful, was that they had been educated by Mordechai to believe in the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, the ingathering of the exiles back to Israel, and the Redemption.

Today, the entire Jewish people does not face an existential threat as they did in the days of Mordechai and Esther. Yet, there are personal, communal, national and global issues that we would like to see rectified. All of us, on various levels, dream of a perfect world.

When the long-awaited Redemption commences, all of humankind will experience this perfect world. And the way to properly direct our prayers and actions to hasten the Redemption is through studying Torah, specifically Torah that inspires hope, faith and longing for the Redemption.

Happy Purim, and may we celebrate it together as one united people in Jerusalem with the revelation of Mashiach, NOW! ▲

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.

BBYO happenings

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

Join Fort Myers BBYO this March for two exciting programs. The first is on Wednesday, March 6 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties for Fibbage and Chinese Food. On Saturday, March 16 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., join us for the Great Jewish Bake-Off at 15412 Fiddlesticks Blvd., Fort Myers.

Are you in middle school and want to start participating in BBYO? On Sunday, March 3, BBYO's middle school program will be headed to the CenturyLink Sports Complex for a Philadelphia Phillies vs. Minnesota Twins spring training baseball game. Tickets are \$20. To sign up before tickets run out, use this link: bit.ly/philliesvstwins. On Sunday, March 17, please join us for kayaking through the Everglades from noon to 3:30 p.m. For more information and to register, use this link: bit.ly/kayaking123.

Are you a middle or high schooler

who needs some community service hours? On Sunday, April 7, Naples and Fort Myers BBYO will be participating in BBYO's international day of giving called JServe. Our cause this year is to create awareness and assist the homeless children in our area. There are approximately 800 homeless children in need of food every day when they leave school in Naples. If you would like to help our cause, please donate food or preferably, gift cards to restaurants and grocery stores. Drop them off or send them to Jessica Zimmerman, Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, 2500 Vanderbilt Beach Rd., #2201, Naples, FL 34109. Everything donated will be directly given to a homeless child in our community. We will be collecting donations through April 7. If you are in grades 6-12, contact me if you would like to get involved

on April 7.

To be added to our mailing list email or to contact local staff about upcoming programs, questions or concerns, email me at jesszimmerman@bbyo.org. Follow us on Instagram @[orshemeshbbyo](https://www.instagram.com/orshemeshbbyo). ▲



Jessica Zimmerman



Michael Shapiro

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bar / Bat Mitzvah Specialist

Choosing the right photographer is an important decision. Michael Shapiro has more than 30 years experience in media and journalism. He is able to capture images that are unique, unexpected and spontaneous.



Other Services: Weddings / Family Portraits / Events

239.770.6860

mike@shapiro-photography.com

www.shapiro-photography.com

High School Students: Earn CAS Credits!

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

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

- Name
- Address
- Phone #
- Age
- Grade
- School
- Preferred volunteer hours (e.g. 2 - 5PM. Sundays)



**TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS
Fort Myers**

*Tab Scribner,
Director of Congregational Learning*
February was a month of looking forward at Temple Judea Religious School. It continues in March. As we prepare for the month, our children are back into the routine of things and making strides as they prepare for bigger events.

Many of our students have begun volunteering to lead our minyan before classes on Wednesdays and Sundays, and have made real progress on their Megillah portions. A handful of our



Temple Judea students host Tu B'Shevat Seder. Younger students have inquired about learning Torah trope.

The children and staff are looking forward to so many things. March starts with our children leading the Friday night service on March 1 at 6:30 p.m. Then, on Sunday, March 3, our children will be adopting grandparents (or bringing their own) to Religious School for an Israeli cooking program led by Shlihah Netta Harush. The children will lead minyan in the sanctuary and then grandparents can join the children in a hands-on project in our social hall followed by preparing an Israeli

meal together.

In cooperation with the Temple Beth El Religious School, we will host a Purim Carnival on Sunday, March 10. Students from both schools will combine for minyan before being turned loose for the carnival. To reserve your admission wristbands for this event, please call 239.433.0201 or email PurimCarnivalSWFL@gmail.com. Wristbands are \$10 and include unlimited games, activities and three food/drink items from the concession booth. If you or your business is interested in sponsoring a booth for this event, there are still a limited number of booth sponsorships available. Please contact me at 239.433.0201 or tjswfledu@gmail.com for more information.

As if that wasn't enough to look forward to, our children are also preparing to take part in the reading of the Megillah on Wednesday, March 20 at 6:15 p.m. Our children have been reading and practicing an individually assigned segment of the Megillah and can't wait to make some noise. In some circles it is said that we need more cowbell. I like to say we need more grogger.

Did I mention we have a lot to look forward to?

Temple Judea Preschool

*Joann Goldman,
Temple Judea Preschool Director*
Dr. Seuss is on the loose at Temple Judea Preschool. We will celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss in March. The children will have a chance to read the classic tales of Dr. Seuss as we make some fun art projects, create some

green food and wear some fun hats.

It's RHYME TIME! In Pre-Kinderergarten we will also focus on the works of Dr. Seuss to further enhance the concept of rhyming. Participating and playing with sounds of language (rhymes/syllables) is an important pre-reading skill. Watch for "Hey Diddle, Diddle" and "Jack Be Nimble" projects. There is overwhelming evidence that early learning of nursery rhymes and rhythmic poems, songs and chants significantly enhances early reading skills and phonemic awareness. Nursery rhymes also teach musical awareness and help with memory.

Teaching time began for our Pre-K students last month. Each student will take the spotlight and share his/her knowledge about a subject of choice with their friends. This confidence-building program continues throughout the month.

Fred E Bear has more homes to visit and is living large in the Pre-K homes. The children enjoy sharing the weekend with Fred E Bear, and love writing and drawing in their journal about the experiences they've had. When they return to school, the children are proud to stand in front of the classroom sharing the adventure they had.

Temple Judea Preschool registration for the 2019 -2020 preschool year:

It is crucial to offer ongoing learning opportunities. Our preschool program is based on the individual needs of every child. Our curriculum encourages children to make choices and be independent thinkers.

Temple Judea Preschool registration is open to the community. If you are interested in learning about our school, please call 239.482.1121 or stop by for a tour. We accept children ages 18 months to 5 years. Limited space is available.

Join our Toddler Time program for the 2019-2020 preschool year. This program is designed for parent/guardian and child.

Toddler Time 1: 12 months to 23 months of age. This program will be offered from 9:00 to 10:15 a.m. on Tuesdays.

Toddler Time 2: 24 months to 30 months of age. This program will be offered from 9:00 to 10:15 a.m. on Wednesdays.

Join us for a fun-filled morning of art, story time, music, cooking and movement. Our Toddler programs offer your child a chance to interact with other children while you are interacting with parents. Meet new friends, bring a friend along or reconnect with old friends. Classes are designed to be age-appropriate.

Candle lighting times:



- March 1: 6:11**
- March 8: 6:15**
- March 15: 7:18**
- March 22: 7:22**
- March 29: 7:25**

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

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

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

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

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

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

PJ LIBRARY RADIO LIVE!



Now PJ library families can listen to Jewish kids music — anytime, anywhere.

Introducing *PJLibraryRadio.com*, an online streaming radio station with more than 2,000 songs from hundreds of artists across the globe. Music is available 24/7 with special music blocks for Shabbat, Holiday and Bedtime.

- Listen to the music online
- Download the free app on iTunes, Google Play or Tune In Radio



DISCOVER THE FUN!



SHARE the experience of reading with your children as they grow with PJ Library books.

SIGN UP TODAY!

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

RECEIVE THE GIFT OF FREE JEWISH CHILDREN'S BOOKS MAILED TO YOUR HOME EVERY MONTH!

Funded by the Roth Family Foundation

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

Families can sign up for PJ Library at pjlibrary.org

SHALOM LIFE CENTER

Fort Myers

(239) 218-3433

Purim

Lawrence & Robin Dermer

In the story of Purim, Haman says to King Achashverosh, "There is a nation that is dispersed and separated among all the provinces of your kingdom." Amalek is the evil force which Haman represents. What Haman is really saying to Achashverosh is, "Don't worry about killing the Jews; they are divided and no one will come to their rescue, they are powerless to defend themselves."

We can understand Purim on a deeper spiritual level as well. The physical Amalek is something we've dealt with throughout our history in the form of Pharaoh and Hitler. Even today we deal with Amalek in the form of nations that swear to our destruction like Iran and terrorist groups like Hamas

and Hezbollah. We now face the threat here in the U.S. coming from voices within our own Congress that question the legitimacy of Israel and its right to exist as a Jewish state. The threats we face today are very real and should be taken seriously, but we also battle a spiritual Amalek. This Amalek from within can be understood as our own *sinat chinam*, lack of unity. Wherever we live, we must not be divided. Our real strength is the unity we must maintain if we are to survive the threats we still face from within and without.

So how do we unite? Does this mean we must all gather together physically in Israel? Unity means we support each other and focus on our commonalities. "As one man with one heart," we can be there for each other regardless of our affiliations or backgrounds. Only by finding a common unifying point, will we be able to focus our energies and become "a light unto

all nations."

Each year, the story of Purim demonstrates for us what we can accomplish when we pull together as a team. As it was then, so is it today. We hold the key to our own success or failure. Our Torah reminds us, "Love your neighbor as yourself." We must live by this golden rule in order for it to be spread to the rest of the world. History has shown us time and time again that our lack of unity fosters an anti-Semitic atmosphere. United we stand, divided we fall. May the holiday of Purim be a reminder for us all to never again live through what we experienced in the middle of the 20th century as a wake-up call. *Anachnu Chazakim - We Are Strong!*

Soon after we celebrate our victory over Haman during Purim, we will prepare to celebrate our Exodus from bondage at the hands of Pharaoh with the holiday of Pesach. Our Shalom Life Center Seders are beautiful, traditional, musical, interactive and probably un-

like any Seder you've ever attended. Please join us for the best Seder experience of your life, which will be held on Friday, April 19 and Saturday, April 20 at the Holiday Inn at Town Center. For more information and to RSVP, call 239.218.3433 or email us at info@shalomlifecenter.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

Join us on Saturday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m. for "Big Songs - Bigger Voices," an amazing musical tribute to Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and others.

Join us for Shabbat services every Friday at 7:30 p.m., and Saturday mornings for Torah study at 10:00 a.m. With Yiddish Culture Club, Book Club, Men's Group, Sisterhood, Women's Circle, SLC Kitchen, Choir and BBYO, there are so many ways to enhance your Jewish life at Shalom Life Center. Visit our website at www.shalomlifecenter.org for more information on our many clubs, programs and special events.

HADASSAH

Collier/Lee Chapter

(239) 301-0509

What's magical about Hadassah?

Diane Schwartz

The combination of a significant and world-changing mission and the women who carried it forward and "made it happen" for 106 years is certainly a recipe for magic. What better way to celebrate the "Power of Women Who Do," Hadassah's slogan, than to honor a group of Collier and Lee County women who not only have dedicated their time, energy and passion to ensure the sustaining growth of the chapter, but also the mission Hadassah brings to the United States, Israel and the world? Plan to join us on Sunday, April 7 at 5:00 p.m. at the Audubon Country Club in Naples to celebrate.

"It's Magical...A Tribute to Collier/Lee Hadassah's Past Presidents"

takes note of the importance of 22 women who have served as presidents of the chapter, their leadership and commitment to Hadassah's work.

Honorees from both Collier and Lee counties are Karen Cohn, Gayle Dorio, Muriel Freedman, Penny MacIntyre, Mimi Mangel, Merrill Paletsky, Shirley Robbins, Rae Rubin, Sylvia Simko, Shirley Gilbert, Connie Mansfield, Sharon Treiser, Ruth Hubing, Miriam Silver, Helene Weiss, Judi Palay, Iris Shur, Shelley Skelton, Dena Sklaroff, Lynn Wilner and Marciadee Zolot-Newman.

Hadassah and community members and friends will proudly come together to recognize the significant accomplishments of these outstanding women and enjoy a special performance by noted entertainer Keith Raygor, with his unique blend of "magic, mind reading and music."

Also magical is that funds raised at the celebration support the Hadassah 360 degrees of Healing – The Full Circle Campaign. The Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) has completely reimaged its Round Building, home to the world-famous Chagall Windows and the original inpatient center and core of the Hadassah Ein Kerem campus.

Through the project, HMO will add 200 new beds; renovate 17 operating rooms with state-of-the-art equipment; improve efficiency and reduce waiting time for surgery; expand treatment offerings; reconfigure and improve the interior space on each floor so that doctors and nurses can respond to patients more quickly; create larger rooms to give patients more privacy; strengthen the building's infrastructure; upgrade the HVAC system; and protect the hospital from earthquakes and conventional, biological or chemical attacks.

The doctors at the two Hadassah hospitals treat 1,000,000 patients a year and treat all who come through their doors regardless of race, religion or ethnicity. That's magical!

HMO physicians collaborate with many of the world's most prestigious research centers, hospitals and universities.

The results are magical, reflecting the vision, dedication and hard work of Hadassah Founder Henrietta Szold and the many women who have followed her in enthusiasm and commitment to a cause greater than themselves.

The value and personal satisfaction of reaching beyond one's self, supporting and volunteering for such a significant organization, it is truly a special feeling. In fact, "It's Magical!"

For more information, contact me at dianepschwartz@gmail.com.

HUMANISTIC JEWISH HAVURAH

of Southwest Florida

(239) 495-8484

"Israel's Nation State Law:

Is it Good for the Jews?"

Paula Creed

The Humanistic Jewish Havurah of Southwest Florida invites you to a discussion with Israeli journalist Amir Tibon on Sunday afternoon, March 17. Mr. Tibon covers Washington, D.C., for *Haaretz*. His topic will be "Israel's Nation State Law: Is it Good for the Jews?"

The meeting begins at 1:30 p.m. with coffee and chat in the David G. Willens Community Room of the Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, 2500 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Suite 2201, Naples. Mr. Tibon will begin his conversation with us, via skype, promptly

at 2:00 p.m. Reservations are required, so please contact Dena Sklaroff at denas27@aol.com or 239.591.0101.

Before moving to Washington in 2017, Amir lived for two years in Kibbutz Nahal Oz, the closest place in Israel to the Gaza Strip. He is the co-author of *The Last Palestinian*, a biography of Mahmoud Abbas, published in July 2017. Amir's writing on Israel and the Middle East has appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, *The Atlantic*, *Politico Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *The New Republic* and *The Jerusalem Post*. He has been interviewed on CNN, Al-Jazeera, CBS and MSNBC.

On July 25, 2018, following months of controversy and nearly seven years of heated debate, the Knesset adopted a new Basic Law titled "Israel - The Nation State of the Jew-

ish People" by a vote of 62-55. Since Israel has no written constitution, the Basic Law provides legal statements outlining the rights of the individual and fundamental principles of the state that are expected to be incorporated into a formal constitution if one is approved.

The law is now one of more than a dozen Basic Laws that can only be amended by a majority in the Knesset. Two others, on human dignity and on liberty and freedom of occupation, both enacted in the 1990s, address the values of the state as both Jewish and democratic.

Since Israel was established, it has grappled with the inherent tensions between its dual aspirations of being both a Jewish and democratic state. The new law, portrayed by proponents as restoring that balance in the aftermath of judicial rulings that favored democratic values, nonetheless struck critics as an effort to tip the scales sharply toward Jewishness.

Its passage demonstrated the ascendancy of ultranationalists in Israel's government who have been emboldened by the gains of similarly nationalist and populist movements in Europe and elsewhere, as Mr. Netanyahu has increasingly embraced illiberal democracies like that of Hungary, whose far-right prime minister, Viktor Orban,

arrived in Jerusalem for a friendly visit only hours before the vote.

Moments after the vote, Arab lawmakers ripped up copies of the bill while crying out, "Apartheid!"

A flood of criticism also followed from groups outside Israel and from Jews in the diaspora. The European Union said the law could harm prospects of a two-state solution. The Anti-Defamation League said there were problematic elements in the law that might lead some to question Israel's commitment to pluralism.

The Jewish Federations of North America decried the clause stipulating only Jews have a right to self-determination in Israel. "Jewish Federations stand shoulder to shoulder with the Druze community and urge Israeli legislators to work with the community as soon as possible to address their very real concerns."

The Reform Movements in North America and Israel feel the bill causes "real damage to marginalized communities within Israel and to the relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jewry."

In the face of these objections, the Havurah is providing an opportunity to learn more about this topic from a noted Israeli. Come learn about this law from another perspective.

Shapiro. Specifics for this program will appear in next month's issue.

Temple Judea's active HAZAK Chapter is a chartered member of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Membership in the organization is open to the community. Join HAZAK and meet new friends. HAZAK Chapters are for singles or couples. It's an organization that enables members to meet and socialize with each other. Our monthly programs vary in nature. Annual dues are a modest \$10 per person.

Members of the community are always welcome to attend our programs. For more information, email us at TJHazak@gmail.com or call Temple Judea at 239.433.0201.

HAZAK 55+ CHAPTER

at Temple Judea

(239) 433-0201

Joyce Rosinger

HAZAK's March program is a fun miniature golf outing at Smugglers Cove (17450 San Carlos Blvd., Fort Myers) on Thursday, March 28 beginning at 10:00 a.m. The cost will be either \$6 or \$8 per person depending on the total number in the group. We will gather for lunch afterward at a nearby restaurant. We must have RSVPs by Thursday, March 21. To RSVP, for questions or additional information, please email Andy Chernow at acheronow67@gmail.com.

The April program will be "Restorative Yoga" led by Robert and Linda

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

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 566-1771

Huge success generates huge plans

Marina Berkovich

On January 28 at the Silverspot Cinema in Naples, members and friends of the Jewish Historical Society of SWFL gathered to celebrate Florida Jewish History Month with the documentary premiere about Dr. Judith and Samuel Friedland, *The Power of Two*. Jeffrey Feld, President/CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, presented the Certificate of Appreciation to Dr. Judith and Samuel Friedland in recognition of everything they have done over the past 30 years for the Jewish community of Collier County.

Dignitaries in attendance included City of Naples Council members Reg Buxton and Ellen Seigel, Collier County Mosquito Control Commissioner Sandra Lee Buxton and District 2 Collier County Commissioner Andy Solis, who presented to the Friedlands the Board of County Commissioners of Collier County, Florida proclama-

tion, dated January 22, 2019, recognizing and honoring Dr. Judith and Mr. Samuel Friedland for their economic, religious and cultural contributions.

In the words of event attendees: "Fascinating story," "Fabulous event with a great tribute to a very deserving couple," "You did it again," "Could not believe how mesmerized the audience was, not a peep, not a stir."

The expectations are escalating from year to year, and we'd like to bring you only the best and most entertaining, as well as informative educational programming.

The great question to answer as we end our ninth year of operations with Film IX of the Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers Series, produced by JHSSWF, is what's next?

Let us first recap our accomplishments thus far:

- ◆ Collected and organized archival data
- ◆ Built Virtual Museum of Southwest Florida Jewish History
- ◆ Interviewed dozens of eyewitnesses of SWFL Jewish History

- ◆ Created and developed Timeline of Southwest Florida Jewish History
 - ◆ Created and commenced Master Classes of Southwest Florida Jewish History
 - ◆ Created and produced nine films in the Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers documentary series
 - ◆ Won prestigious Telly Awards
 - ◆ Placed Southwest Florida Jewish History into the regional spotlight
- Not too shabby for an organization run by a very small volunteer board with 99% volunteer help. We are very proud of our record and reputation. We are extremely grateful to our members, supporters and sponsors for their trust and loyalty.

As we embark on our tenth circle, we'd like to expand upon the strong foundation we were able to build in these uncharted waters, and we will continue on the trail of local history with innovative preservation and educational ideas.

We count on you, our readers, followers, supporters, encouragers, researchers, in fact all Southwest Floridians – full-time, part-time and undecided – to lend your skills, hands, ears

and other capabilities and resources to renew, join or step up in your contribution to our mission of protecting and preserving SWFL Jewish History for future generations.

In a world filled with unforgiving demolition of traditions and quick replacement of ideals, historical preservation is an essential effort of saving what the preceding generations have been able to forge as they stood, often scared and unsure of how they would be received, in the strange land, previously untraversed by Jewish people.

No one in Southwest Florida is asking Jews to display their horns anymore, as they would have as recently as 50 years ago. But times are always changing, so we must work harder to secure our people's fascinating legacy.

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

GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 963-9347

GenShoah presents uplifting WWII documentary about Zakynthos

Ida Margolis

"If there were more people in Europe like the people in Zakynthos, the Germans wouldn't have been able to do what they did." These are the words of Haim Konstantini, one of the last remaining Jewish WWII survivors of the Greek Island of Zakynthos and the narrator of

Life Will Smile, a compelling 40-minute documentary that tells the



story of the survival of the Jewish Community of Zakynthos during the Holocaust.

During these often disturbing times, "this story acts as a reminder of how, when united, humanity can overcome even the darkest of times. Every single member of a 35,000-person

community on a small island defied the orders of the Third Reich and managed to save every single one of their fellow

human beings. Their example is as relevant and inspiring today as it was over seven decades ago."

The Nazi's "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" was carried out throughout German-occupied Greece, with one exception – on the small Greek island of Zakynthos. All 275 members of its Jewish community were protected and saved by their fellow Christian Zakynthians.

The film tells the little-known story of the humanism and bravery of the Greeks on the small, southernmost Ionian island. In doing this, they were led by two brave men: Bishop Chrysostomos and the Mayor of Zakynthos, Loukas Karrer, who risked their lives and managed to protect all the Jews of the island. In 1978, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem honored the two Zakynthian leaders for their brave action as "Righteous Among the Nations."

Created under the auspices of UNESCO, the film was first screened on the island of Zakynthos on October 7, 2017, with Haim Konstantini and his extended family traveling from Tel Aviv to attend. This documentary project would have never been possible without the generous support of the

whole community of Zakynthos. As before, the whole island came together to create something unique and once more become a positive part of human history.

After the showing of this outstanding film – which was obtained for screening by GenShoah program chair Steve Brazina – Odette Port, a Holocaust survivor from Greece, is scheduled to appear. She will be interviewed by Sam Varsano, whose parents were Holocaust survivors from Greece.

This film is being presented on Thursday, March 7 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, 7100 Airport-Pulling Road N., Naples. There is no charge, but reservations

are required. To RSVP and/or to donate, go to HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org, then go to March 7 on the calendar and click "Life Will Smile." This film is presented by GenShoah SWFL and The Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center, with the cooperation of St. Katherine Church. Please bring your friends to this free program so that they can learn about this important part of history. Please also consider a donation to the Museum so that GenShoah can continue to provide programs.

For more information about GenShoah SWFL or to receive the monthly GenShoah newsletter, please email genshoahswfl@gmail.com.

SNOWBIRDS,

newspapers don't fly...

however, your address will!



Going North?

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

Send address changes to:
loriramos@jfedlcc.org
or call: 239.481.4449 ext-4

Safe Travels



Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

Food Pantry Needs

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

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

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

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

Heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Boris Kotlyar, who was laid to rest at the end of January. Boris, a native of Kiev who leaves wife Inna and son Lezlie, served as a biomedical technician in our Lee Health system.

Mazel Tov to Joshua Diamond, the rabbi's nephew, upon his engagement to Taryn Suben. Taryn works for Sierra-Cedar, Inc., a national consulting and management firm deploying next-generation technology and applications. Joshua works for a political data firm in Washington, D.C. Nuptials are planned for this October in Asheville, North Carolina, with the Rabbi Diamond officiating.

C.F.S. Winter Adult Education continues on Thursdays, March 7, 14 and 28 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Community Hall. The study topic is "American Jewish Relations with Zionism and the State of Israel, Past, Present and Future." The series, taught by

Rabbi Diamond, is free and open to all. Participants are strongly urged to do the weekly online reading on the C.F.S. website at www.fortmyerssynagogue.com.

The Megillah of Esther reading begins at 7:00 p.m. Purim night, Thursday, March 21, accompanied by the our hilarious new "PowerPoint Purim 4.0" and sing-along. Homemade humantaschen will be served after the reading, and take-home *Shalah Manot* gift bags distributed.

Mailed invitation letters to our Friday, April 19 Community Free First Night Seder will go out the last week in March. The Seder is free and open to the first 180 reservations. If you are not on our mailing list, please send your name and home address to our coordinator, Natalie Fulton, at comfreesyn@gmail.com or mail the information to The Community Free Synagogue, P.O. Box 07144, Fort Myers, FL 33919. The invitation letter will contain the information you need to make your easy free reservation for our First Night Seder.

C.F.S., in conjunction with our Federation's PJ Library program, will host

a special Passover First Day program and Seder-style luncheon for children ages 5-8 and their families starting at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 20 at the synagogue, 10868 Metro Parkway. The program begins with The Exodus Story and "Had Gadya" interactive puppet show presented by our "pro-am" Community Free Players, accompanied by keyboardist Joseph Brauer and vocalist Traci Pavel, followed by a home-cooked luncheon with all the elements of the Seder, including a gift for every child finding the *afikomen* (and all of them will). The event is free, but reservations are appreciated at comfreesyn@comcast.net or debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org.

Our 6th Israel Pilgrimage is a "go" for June 4-15 and the is still room for six more travelers. To find out more, email arnieh@embarqmail.com.

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

Every Saturday at 9:30 a.m., C.F.S. offers a light breakfast followed by a

lively discussion of the week's Torah portion with the rabbi until 11:30 a.m., when the Mourner's Qaddish is recited. On Saturday mornings, March 23 and 30, Torah Study will be in the Federation's meeting room, 9701 Commerce Center Court, Fort Myers. Sabbath Eve services remain at the synagogue.

Now in its 14th year, The Community Free Synagogue is an independent synagogue and the largest Jewish congregation in our area. All of its events and programs, including youth and adult Jewish education, are open to all and always free. The congregation does not sell memberships. Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D., who guides the synagogue, is a respected community leader and educator for over 22 years. The foundation of The Community Free Synagogue is "Study, Worship and Benevolent Acts," generally following progressive Jewish traditions.

The synagogue meets at the Southwest Florida Masonic Center, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers. Visit www.fortmyerssynagogue.com for more information. Please email comfreesyn@gmail.com to be included in our weekly "blasts."

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

The Bat Yam community had a fabulous February and will have a marvelous March. Fabulous February began in late January with the Shared Scholar Lecture by the Rev. Dr. Philip Newell followed by *The Oslo Diaries*, the first film shown at Bat Yam on Sanibel by the Jewish Federation as part of the Jewish Film Festival. Sidney Picker served as moderator and discussion leader for the film.

February offered the annual Pulpit exchange, the Lee County Board of Rabbis' bioethics program, Rabbi Dr. Steven Fuchs' Thursday classes on the Minor Prophets in the Bible titled "Minor in Name Only," and the amazing Sunday afternoon musical program, "A Sanibel Celebration: Three Cantors and a Pastor." The Broadway-worthy performers were Bat Yam's Cantor Murray Simon, Cantor Elizabeth Shammash from Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, Cantor Randy Herman from Mt. Kisco, New York, and Rev. Dr. John Danner, senior pastor of the Sanibel Congregational UCC, with Toby Simon on piano. Following the event, the audience met the celebrities. The Leo Rosner Foundation in honor of June Rosner was the primary sponsor of the musical afternoon.

Saturday morning Adult Education classes start at 9:00 a.m. with sessions of Hebrew and Bible study led by Rab-

bi Fuchs. The congregant-led segment begins at 10:30 a.m. March topics include "Health Tips, Tricks and Myths," a Reform family's history, women's rights in Jewish

law, Jews in media, and advanced care planning. Thanks to Vickie Fuchs, coordinator, for the interesting topics and to the volunteer speakers.

The next meeting of the Bat Yam Grief Support Group is Wednesday, March 6 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library of the Sanibel Congregational UCC. The focus is on healing and companionship. Rabbi Fuchs serves as the facilitator. The group is open to everyone. Questions may be directed to Dr. Ellen Feingold at 302.345.7187.

The Bat Yam Purim reading of the Book of Esther will be on Friday, March 22 as part of Shabbat services. Talented volunteers, led by Rabbi Fuchs, will present the Purim story in words and song. Reverend John Danner will make a guest appearance.

Once again, Irene Skolnick will be a speaker as part of the Holocaust Memorial Week at Florida SouthWestern State College in Fort Myers. On Wednesday, March 27 at 9:30 a.m., Irene will tell her harrowing Holocaust story. At 12:30 p.m., she will be part of a round table discussion. Events are free and open to the public.

The Bat Yam Annual Meeting is set for Thursday, March 28 at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. A slate of officers and trustees for a two-year term of office will be presented to the members. A budget will be introduced. There

will be a pot luck dinner coordinated by Esta Berger.

The Bat Yam community-wide Passover Seder is Friday, April 19 at 6:00 p.m. at the Community House located at 2173 Periwinkle Way on Sanibel. Rabbi Steven Fuchs and Cantor Murray Simon will conduct the Seder. Reservations are required since space is limited. The deadline is April 5. For details, including cost call Annette Pacyga at 941.740.1650 or Lois Lorsch at 516.385.0190.

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

Come to worship and learn at our meeting place on the campus of our host, the Sanibel Congregational UCC, located at 2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel. Members of the community, guests and visitors are always welcome to join with congregants.

STAY IN TOUCH

Sign up for e-blasts!



GET THE LATEST INFORMATION ON
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Send an email to debbiesanford@jfedlcc.org

Mellow Mah Jongg

Each Tuesday afternoon, an open session of Mah Jongg is held at the Jewish Federation.

Players must be at least advanced beginners, as no lessons are given.

DAY: Tuesdays, 12:30~3:30 P.M.
FEE: \$1 per week

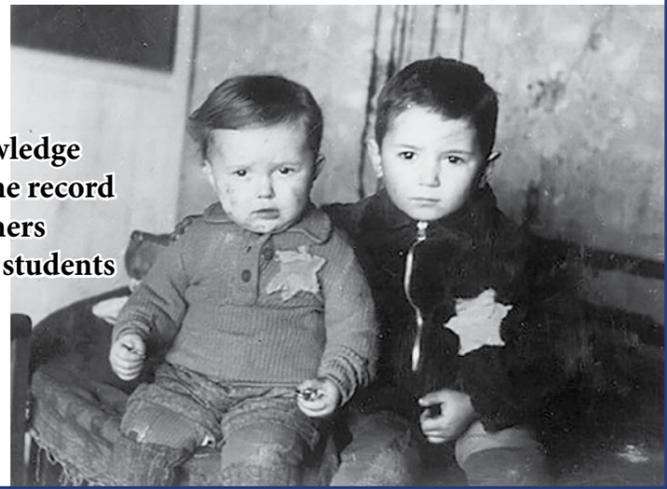


for more information call
Rona Strausberg at 239.949.9003

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TEMPLE JUDEA

Fort Myers

(239) 433-0201

www.tjswfl.org

Join Temple Judea's upcoming Purim celebrations. On Sunday, March 10, Temple Judea and Temple Beth El Religious Schools are co-sponsoring a Purim carnival at Temple Judea. Festivities begin at 10:00 a.m. and will include games, refreshments, a costume contest, a DUNK THE RABBI TANK and more! The community is also invited to attend.

That same evening, the synagogue will hold "A Night to Remember," a Purim celebration and fundraiser. The event begins at 5:00 p.m. at the Heitman House. At the event, JoAnn Lewin and Diane Seidenstein, two members who have contributed much to the life of the congregation, will be honored. There will be delicious hors d'oeuvres, a delectable buffet dinner,

exquisite desserts and an open bar. There will also be lively dancing with a DJ, a spectacular silent auction and an exciting raffle. This event is also open to the community.

The cost is \$75 by March 1 and \$100 till March 5. There is also an opportunity to send in a tribute to be included in a book honoring JoAnn and Diane, as well as sponsorship opportunities. For more information or to RSVP, call 239.433.0201 or email tjswfl@gmail.com.

Chaverot's monthly Rosh Chodesh program is on Thursday, March 7 and will be at the home of Bernie Perlstein. Later in the month, on Wednesday, March 27, Chaverot will take a tour of Page Field. Participants will get to see the facility and hear about the airport's historical significance and current role in the community. Men are invited to attend. There is no cost and wheelchairs and walkers can be accommodated. After the tour, the group will go

across the street for milkshakes. Group size is limited, so make your reservations early. To RSVP, email tjchaverotfortmyers@gmail.com. The tour begins at 1:30 p.m. sharp in the lobby and will last about an hour and a half. Page Field is located at 5200 Captain Channing Page Dr. in Fort Myers.

Temple Judea's new shlichah, Netta Harush, will be leading several new programs. Netta will have "Coffee with Netta" on Monday mornings at 10:15 a.m. at Temple Judea. All are welcome to come and learn more about life in Israel. On March 4 she will talk about "The People's Army," and on March 11, the upcoming Israeli elections.

The next Tot Shabbat is on Friday, March 8. With Purim around the corner, families are invited to join together for a family-friendly service, music and grogger decorating. March's Musical Shabbat will be on Friday, March 22 at 6:30 p.m.

Rabbi Sack's lunchtime Torah study is on Thursday, March 7 at noon at the offices of Myers and Brettholtz

and Company. It is an hour of open discussion of Torah and Judaism, where all levels of background and all questions are encouraged. Everyone is welcome and there is no cost to attend.

Our monthly service of meals at the Salvation Army's Meals with Compassion continues. Meals are served on Monday evenings and volunteers are needed for March and April. To help, please contact Linda Idelson at lindaidelson@gmail.com.

Regular scheduled events:

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

TEMPLE SHALOM

Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands

(941) 625-2116

www.templeshalomfl.com

Temple Shalom had a most exciting month in all of its areas. The month began with an outstanding Art Auction chaired by Dr. Carol Roark on Febru-

ary 9. Sisterhood followed with its game day that was attended by 120 women on February 11. The Film Festival continued on February 19 with the documentary *Above and Beyond*. On February 22, we observed Jewish Music Month featuring the music of Craig Taubman under the direction of Dr. David Katz. On Febru-

ary 24, Jack Bernstein led a wonderful afternoon of karaoke.

On Tuesday, March 12, the afternoon Film Festival will continue. Al and Elaine Lubiner will lead the Jewish Book Club on Tuesday, March 19, featuring the book *The Mossad Messiah*. Free copies of the book are available in the temple office. Lunch and Learn with the *Forward* continues on Tuesday, March 26 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

Please call the temple office at 941.626.2116 if you would like to participate.

A closing Yiddish thought: "*Kleyne kinder lozn nit shlofn; groyse kinder lozn nit ruen.*"

"Small children don't let you sleep; big children don't let you rest."

TEMPLE BETH EL

Fort Myers

(239) 433-0018

www.templebethel.com

Temple Beth El's Leslie Luzar Memorial Cantorial Shabbat Series recently hosted guest cantor, Marshall Portnoy, who has composed and recorded popular Jewish melodies for over a dozen years. The prior guest was Cantor Jamie Marks, composer/songwriter and an executive board member of the American Conference of Cantors, who will be Scholar-in-Residence for Mifgash Musicale, the annual intensive course for Jewish Musicians at Hebrew-Union College.

If you missed The Doo Wop Evening, Grave Matters, Sisterhood's Fashion Show and Luncheon, the Raisin' Cane tour, and Learning to Bake Hamantaschen by a master baker, you can still catch our March programs. Look for the Sunday, March 3 Annual Comedy Night at Laugh In Comedy Club, open to all, hosted by the Men's Club. Some stories only Jewish audiences appreciate!

Coming soon: Temple Beth El's Sixth Annual *Mishloach Manot* (Purim Baskets) assembly and distribution. Receiving a basket of Purim goodies and fresh hamentashen from fellow

members gives warm feelings.

The Temple Beth El Book Club will discuss *Paris in the Present Tense* by Mark Helprin. Reviewed by Jennifer

Avon, this powerful novel finds a present-day child of the Holocaust grappling with his complex past, trying to move on. Don't miss the April meeting to help select future books.

Religious School is going strong, with Religious School Hebrew, Jewish Cultural Studies, Cooking, Art and Music to spice up the curriculum. The Confirmation Class recently ended its toiletries drive, assembling nearly 100 bags of toiletries for Abuse Counseling and Treatment.

Have you visited our new website? Find out all about Temple Beth El and its upcoming educational, religious and social activities with new and easy online registration.

Talmud and Life, Lunch and Learn, Current Events and Book Club are just a few of the regular yet stimulating programs and a great way to connect to others with something in common.

For the little ones, join our Tot Shabbats on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. Membership renewals are coming in rapidly and TBE is proud to regularly welcome new members, who can find a

new membership portal that makes it easy for members to view, renew and update all their information.

Sisterhood is busy planning the upcoming Trivia Luncheon, Broadway Palm outing, and Guest Romance Writer. Sisterhood was honored on a recent Friday evening filled with joy and song. The Ladies Who Lunch visited Mona Lisa Italian Restaurant, while some modeled clothing from Anthony's Ladies Apparel. On January 6, Sisterhood had a fun and successful Purse, Jewelry and Dessert Party/Auction.

More committees are at work at Temple Beth El. Mitzvah Committee members mentor Israeli teenagers through the Israel Connect program. Conversing with an Israeli teenager for 45 minutes once each week via video chat helps an Israeli student challenged by English classes there to practice. And inevitably, some Hebrew is picked up on our end.

Recently, Randy Kashi, member and accompanist at Temple Beth El, was invited to perform one of her original Jewish tunes, her version of "L'cha Dodi," at Shabbat services at Temple Beth



Temple Beth El Sisterhood enjoys a Fashion Show by Anthony's Apparel and Luncheon at Mona Lisa Italian Restaurant

Am in Seattle. When friend and former TBE Cantor Victor Geigner took his position there, he taught the melody, so his choir and about 300 service attendees sang along. Also playing and singing was Scholar-in-Residence Danny Maseng, actor, popular singer and Jewish. Present also was Danny's pianist, Mike Skloff, who composed the Emmy-nominated theme song from the TV show *Friends*, and songs for the TV show *Grace and Frankie* among many others.



Temple Beth El Sisterhood's Purse Party and Auction

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

Cape Coral

(239) 772-4555

www.templebethshalomcc.org

What are you looking for in a synagogue? A spiritual home? New friends? An extended family? Fun activities? Religious education? A rabbi and a congregation that care about you?

March starts out with Gatlin on Saturday, March 2. This fabulous song-and-dance duo puts on a show that is not to be missed. This incredible

duo sings all styles and genres of music and will bring back memories of the music of your youth. This will be their fourth appearance at Temple Beth Shalom and they fill the hall every time.

On Tuesday March 26, we will host "How to Taste Wine Like A Pro." Like wine? Want to know more about it? Then be sure to attend our next wine event. Hosted by the Wine Whisperer himself, Jerry Greenfield, the event takes place from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m. in the Beth Shalom Social Hall). Jerry's

last presentation in 2015 was a huge success, so we've invited him back. Come join us. Tickets available early March.

On Sunday, March 31, the Brotherhood will sponsor the annual Temple Picnic at Jaycee Park in Cape Coral. If you haven't been there before, it is a lovely park on the river with lots of shade. It is a beautiful event where members can relax, eat and enjoy each other's company.

Join us for services and any other events that tickle your fancy. You will be welcomed with open arms. Please call the temple office at 239.772.4555

for more details.

Temple Beth Shalom may be small, but it has it all: Friday night services where you will be greeted and treated like a member of the family, Torah studies to deepen your understanding and stretch your brain, Brown Bag lunches to have spirited discussions of current events, a congregation where everyone is accepted as is, and where there are no elite members, just members and a rabbi who knows everyone. Most of all, we have fun.

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