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# L'CHAYIM

Published by the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

**November 2023 / 5783**

**[JewishFederationLCC.org](https://JewishFederationLCC.org)**

**Volume 46, Number 3**

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### Calling all Volunteers!

The JFS program needs food pantry volunteers to handle the pantry's expanded services.



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### Singles – Mark Your Calendars

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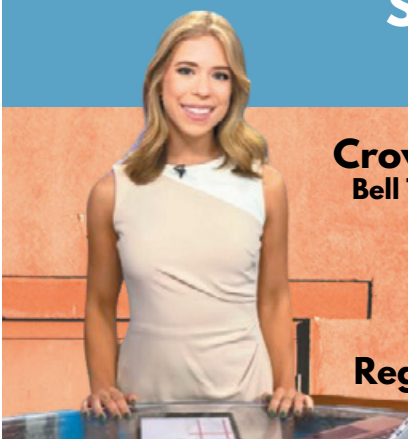
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Volume 46, Number 3**

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**DECEMBER ISSUE  
EDITORIAL  
DEADLINE:  
Monday, November 6**



### OUR MISSION

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

### OUR VISION

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

# Dealing with depression

By Rabbi Michael J. Schorin, MAPC, BCC

As I write this column, Israel has just suffered a major trauma in being invaded by Hamas terrorists from Gaza. This will be a terrible time for Israel — and a difficult time for Jewish Americans. Please pay attention to your emotional state and seek help, if that is appropriate.)

Are you depressed? I ask because the subject seems to be everywhere these days. Senator John Fetterman (D-PA) has discussed getting treatment for it. Just last week, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo appeared on television to talk about her attempts to deal with her depression. I am not sure if I can count all of the Hollywood celebrities who have admitted to fighting depression. And, yes, I have suffered from it as well.

If you are curious about the subject, there is a great book out that I highly recommend: “Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression — and the Unexpected Solutions.” It is written by Johann Hari and was published in 2018.

Of course, depression is nothing new, even if we talk about it much more these days. Believe it or not, we can even find traces of it in the Bible. Surprised? Don’t be. In Genesis 22, Abraham takes his son, Isaac, to become a sacrifice up on Mount Moriah. At the end of the akedah, we read that Abraham heads home with his servants,



■ Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Schorin

but the verse doesn’t mention Isaac. Why? What happened to him and where did he go? Rabbinic tradition suggests Isaac went to study at the heavenly yeshivah of Shem v’Ever for three years. To this writer, that sounds like Isaac was suffering from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). I believe Isaac was entitled to some time away.

Could you imagine returning to live with your father after he tied you up on an altar and began to bring a knife to your throat? It may also be true this heavenly academy was the first out-patient treatment center in the whole world!

But there is also a second instance of depression in the book of Genesis. In Parshat Vayigash, Joseph’s brothers return from Egypt to tell their father Jacob that Joseph is actually alive. What a bad news/good news dilemma! Yes, we lied to you about Joseph being

dead but, guess what, he’s now alive! How would you break the news if this was your family? Rabbinic tradition mentions that one of Jacob’s grandchildren, Serach, was a gifted musician with a beautiful voice. When Jacob was mourning his son’s death, she would come and play and sing for him, and he would be somewhat comforted.

So the brothers commissioned her, and she came and sang a melody so beautiful that Jacob could not resist it. It was a melody that contained Joseph’s

beauty, his pain and longing, and his devotion. Despite his soul wanting to leave his body, she persuaded him to let it return. (“Torah Journeys” by Rabbi Shefa Gold) Jacob certainly sounds depressed here. But even more, it sounds like he had an NDE — a near-death experience. There is no blame here. How could Jacob not be gob-smacked by this turn of events? How much can any of us take? Obviously, Serach’s musicianship carried the day, because we read that Jacob picked up his camp and went to visit his son, the Prime Minister of Egypt.

What does all of this mean then? There is no shame in being depressed (actually, you have some really good company!). But please remember: you are not alone. There is a plethora of therapies and therapists out there who can help. Besides music therapy, you might want to try hypnotherapy, EMDR (eye movement desensitization and reprocessing), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and, of course, regular psychotherapy.

If you are depressed, please consider your lifelines: phone a friend, reach out to a mental health agency, call the United Way for suggestions and speak to a physician and maybe even a rabbi. If you are able, do something to help others. Give some “zedakah.” Go to the beach or to a nature preserve. Spend time with others. Study some Torah.

Especially during this difficult time of war, please limit the amount of media you take in, it can be soul-crushing. Rebbe Nachman of Bratzlav once wrote: “Never despair! Never give up! There is always hope!” 🕊

**There is no  
shame in being  
depressed...  
But please  
remember: you  
are not alone.**

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# Securing our Jewish community

LiveSecure and SCN grant

FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

■ Debbie Sanford



I wrote this article before the war broke out in Israel. Your support of this new security initiative is even more important now. I will include a follow-up on the war next month, including what the Jewish Federations are doing on the ground and where your contributions are being utilized. Thank you for your support. Am Yisrael Chai.

I would like to talk to you all about security in our community and the steps we are taking to make sure we are free to practice our Jewish heritage and attend Jewish events safely. Over the last year, we have faced an increase in Antisemitic incidents in our community and our schools. The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties

has applied for a security grant through LiveSecure. LiveSecure is a multimillion-dollar campaign launched by JFNA in 2021 with the goal of securing every Jewish community across North America and saving lives. It is the largest security initiative in history for Jewish communities.

I am initiating a new security campaign, starting in 2024, for Lee and Charlotte counties. This campaign is a tremendous investment in our Jewish future, and I need your support. The best part is there are matching funds! Dollar for dollar what we raise will be matched by a LiveSecure Grant.

What can we do with this grant? The grant will enable us to enhance overall security throughout the entire community. Yes, every Jewish organization with a physical building in both Lee and Charlotte counties will benefit from this grant! We will work closely with SCN (Secure Community Network) and be assigned a security director. Our security director will live amongst us, in our community. He/She


will start with complete assessments of every Jewish facility. They will provide all of us with training, communications, emergency response and crisis management. This security director is your security director, working in tandem with each synagogue, preschool, day school and religious school. SCN helps with grant writing and resources so, eventually, we can upgrade our security at each of our facilities. If enough money is raised, we will provide security for community-wide events and festivals, look at installing a community-wide panic alarm system, and much more. This initiative will not come to fruition without your support and the ability to partner with other small Federations in Southwest Florida so we are teaming up with Pinellas County and Naples, to be able to afford such an endeavor.

This grant will enable us to enhance overall security in our entire community. But the money we raise as a community for the match needs to be designated funds for security, and funds donated above and beyond a normal

annual campaign gift. That is how the match works. With this match, we can make this happen in our community!

I know you just received an appeal letter for our annual campaign for the new year in the mail. Please take a moment to think about an additional donation for security now or even for next year's pledge. Don't think that a \$10, \$50 or \$100 increase in your donation doesn't make a difference. It makes a HUGE difference! If you recognize the need, like I do, then I need your help! Just indicate on your pledges going forward or on your new pledge if you have yet to give it to our Federation, "Security Initiative" so we post it correctly.

Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker of Colleyville's Congregation Beth Israel has credited the security training he received through SCN with saving his life and other hostages' lives during the attack.

This grant will ensure that Lee and Charlotte counties continue to have access to the highest possible level of security infrastructure. 

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L'CHAYIM is a monthly nonprofit newspaper supported by generous readers, committed advertisers and the Jewish Federation.





# Embracing new beginnings and community connection

By Danielle Bernstein, Special Events and Program Coordinator

I hope everyone enjoyed the high holiday season and is off to a great start in this new year. We have a lot to look forward to this year and as a community, we will make this the best year yet.

In the beginning of September, I had the privilege of hosting my first PJ Library event at Lakes Park, and the turnout was nothing short of amazing! We had a children's magician, reading time and goodie bags filled with apples for Rosh Hashanah. It was an absolute blast, and seeing the smiles on children's faces was incredibly rewarding.

But the excitement doesn't stop there! I had the opportunity to attend

my first networking event at FGCU, where I had the pleasure of connecting with numerous nonprofit organizations in our community. It was an enriching experience and one I hope to attend again.

Looking ahead, we have a lineup of exciting events that I can't wait to share with you. First up, mark your calendars for the Community Breakfast Dec. 10 at 10 a.m. We're thrilled to have Natasha Rogoff as our guest speaker, discussing her book "Muppets in Moscow," which delves into the fascinating world of Sesame Street in the Soviet Union. This promises to be an enlightening and

entertaining morning that you won't want to miss!

Our last two Shalom Singles events for 2023 are just around the corner. On Dec. 3, we will have a Mitzvah Mingle, where we will be packing Hanukah bags over dinner. Then, on Dec. 5 at the Immokalee Casino, we will be offering free play gift cards to all attendees.

As a friendly reminder, the one and only Challah Prince will be joining our community, sharing his expertise in the art of challah braiding in the most unique and delightful



■ Danielle Bernstein

ways. This promises to be an unforgettable experience, and we hope to see you there.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for coming out and being a part of this welcoming community. If anyone is interested in volunteering or has fresh ideas to share, please don't hesitate to reach out to me

at [Danielleb@Jfedlcc.org](mailto:Danielleb@Jfedlcc.org) or 239-481-4449, x4. 📞

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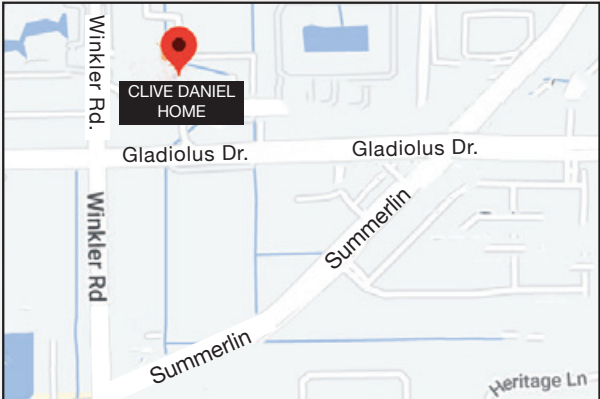
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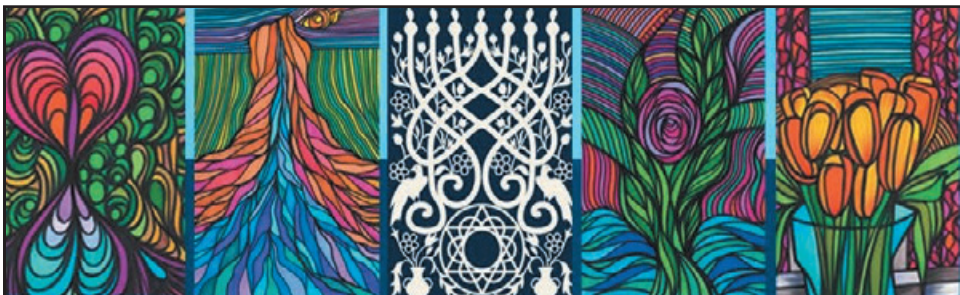
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This year please consider making an additional campaign contribution in honor or memory of a loved one. Because kindness is contagious, we would like to highlight your generosity in L'CHAYIM and notify personally those whom you honor. You may choose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



## TRIBUTES

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Jewish Federation  
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

### HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION SERVES

#### Local Jewish Education and Culture

- ☆ Community-wide Jewish Education and Cultural Programs for all ages including the Jewish Film Festival, Jewish author events, Out & About Films, Israel celebration, day trips, Israeli folk dancing, PJ Library & TRIBE, a young adult group.
- ☆ L'CHAYIM published monthly to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues.
- ☆ New CRC-Community Relations Council to address issues of anti-Semitism and Interfaith Relations.
- ☆ Israel Advocacy and Initiatives to strengthen local Jewish community ties with Israel. Holocaust education for middle and high school students in the community and a college campus Jewish life experience committee.
- ☆ Volunteer opportunities for all ages.



#### Overseas

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

#### Jewish Community Foundation

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



#### Local Seniors Services

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

#### Local Social Services

- ☆ Non-sectarian, individual and family outreach, information and referral services.
- ☆ Friendly Visitor Program.

#### Local Emergency Services

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

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



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

Jewish Federation  
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# Meet the Piché family

## PJ Library Family of the Month

By Danielle Bernstein, Special Events and Program Coordinator

PJ Library’s “Family of the Month” is a special recognition program that highlights one exceptional family within the PJ Library community each month. This initiative celebrates families who actively engage with PJ Library’s mission of fostering Jewish values and traditions. For this month, we are proud to introduce you to the Piché family of five.

**Number of children and their ages:**  
Molly (3½ years old), Michael (1½ years old) and one furry family member, Teddy the dog (5 years old).

**Years of PJ Library participation:**  
3 years

**Discovery of PJ Library:**  
Located in the vibrant city of Minneapolis, the Piché family first learned about PJ Library through their local day care at the Jewish Community Center. Additionally, a family friend was involved as a PJ Library coordinator, which piqued their interest and led them to explore the program further. “I was very excited when I saw there was one in the area!” shares Mrs. Piché.



**Fostering Jewish values and traditions:**  
For the Piché family, being part of PJ Library has been a meaningful journey toward nurturing Jewish values and traditions in their daily lives. Despite relocating to Florida, where they have not yet joined a synagogue, the family has found ways to integrate their Jewish heritage into their lives.

One significant avenue for the Piché children’s cultural exposure is Temple Judea Preschool. This educational institution allows Molly and Michael to engage with Jewish traditions and culture, providing them with a foundation that will help them carry forward their heritage into the future.

The Piché family believes that being Jewish is about preserving traditions and passing them down through the generations. While their connection to Judaism remains a vital aspect of their identity, they also recognize the importance of fostering these values within their children.

**Hopes for the future:**  
As newcomers to their Florida community, the Piché family is eager to continue participating in PJ Library events. Their hope is to forge connections with other families who share similar values and traditions. By



attending PJ Library gatherings, they anticipate not only creating lasting memories for their children but also establishing meaningful friendships for themselves.

The Jewish Federation is so fortunate to have such a wonderful group of PJ Library families in our community. Each and every one of you contributes to the richness of our shared

experiences, helping to create an amazing, vibrant community. If you’re interested in joining us and becoming part of this special community, please don’t hesitate to reach out for more information. You can reach me at [Danielleb@jfedlcc.org](mailto:Danielleb@jfedlcc.org) or 239-481-4449, x4.

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# The extended wingspan of Jewish Family Services

*Jewish Family Services update*

By Jodi Cohen, Jewish Family Services Coordinator

Steve Shirey started as the Federation's new facilities manager at the end of this past July. He is the only "y" chromosome on staff and does the literal heavy lifting. He can fix, repair and problem-solve whatever comes his way, and he does so with grace and kindness. His mantra is, "I'm here to help." If you thank him for helping, he replies, "That's why I'm here."



■ Jodi Cohen



Hearing this mantra is a good reminder of the role of Jewish Family Services, which is to serve the entire community based on the Jewish values of *Tzedakah* (benevolence), *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and *K'lal Yisrael* (taking responsibility for one another).

Executive Director Debbie Sanford's vision to extend the wingspan of JFS and move into the larger suite of offices has been a big transition. JFS has more space and, as the newest United Way House, we are excited to collaborate with partner agencies to bring breast cancer screenings, Dress for Success events and potentially serve as a site for free tax preparation. But wait, there's more!

## Food pantry

Since The Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry is so large, there is room for the food delivered every week from Harry Chapin Food Bank. What's true is that the rise in grocery prices directly affects the percentage of families facing food insecurity and, as a result, the

number of people visiting the pantry is also growing. JFS Case Manager and Food Pantry Coordinator Silvia Garcia reached out to United Way partner Healthy Start, and now the pantry has diapers available for recipients. This is a big deal.

With all the growth comes the need for more pantry volunteers! If you have a couple of hours a week to help organize the inventory, pack bags, greet and register the people who walk in, then come on down! You can sign up by contacting Silvia at 239-481-4449, ext. 3 or [casemanager@jfedlcc.org](mailto:casemanager@jfedlcc.org).

## Lunch Bunch

A big shout out to the Alliance for the Arts, our fabulous community partner, who hosted the September Lunch Bunch in its main gallery, where the artwork served as a gorgeous background.

A special thank you to Carolyn Gora for leading us in a special Tashlich activity right before Rosh Hashanah. We each wrote something that we wanted to let go of from the past year on a strip of soluble paper, folded the paper into accordion pleats, tied a piece of hemp around the middle and then tossed it into water. Thank you also to Jason's Deli, our delicious community partner!

## Sharing Shabbat

Years ago, my father organized a regular short Shabbat gathering when he lived at Brookdale. I led the service and after I got my puppy, Morty, and before I figured out that he was *not* a user-friendly addition to the Shabbat service, I schlepped him along a few times. The first Friday of the month Shabbat service went on for several years. It was a lovely touchstone for the Jewish residents and their friends living at Brookdale. When family members visited, they joined us as well.

I started the Sharing Shabbat program simply as



Sharing Shabbat at Amavida



Sharing Shabbat at American House

a way for Jewish residents and their friends, living in various older adult living communities throughout Lee and Charlotte counties, to come together to celebrate Shabbat. I've visited two communities so far and it's been wonderful to be together, sing songs and say the prayers over the candles, wine and challah. There were some technical glitches during my first visits, and I know my dad was having a good laugh from on high. I honor him by telling a couple of jokes at the end of every gathering, which he did as well, referring to it as "levity."

We thank you for your generosity and support of Jewish Family Services. Through your recent gifts, JFS was able to help people with their electric and phone bills, health insurance co-payments, maintenance repairs and rental assistance that prevented a family from being evicted.

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## Faith Community Nursing

By Sandi Falk, BSN, RN, CNOR, FCN

**T**zedakah is the Hebrew word for philanthropy, justice and charity. It is a form of social justice in which donors benefit from giving as much, or more, than the recipients. More than a financial transaction, *tzedakah* builds trusting relationships and includes contributions of time, effort and insight.

While *tzedakah* is a Hebrew word meaning righteousness, it's commonly used to signify charity. This concept of "charity" differs from the modern Western understanding of charity. The latter is typically understood as a spontaneous act of goodwill and a marker of generosity; *tzedakah* is an ethical obligation. Specifically, doing the right things by helping people or causes in need. *Tzedakah* is mentioned numerous times in the Old Testament.

The Faith Community Nursing program is *tzedakah* in many ways. Faith Community Nursing is a unique, specialized practice of professional nursing that focuses on the intentional care of the spirit as part of the process of promoting holistic health and preventing or minimizing illness in a faith community.

The role of the Faith Community Nursing is as follows:

- **Health counselor:** Discusses individual health needs regarding illness, medication, prevention and wellness, and gives reassurance during times of concern or crisis

- **Educator:** Promotes the relationship between faith, health, attitudes and lifestyle choices through bulletin articles, literature review and health education programs


- **Advocate:** Identifies the medically underinsured and uninsured members of the faith community who need support for decision-making about health care issues

- **Liaison:** Connects faith community members to each other in response to needs as well as to appropriate community resources

- **Trainer:** Recruits and supervises volunteers in health ministries and provides education to assist them in their role. The nurse also facilitates support group formation.

- **Healer:** Facilitates a whole-person approach to the healing of body, mind and spirit through presence and prayer

Our new Faith Community Nursing program will be available soon to all members of the Jewish community who, perhaps, just need someone to listen, to assess the safety in their homes, and give "*tzedakah*."

Jewish Family Services is looking for nurses, practicing and retired with a current license to volunteer for this unique program. Please contact Nancy Klein if you are interested. 239-481-4449, ext. 2 or [NancyKlein@jfedlcc.org](mailto:NancyKlein@jfedlcc.org) 

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## Candle lighting times:

**November 3: 6:25 p.m.**

**November 10: 5:21 p.m.**

**November 17: 5:18 p.m.**

**November 24: 5:17 p.m.**





# What it is really like to have no home — and what can be done?

*Movies that Matter offer insight at no cost to you*

By Jeff Margolis

Much media attention has been given to the problem of homelessness but most people do not really know what it is like to have no place to go home to, and they do not know what homeless individuals are like. You can gain insight into this important issue by viewing the third film in this season’s Movies that Matter, Steve Brazina Memorial Film Series.

“The Invisible Class” is an award-winning, groundbreaking new documentary about homelessness in America. The film explores what it truly means to be homeless in America, challenging stereotypes and examining the systemic causes of mass homelessness in the wealthiest nation in the world. The film depicts a day in the life of homeless populations across America.

Because of the importance of the housing issue in our area and throughout the U.S., everyone registered for “The Invisible Class” will also receive a link to another highly acclaimed award-winning film:



“Finding Hope – Beyond Homelessness.” This film not only examines the root causes of homelessness but includes possible solutions. “Finding Hope” shows that there are ways to tackle homelessness. Those who view this film find encouragement and often want to become part of the solution. These films will be available by link beginning Oct. 26.

Movies that Matter is a special film series that, in addition to presenting films at no cost, gives viewers the opportunity to hear from a panel of experts on the film’s subject and learn how it relates to our local area. The panel members scheduled to discuss homelessness include Steve Brooder, CEO of St. Matthew’s House, and Mike Overway, executive director of the Hunger and Homeless Coalition of Collier County.


The panel discussion will take place via Zoom on Nov. 1 at 4 p.m. To obtain a link to the films and the panel discussions, simply visit [www.hmcec.org](http://www.hmcec.org) and go to the link for events.



This site will also allow you to make donations or become a sponsor of the only human rights film series in Southwest Florida.

Thank you to our sponsors and donors. If you have questions, staff can be reached at [info@hmcec.org](mailto:info@hmcec.org).

“Movies that Matter: The Steve Brazina Memorial Film Series” is a


collaborative effort of the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center, GenShoah of SWFL, Temple Shalom, Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, the Federation’s Jewish Community Relations Council, Interfaith Alliance of SWFL, BRIDGES and Naples United Church of Christ. 

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


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# Museum Reopens

By Susan Suarez, President & CEO

“I just hope we can expand.” The late Museum Benefactor Janet G. Cohen said those words to me during “Demolition Day” as we ceremoniously broke through a wall of the Museum’s new permanent home. This was a long-awaited dream that her generous gift to our first capital campaign made possible. Cohen cared deeply about children and felt that the Museum’s work to educate students about the lessons of the Holocaust was extremely important.

Her wish has now become a reality. On Saturday, Nov. 4, the Museum will reopen to the public with a new North Wing. The nearly year-long expansion project converted the space from two adjacent office suites we purchased into another 3,600 square feet for Museum use.



■ Susan Suarez

The North Wing features three large new galleries — the Auschwitz Gallery, the Estelle and Stuart Price Gallery for Special Exhibits and the Shelley and Stephen Einhorn Genocide Gallery — as well as the new Herbert H. Schiff Classroom, which allows us to serve larger size school groups and community meetings, and education department offices.

We are excited to welcome the public to attend the following special Grand Reopening programs:

• **Saturday, Nov. 4 “Family Day,”** includes a special children’s program starting at 12:15 p.m. and regular admission from 1 to 4 p.m. with face painting, crafts and storytelling. We recommend reservations as space is limited.



Please RSVP at [hmcec.org](http://hmcec.org).

• **Saturday, Nov. 11 Complimentary Museum Admission** from 1 to 4 p.m., with the last guests admitted at 3 p.m. Reservations are required. Please RSVP at [hmcec.org](http://hmcec.org).

• **Saturday, Nov. 11 Veterans Day** program at 2 p.m., featuring a short film followed by a discussion with Heinz Wartski, Holocaust survivor and Korean War veteran. No reservations are required.

Prior to reopening, our volunteers and docents toured the newly completed North Wing and updated displays in the main Museum. They also tried out the state-of-the-art information kiosks in the new galleries, saw the new forgeries and the Holocaust special exhibit in the Estelle and Stuart Price Gallery, and explored the amenities in the new Herbert H. Schiff Classroom.

## Movies That Matter

Many thanks to all who participated in this year’s “Movies That Matter – Steve Brazina Memorial Series.” Through the Zoom discussions of three important documentaries, we learned more about human rights issues that affect Southwest Florida and the rest of the country — poverty’s effect on children in the U.S., community response to acts of hate and violence, and homelessness. We are grateful to the speakers on our expert panels: Dawn Montecalvo, Guadalupe Center; Diane Ponton, Grace Place; filmmaker Patrice O’Neill; Rabbi Adam Miller of Temple Shalom; Sharon Harris-Ewing from Interfaith Alliance; Rev. Tony Fisher from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greater Naples; Steven Brooder, CEO of St. Matthew’s House; and Mike Overway, Hunger and Homeless Coalition.

Thank you to our series sponsors: Benefactor Sponsor – Joyce Steckman; Sustainer Sponsor – Marvin Lender; Supporter Sponsor – Jane Schiff; and Patron Sponsors – Robert Davidson, Lisa Freund, Rene Geist, Ken Goldstein, Monica and Allan Goodwin; Liz and Alan Jaffe, Nancy Kahn, Marlene Landa, Ida and Jeff Margolis, Estelle Price, Susan and Nathaniel Ritter,

Jane Schiff, Sharon Stein. Final thanks go to our Community Partners who along with the Museum presented the “Movies that Matter Series: GenShoah SWFL, BRIDGES, Interfaith Alliance of SWFL, Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Naples, Jewish Federation of Greater Naples, Naples United Church of Christ and Temple Shalom.

## The Luncheon tickets and sponsorships

We invite you to attend our annual winter fundraising event, The Luncheon, taking place at Vineyards Country Club on Wednesday, Dec. 6 from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Tickets and sponsorship packages are available on our website at [hmcec.org](http://hmcec.org).

This year’s special program includes a live performance of “Letters from Anne and Martin.” Presented in conjunction with the Anne Frank Center USA, the short play is a dramatic reading drawn from the writings of Anne Frank and Martin Luther King. These two icons were contemporaries, born six months apart in 1929. Although they lived in different counties, during their lives, both experienced prejudice, hatred and violence. Both were murdered because of hatred, yet each left powerful legacies we honor to this day. We hope you’ll join us for this special event. Net proceeds benefit Museum Education Programs.

Thank you to our Luncheon Sponsors as of 10/2/23: Remembrance Sponsor – Shelley and Steven Einhorn; Testimony Sponsor – Estelle and Stuart Price; Hope Sponsor – Fran and Rob Nossen; Inspire Sponsor – Sandy and Fred Roth; and Patron Sponsors – Shirley and Marshall Besikof, Rosalee and Jerry Bogo, Susan Bookbinder, FGCU Foundation, Jim Hale, Dottie McGovern and Nancy White.

On behalf of the Museum Board and staff, we look forward to welcoming you to our newly expanded Museum. Janet Cohen was aware of the progress being made, and although she unfortunately isn’t with us to celebrate in person, we know she is smiling down on it.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your families! 🍂



## Join Us for The Luncheon

**Date:** Wednesday, December 6, 2023  
**Time:** 11:30am – 1:30pm  
**Location:** The Vineyards Country Club, Naples

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## Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties Holocaust Education and Programs Department

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties is creating a Holocaust Education department in response to growing antisemitism and a need for education and remembrance. The new department will sponsor outreach programs in the schools and community as well as host speaking, author and film events. We are also in the process of creating a remembrance wall that will highlight local loved ones lost in the Shoah. For naming and other donor opportunities, or to share stories, please contact JFED Holocaust Education Director Ella Naylor at 239-281-7874 or via email at [jfedholocaustdirector@gmail.com](mailto:jfedholocaustdirector@gmail.com)



**Jewish Federation**  
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

# Operation Harvest Festival, November 1943

By Paul R. Bartrop, Professor Emeritus of History,  
Florida Gulf Coast University

Eighty years ago this month, on Nov. 3, 1943, what was arguably the largest single day-long mass murder operation of Jews to take place over the entirety of World War II happened.

Referred to by the Nazis as Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*), it was ordered by *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler to be a planned operation carried out in direct retaliation for a sequence of resistance activities in concentration camps and ghettos. The plan was put in the hands of SS officers Christian Wirth and Jakob Sporrenberg.

Wirth had already been closely involved in the Nazi "euthanasia" program known as Aktion T4, which murdered tens of thousands of Germans with intellectual and physical disabilities, before being transferred out of the program in the summer of 1941. He was the overall commander of the much larger murder program known as Operation Reinhard, of which Operation Harvest Festival was part.

Sporrenberg was SS and higher police leader (SSPF) in Lublin, Poland and was given the task of overseeing and implementing the mass shooting of Jews during Operation Harvest Festival.

Heinrich Himmler ordered the operation to take place following multiple expressions of resistance throughout the areas of Poland controlled by Germany in which revolts had taken place. Specifically mentioned were revolts at the Sobibór and Treblinka death camps as well as earlier revolts that had taken place in the Warsaw, Białystok and Vilna ghettos. Fearing further Jewish resistance, Operation Harvest Festival was planned and carried out with the intention of crushing any possibility of further resistance.

Operation Harvest Festival began at dawn on Nov. 3, 1943, when the concentration camp at Lublin-Majdanek, together with labor camps at Trawniki and Poniatowa, were surrounded by SS and German police. The inmates were taken out of the camps and shot, their bodies falling into massive ditches. At Majdanek, the operation took place under the watchful eye of an SS non-commissioned officer, Erich Muhsfeldt.

Originally, Muhsfeldt served at Auschwitz in 1940 but was transferred to Majdanek on Nov. 15, 1941. When that camp was liquidated after Operation Harvest Festival, he was transferred back to Auschwitz, where he worked supervising Jewish *Sonderkommando* prisoners in the gas chamber complex in Crematoria II and III.

At Majdanek, Muhsfeldt oversaw the day's events on Nov. 3 as the Jews were separated from the rest of the prisoners and taken to be killed. Thus, he was closely involved in the mass shooting of the camp's Jewish inmates.



■ Paul R. Bartrop

During Operation Harvest Festival, the victims were initially ordered to dig massive trenches designed to combat oncoming Soviet tanks, but it was feint; instead, the trenches were used as mass graves. During the mass shootings at both Majdanek and Trawniki, music was played over loudspeakers to drown out the sounds of continuous gunshots. The process was completed in a single day at Majdanek and Trawniki; it took place over two days at Poniatowa, however, owing to prisoner resistance within the camp.

Operation Harvest Festival was responsible for the largest single number of casualties during a mass shooting conducted by the SS, resulting in the death of approximately 43,000 Polish Jews across the three locations. Unquestionably, it destroyed the Jewish population of the Lublin district of German-occupied Poland. It was part of the much larger Operation Reinhard (*Aktion Reinhard*), an organized mass murder of all Polish Jews in German-occupied Poland.

After Majdanek had been liquidated, Erich Muhsfeldt was transferred back to Auschwitz. Captured after the war, he was tried for war crimes by the U.S. military, found guilty of committing atrocities at the Flossenbürg concentration camp and sentenced to life in prison. He was, however, extradited to Poland, where he was retried by the Supreme National Tribunal at the Auschwitz Trial in Kraków, and sentenced to death by hanging for crimes against humanity. He was executed on Jan. 24, 1948.

After the war, Jakob Sporrenberg stood trial in Poland. Convicted in 1950 of war crimes and sentenced to death, he was executed in December 1952.

Christian Wirth, the overall commander of Operation Reinhard — of which Operation Harvest Festival was part — was also instrumental in developing what were known as the Operation Reinhard camps (Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka), the extermination camps specifically designed for the purpose of Jewish mass murder. He was killed by Yugoslav Partisans on May 26, 1944 in Hrpelje-Kozina (now part of Slovenia) near Trieste after the conclusion of Operation Reinhard.

It is a sobering reflection that not too much later in far away Australia, the 12th anniversary of Operation Harvest Festival coincided with this writer's day of birth. Placed in this context, the Holocaust remains very much part of an ongoing history.

Paul R. Bartrop is Professor Emeritus of History and the former Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Research at Florida Gulf Coast University.



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## The swastika tattoo

*Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old*

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

“It’s always a good day when my grandson comes to visit!” Lillian thought to herself. Her smile said it all as she gave a quick wave to her friends. “I’ve got to rush. Kyle loves kugel so I’m making it for him and his friend, Joe.”

Lillian got to work and just like clockwork, when the oven timer signaled the kugel was done, the doorbell chimed signaling that Kyle and Joe had arrived.

Kyle let his nose lead the way to the kitchen. “Sure smells great, Grandma.” Joe nodded in agreement and asked to use the bathroom to wash up. Pushing up his sleeves, Joe made his way to the sink just as Lillian observed his forearm. She gasped. In bold black and red, Lillian saw the unmistakable drawing of a swastika. How could it be that Kyle, her grandson, the great grandson of Holocaust survivors, was friends with someone who displayed the hated Nazi symbol as a tattoo on his arm?

For the first time since they’d been sharing Shabbat lunch together, Lillian was strangely quiet. When it came time to leave, Lillian stiffened when Joe offered her a hug. Kyle noticed and whispered, “Gram, is there something wrong?” Lillian lied. “It’s nothing really. Just a little indigestion, that’s all.”

For the next several weeks, Lillian obsessed about Joe’s swastika tattoo. She didn’t know what to do. Joe seemed nice enough but how could she tell Kyle that his best friend was no longer welcome in her home? How would Kyle react? Did he know that Joe was obviously antisemitic? Would speaking up damage the special relationship that she and Kyle shared?

Reluctant to turn to her friends for advice, Lillian engaged “Mr. Google.” Whenever she wanted to know something, learn something or understand something, Lillian powered on the computer and asked “Mr. Google” her question. On this particular sleepless night, Lillian asked for “Ideas to combat antisemitism.” Kyle had called to say that he was coming for lunch on Saturday and bringing Joe as well. Lillian knew she needed to do something but what could one individual do?

To her amazement, Lillian found hundreds of sites, most developed by Jewish organizations, including one that offered 90 suggestions for responding to antisemitism (WordstoAction – Empowering Students to Address Antisemitism). In the section titled “In Your Home and Personal



■ Rabbi Barbara Aiello

Life,” Lillian found several guidelines that addressed her dilemma, among them item 7: “Speak out against antisemitic ... slurs. Silence can send the message that derogatory remarks ... are acceptable.”

“Well,” Lillian said aloud. “A swastika tattoo is a symbolic slur. If I say nothing, it’s like I’m saying that the swastika is OK.” Lillian clicked on “compose” and

wrote to Kyle. “I’m looking forward to having you and Joe join me for lunch.”

“No kugel?” Kyle sniffed and opened the oven door. “What’s up?”

Lillian smiled and brought out three deli-wrapped sandwiches. “I’m having computer problems. My iPad is on the fritz. Kyle, could you work on it? Joe and I won’t disturb you. We’ll be out on the lanai.”

And so it was that Lillian took Joe’s hand, offered him a chair and closed the sliding doors. Through the glass, Kyle could see Joe as he pushed up his sleeve, uncovering the Nazi symbol. He could see his grandma’s animated expressions as she spoke about her family’s experience in Nazi Germany. When Lillian opened the door

and invited Kyle to join the conversation, Kyle heard Joe’s explanation. It was several years ago when he turned 18 that his buddies dared him to get the tattoo. At first Joe thought it was cool – “edgy,” he said. “I didn’t really know what it meant.” Joe

looked at Lillian. “Now, I do.”

Joe had been thinking about having the swastika removed and had investigated tattoo removal procedures. “For a tattoo like this,” Joe said, “It will cost me about \$800 to have it taken off. I want to do it but I can’t afford it.”

Lillian smiled. “If you’re serious, I’ll help you. We can make a deal. I’ll advance you the money if you pay me back by washing my car, painting my bathroom and helping me clean and organize my storage bin!”

When Joe said “Deal,” Lillian smiled. When Joe hugged her, Lillian didn’t freeze and when Joe said, “I’m sorry,” Lillian cried.

For 10 years, Rabbi Barbara Aiello served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life as resident rabbi. Her most popular columns are now published in her new book, “Aging Jewishly,” available on Amazon books. Rabbi Barbara now lives and works in Italy, where she is rabbi of Italy’s first Reconstructionist synagogue. Contact her at [rabbibarbara.com](mailto:rabbibarbara.com).



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# Killers of the Flower Moon, Thanksgiving and Napoleon

By Nate Bloom, Stars of David Contributing Columnist

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

## "Killers of the Flower Moon"

If I had a "good Jewish connection," I would have written an item about "Killers of the Flower Moon," a Martin Scorsese film that opened last month to great reviews. Well, I just found that connection via some dogged research. Based on a critically acclaimed, bestselling nonfiction study of the same name, "Killers" opened Oct. 20 and is still in most theaters.

The book and film chronicle what are referred to as the Osage Tribe murders. The Osage were forced out of their homes in Kansas and resettled in Oklahoma in the 19th century. In the early 1920s, large oil deposits were found on their reservation land. Unscrupulous whites found various ways to get their hands on royalties paid to tribe members. Some whites even courted and married Osage women, then murdered them.

Dozens, perhaps hundreds, of Osage were murdered for their royalties. Then, the FBI, a new agency at the time, got involved in 1925 and solved several of these cases. However, most of the murders were never solved.

Robert DeNiro and Leo DiCaprio play bad guys who swindle the Osage. Jesse Plemons plays the top federal officer. Lily Gladstone, a Native American, co-stars as an Osage who is married to DiCaprio's character.

The screenplay was co-written by Scorsese and **Eric Roth**, 78. Roth's credits include "Forrest Gump" (won

the best adapted screenplay Oscar) and "Munich" (Oscar nominated in the same category).

The historical study was written by **David Grann**, 57, a top journalist who is a *New Yorker* staff journalist. He is also the author of the bestselling historical study "The Lost City of Z." A movie of the same name opened in 2016.

Grann's father, the late Dr. **Victor Grann**, was a prominent oncologist. His mother, **Phyllis Grann**, 86, was the former CEO of Putnam Books. She was the first woman to head a major publishing company.

Some months ago, I looked at David Grann's Wikipedia entry and it said that his father was "one-quarter Jewish," and his mother was "half Jewish." But I recently went back to the Wiki bio and read the *New Yorker* article cited for this info. The article says nothing (!) about David's father's religious background and is unclear about his mother's.

I checked records. Victor Grann was the son of a Yiddish-speaking Russian Jewish immigrant and his American-born Jewish wife. As for Phyllis, the *New Yorker* article gets Phyllis's father's background right. He was a Russian Jew who settled in the U.K.

The article describes Phyllis's mother as British (by birth). But it doesn't say whether she was British **and** Jewish. As I write this, I know that three of David Grann's "grands" were Jewish, with one unclear.

By the way, there are people of mixed Indian and Jewish background. **Robbie Robertson**, the leader of the famous rock band "The Band" and its principal songwriter, was the son of a Canadian Mohawk mother and a Canadian Jewish father. Robertson died last August at age 80.

In a memoir, Robertson made this wry remark about his Jewish and Indian heritage: "You could say I'm an expert when it comes to persecution."

## "Thanksgiving"

A horror film that opens in theaters Nov. 17, "Thanksgiving" was directed and co-written by **Eli Roth**, 51, a "master" of horror. Roth's big hits include "Hostel" (2005) and "Cabin Fever" (2016). He also acts now and again. He played Donny "The Bear Jew" Donowitz in Quentin Tarantino's war film "Inglourious Basterds" (2009).

Here's the Thanksgiving premise: After a Black Friday riot ends in tragedy, a mysterious serial killer, known only as "John Carver," comes to Plymouth, Mass., with the intention of creating a Thanksgiving carving board out of the town's inhabitants.

The film's co-stars include **Milo Manheim**, 22. He's the son of actress

**Camryn Manheim**, 62, ("The Practice" and, currently, the chief police officer on "Law and Order"). Milo had a bar mitzvah ceremony.

## "Napoleon"

A "big movie" about the rise of the famous French general who became the Emperor of the French, "Napoleon" was directed by Ridley Scott, 85(!). Scott specializes in big action films ("Alien," "Blade Runner" and "Gladiator").

**Joaquin Phoenix**, 49, plays Napoleon. Over the years, Phoenix has established himself as one of the leading actors of his generation. He has earned five Oscar nominations, winning once ("The Joker").

Phoenix's mother was Jewish. His father was not. When he was a child, his parents were members of a Christian cult. He's been secular as an adult and, a few years ago, Phoenix described himself as a "secular Jew." 🌐

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# The new “it” street food in Israel

By Chef Dalia

Meet the “it” Friday challah-schnitzel sandwich — the street food version of Israeli kids’ favorite food and the most iconic pre-Shabbat sandwich that took the country by storm.

Over the last few years, you can’t miss the growing trend around Israel of schnitzel on challah, often made on a huge challah or challah roll with layers of matbucha, schnitzel, fried eggplant tahini and pickles.



This mouthwatering sandwich was a “childhood must” at my house, just like in many Israelis households. Friday noon was always very hectic: the house is quiet and squeaky clean, and a small army of pots and trays filled with delicious food is sitting on the kitchen counter. For lunch, my mom served us a plate of samples from Shabbat pots, but small ones, so we are properly hungry for the main event. And hungry we were!

When my mom headed for the shower, I quickly snuck into the kitchen, tore up a couple of thick chunks of challah, slathered it with matbucha, fried eggplants and a couple of schnitzels (...always schnitzel on Friday). I didn’t dare to touch other stuff, like the spicy fish stew I love so much — my mom would know right away that someone had dug into the pot. But schnitzels are piled high, and no one will notice if a couple are missing.

Decades later, the challah-schnitzel-matbucha-eggplant combo quickly became the most popular dish in Israel. Nowadays, it is widely imitated by many fast-food restaurants and is popular at home as well.

The iconic Shabbat sandwich is the sandwich to sink your teeth into for



Personal Chef Dalia Hemed can be reached at [daliahemed@msn.com](mailto:daliahemed@msn.com).

lunch on Fridays when people are hungry, before the big Friday night meal. This delicious sandwich is definitely comfort food, combining fried schnitzel, fried eggplant and matbucha in a challah roll topped with tahini and crunchy Israeli pickles. What’s not to love?

My take on this sandwich is much easier but still equally delicious. 🌍

## Challah Rolls

### Ingredients

- 2 cup warm water
- 3 Tbsp. dry active yeast
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 lb. bread flour
- 2 eggs at room temperature
- ⅓ cup oil
- 4 tsp. salt

For the egg wash

- 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 4 Tbsp. sesame seeds

### Directions

- Put the water, yeast and sugar in a glass and stir briefly. Let the mixture sit for 5-10 minutes until it visibly foams.
- Put flour in a bowl and make a hole in the center. Add yeast mixture and egg to the hole in the center and mix for 3 minutes, until well incorporated. Add oil and salt and mix for 8 minutes. Stop the mixer to scrape the sides, as needed.
- Remove bowl from mixer stand. Transfer dough into a lightly greased large bowl covered in plastic wrap and let stand at room temperature for 2 hours.
- Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Divide dough into 14 equal parts. Roll each piece into a ball, arrange on the side of the working surface and cover lightly with a towel.
- Working with one ball at a time, divide each ball into 3 equal parts and

roll them into strands of equal length. Connect the three strands at the top and braid them. When you’re done, tuck the ends under the roll and shape it nicely. Transfer to the parchment paper lined-baking sheet and continue with the rest of the rolls.

- Cover rolls with a paper towel and let stand until it is almost double in size, about 45 minutes.
- Heat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Mix egg yolk with olive oil and sugar, and gently brush the rolls. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.
- Bake the rolls for 15 minutes.
- Cool on a cooling rack.

## Matboucha (Moroccan tomato dip)

### Ingredients

- 2 cans 28 oz. diced tomatoes.
- 1 cup canola oil
- 12 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and thinly sliced
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- ½ cup oil
- 2 Tbsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. cumin
- ¼ tsp. turmeric

### Directions

- Drain the juice from the tomatoes. Set aside.
- Put ½ cup oil in a pot over medium heat. Add garlic and jalapeño and cook until just golden, then add tomatoes, sugar and salt. Bring to boil, reduce heat to low and cook on low simmer

for 2 hours (with no lid on), stirring occasionally. Adjust heat to keep at a low simmer, making sure the matbucha does not burn at the bottom of the pot.

- After tomatoes have been cooked for 2 hours, mix ½ cup oil, paprika, cumin and turmeric into the pot. Let tomatoes cook on low simmer for another 10 minutes, uncovered.

## Israeli-style schnitzel

### Ingredients

- 1 lb. skinless boneless chicken breast
- 1 C. all-purpose flour
- 1 C. cornstarch
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 2 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp. sweet chili sauce
- 1 Tbsp. brown mustard
- 1 Tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 3 Tbsp. water
- 1½ C. breadcrumbs
- canola oil for frying

### Directions

- Slice chicken breast into thin slices and get a few small schnitzels.
- Prepare three medium bowls and a tray to hold the prepared schnitzels.
- Put flour, cornstarch and ½ teaspoon paprika in the first bowl and mix it all together. In the second bowl, put two eggs, chili sauce, mustard and mayonnaise, and beat them lightly with ½ teaspoon salt. Put breadcrumbs, 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon paprika in the third bowl.
- Dip each chicken piece in the flour mix, shake off any excess flour,

dip in the egg and then in the bread-crumbs, making sure the schnitzel is nicely coated on all sides. Transfer to a tray and continue with the rest of the chicken.

- Line a baking sheet with a cooling rack.
- Heat 1/2 inch oil in a large nonstick pan over medium-high heat. When oil is hot, add a few schnitzels without overcrowding the pan and fry on both sides until golden and fully cooked, about 2-3 minutes per side. Transfer to the cooling rack and repeat with the rest of the schnitzel.

## Fried eggplant

### Ingredients

- 1 large eggplant
- 1 tsp. salt
- canola oil for frying

### Directions

- Peel eggplant (optional) and slice to ¼ inch-thick slices lengthwise. Arrange in a colander and sprinkle each layer with salt. Let eggplant stand in the colander over a large bowl for ½ hour. Dry with paper towels.
- Put ½ inch oil in a nonstick pan over medium heat. When oil is hot, add eggplant slices and fry on both sides until golden brown, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a cooling rack.

### Assembling the sandwich

- Slice the challah rolls open and generously spread with matboucha. Top with a few schnitzels with fried eggplant between them, then top with tahini and pickles.



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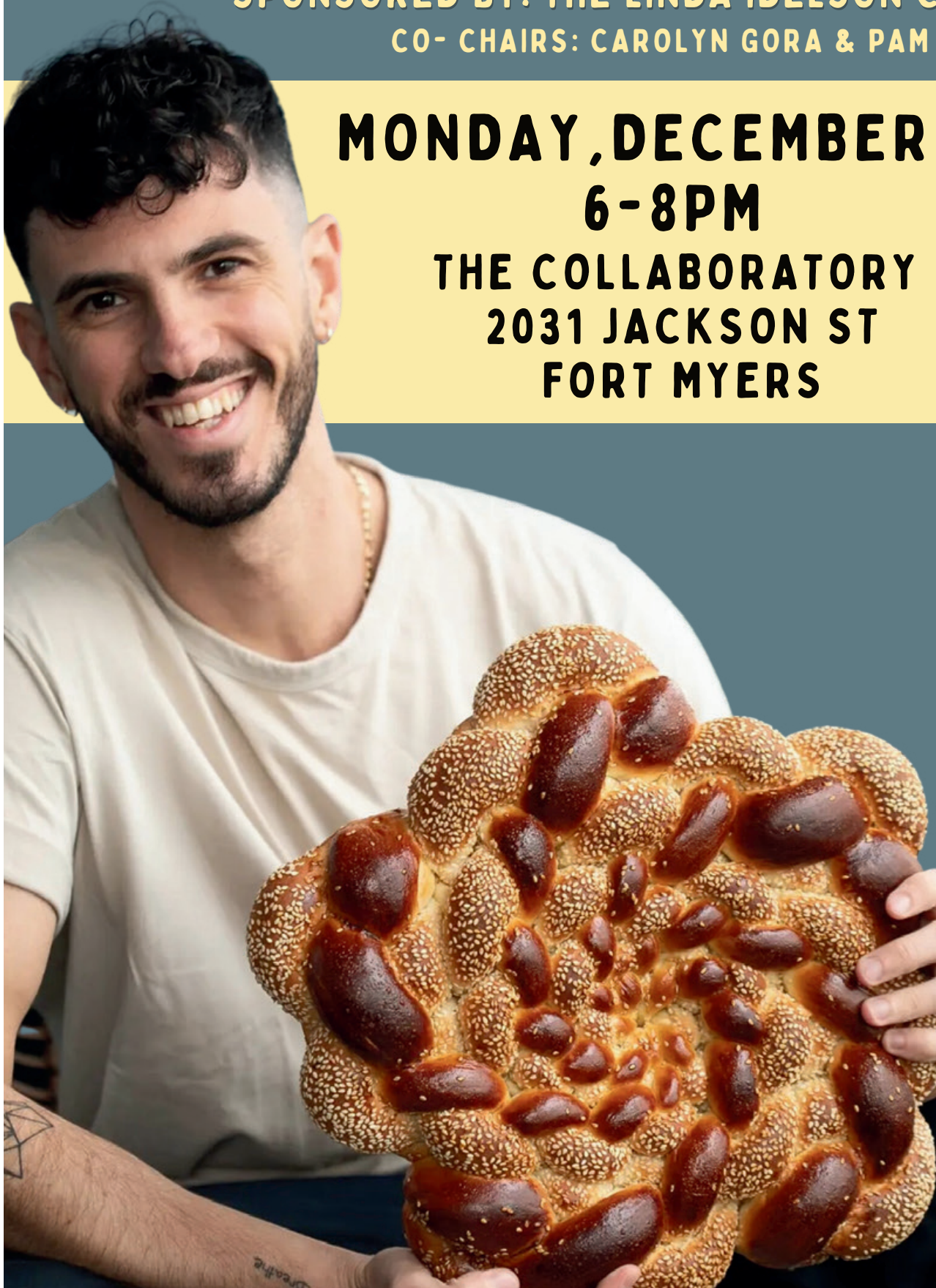
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# How to start your wine collection

By Jerry Greenfield, the Wine Whisperer

One thing that wine industry studies tell us is that Americans like instant gratification. Over 95% of wine purchased in the United States is consumed within a week — most of it is enjoyed within a day or two.

Winemakers are well aware of this fact, and most wines are intentionally made to be ready to drink fairly quickly. It also means that most people can plan a dinner party or other event and buy the wine the same day they expect their guests to show up.

Still, it's a nice idea to keep more than a few bottles on hand, and a nice variety, too, so that you and your guests can have some choices, and maybe even a second bottle during your get-togethers. Instead of frantically rushing to the local wine shop to pick up a bottle or two for the evening, you can have everything you need on hand. Starting a small collection is easy...and highly recommended. Here's how.

You don't need any sort of elaborate cellar or wine room to store those 30 or 40 bottles you'll want to keep conveniently available. You can invest \$200-\$300 in a decent under-counter wine refrigerator or just keep your bottles in a dark place that has a

constant temperature. The main enemies of wine are heat, light and vibration, so you don't want them resting in a cute little wine rack on that sunny windowsill.

Next, consider the assortment. A good small collection will have a selection to accommodate a wide variety of tastes: a few reds, whites, rosés and sparklers.

For the reds, consider first the weight or body of the wine, which is influenced by the tannins that come from the grape skins during crushing and fermentation. The more tannic the wine, the fuller the body. So, consider stocking some pinot noir, which will be on the lighter side, a merlot or two for those who prefer a medium-bodied quaff, and cabernet and syrah for folks who like big, bold, fruity wines.

On the white side, the idea of body or fullness still applies, but instead of tannin we have to consider acidity. Pinot grigio is perfect for an aperitif during pre-dinner socializing because of its light body and zippy acidity. Then, add a sauvignon blanc or two, which has higher acidity but also more pronounced flavors of grapefruit,



■ Jerry Greenfield

pineapple and citrus. Finally, of course, is chardonnay, the world's most popular white wine. Stock both oaked and unoaked versions, and you're sure to please all your guests.

Rosés are becoming more popular in the U.S. by the day, and there is an enormous range of styles to choose from. Judge your purchases by the color. The deeper the pink, the more body and fullness the wine will have.

Finally, there are the sparklers. You don't have to spend a fortune on champagne, though I do recommend having a bottle or two of reasonably priced versions on hand for the more special dinners and occasions. Prosecco, an enjoyable sparkler from Italy, has soared in popularity recently. Also consider crémant, another interesting sparkler made in France and Germany.

When you store those bottles, keep them on their sides, which moistens the corks and prevents leakage. And, as mentioned above, keep them in a dark place where the temperature doesn't vary much. The bottom of a closet is just fine. Then, invite your friends and offer them a selection that

will please every palate ... like these new discoveries:

**Secco-Bertani Red Blend Verona 2020 (\$30)** – The varietal is corvina, and the area is north and west of Venice. Remarkably, this wine is aged in chestnut casks instead of oak, which seems to provide a minerality on the nose and palate. The predominant flavor is raspberry, with hints of tobacco around the edges. WW 87-88

**McIntyre Chardonnay Santa Lucia 2019 (\$38)** – A very direct style, true to type, with dimensions of vanilla and peach, and a slightly oaky overtone. Pleasantly silky with a moderate yet pleasing finish. WW 86

**Abbazia di Novacella Grüner Veltiner Alto Adige 2019 (\$17)** – This region high in the hills of Northern Italy was formed as a glacial valley, so it's perfect for an interesting range of cooler-climate whites. This refreshing example is round on the palate, with graceful notes of green apple and peach. Easy to enjoy. WW 85

*Jerry Greenfield is the Wine Whisperer, a wine author, educator and consultant and author of two wine books. Read his blog and order his books at [www.winewhisperer.com](http://www.winewhisperer.com).*



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Keynote Speaker



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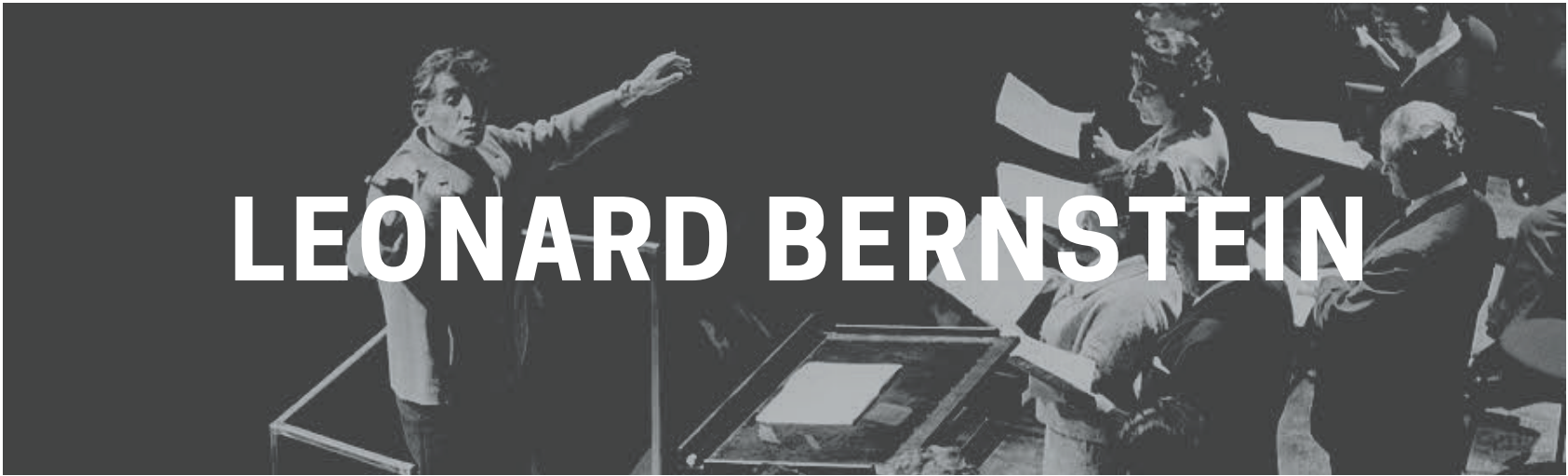
Maor Elbaz-Starinsky is the Consul General of Israel in Miami. A career diplomat since 2006, Maor is building and strengthening partnerships and coalitions for Israel with people and governments of Florida, Puerto Rico, and other states in the nation. Maor works together with the large and influential Jewish and Israeli communities in Florida, promoting interfaith cooperation and combating Antisemitism and racism.

Robert Stearns, a visionary leader is the founder of Eagles Wings'. Robert is co-chairman of the prayer initiative "Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem", promoting right understanding and relationship with Israel and the Jewish people. Interacting with Jewish and Evangelical leaders, Robert's goal is to bring Evangelicals to better understand and pray for the historical, biblical, religious, and political issues surrounding God's Holy Land and all who live there.

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Jamie Bernstein is an author, speaker and filmmaker. In addition to writing many articles and concert narrations, she has traveled extensively, speaking about music and, in particular, about her father, Leonard Bernstein. Jamie’s film documentary, *Crescendo: The Power of Music* has won numerous prizes and is now viewable on iTunes. Jamie’s memoir, *Famous Father Girl*, was published by HarperCollins in June 2018, and was released in paperback in June 2019. To learn more about Jamie’s multifaceted life, visit [jamiebernstein.net](http://jamiebernstein.net).

Jamie’s presentation will divide Leonard Bernstein’s life into four categories: conductor, composer, educator and activist-humanitarian. There will be accompanying audio and video clips, as well as images of items culled from his vast archive at The Library of Congress. The presentation begins and ends with several Bernstein hits performed by a local singer and pianist. The evening concludes with a Q&A with Jamie.

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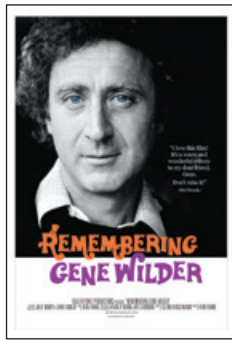


#### DEAD SEA GUARDIAN

Thursday February 1st at 7:15pm

The Dead Sea - the lowest place on earth and one of the wonders of the world - is dying. Three historic enemies join forces on a heroic journey to stop this catastrophe and save the Dead Sea from disappearing.

75 MINUTES • ENGLISH AND HEBREW • ISRAEL • DOCUMENTARY

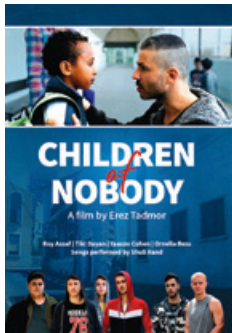


#### REMEMBERING GENE WILDER

Sunday February 4th at 3:00pm

"In this captivating biographical drama, follow the remarkable life of the legendary actor and comedian, Gene Wilder. From his early struggles to his iconic collaborations with Mel Brooks and his unforgettable portrayal of Willy Wonka, the film takes viewers on a heartfelt journey through the man behind the laughter, revealing the complexities and brilliance of a true Hollywood icon."

92 MINUTES • ENGLISH • UNITED STATES • DOCUMENTARY  
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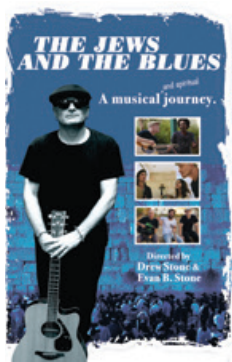


#### CHILDREN OF NOBODY

Tuesday February 6th at 7:15pm

In a heartfelt drama based on a true story, troubled boys living on the outskirts of Israeli society unite to protect a shelter for at-risk youth, led by the compassionate surrogate mother Margalit. When tragedy hits, Jackie, her right-hand man, must defend the home from corrupt developers and navigate social worker scrutiny. With Jackie's guidance, the young men learn to take responsibility for their lives and preserve their refuge, shedding light on the often overlooked and neglected voices at society's periphery.

108 MINUTES • HEBREW WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES • ISRAEL • DRAMA



#### THE JEWS AND THE BLUES

Thursday February 8th at 7:15pm

This new documentary by filmmaker, musician, and talk show host Drew Stone takes us on a musical adventure to understand how the blues can be found in a number of Israeli cultures, including Ethiopian, Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, and others. Learn how the blues ties Jews together all over the world.

67 MINUTES • ENGLISH • UNITED STATES • DOCUMENTARY



#### LOST TRANSPORT

Tuesday February 13th at 7:15pm

In the spring of 1945 a train deporting hundreds of Jewish prisoners gets stranded near a small German village occupied by the Red Army. Condemned to each other and in a context of deep mistrust, desperation and revenge, an unexpected friendship emerges between Russian sniper Vera, village girl Winnie and Jewish-Dutch woman Simone.

100 MINUTES • DUTCH, GERMAN, AND RUSSIAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES  
NETHERLANDS, GERMANY, AND LUXEMBOURG • DRAMA, HISTORY, WAR



#### ISRAEL SWINGS FOR GOLD

Thursday February 15th at 7:15pm

In 2021, Israel's baseball team competed in the Olympics for the first time. With no media allowed in Tokyo's Olympic Village, the players record their own experiences. Mostly newly minted Israelis, they log unexpected battles against anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. Victory for Israel comes on the playing field, even if not on the podium.

78 MINUTES • ENGLISH AND HEBREW • UNITED STATES • SPORT DOCUMENTARY  
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#### MATCHMAKING

Tuesday February 20th at 7:15pm

An entertaining and good-hearted romantic comedy that gives a light Orthodox twist to "Romeo and Juliet".

96 MINUTES • HEBREW • ISRAEL • COMEDY

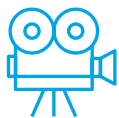


#### FAREWELL, MISTER HAFFMANN

Thursday February 22nd at 7:15pm

"Mr. Haffmann" is a gripping World War II drama set in Nazi-occupied France, centered on a Jewish tailor who risks everything to forge identities and documents, helping others escape the horrors of the Holocaust. The film explores moral choices, sacrifice, and the enduring spirit of hope in the face of unimaginable adversity.

115 MINUTES • FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES • FRANCE, BELGIUM • DRAMA



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## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29



### IMORDECAI

Sunday February 25th at 3:00pm

A Holocaust survivor, born and raised in a different time, must face the realities of modern world. When confronted with an unfamiliar object, an iPhone, will Mordecai be able to fit into a world that has changed so much around him?

102 MINUTES • ENGLISH • UNITED STATES • COMEDY AND DRAMA



### THE SHADOW OF THE DAY

Tuesday February 27th at 7:15pm

Italy, after the promulgation of the racial laws (1938). Luciano, a Fascist-abiding restaurateur, nonetheless believes he can still live by his own rules inside his business. However, everything changes when Anna, a girl with a dangerous secret, starts to work at his restaurant.

125 MINUTES • ITALIAN AND FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES ITALY • ROMANCE, DRAMA



### THE CATSKILLS

Thursday February 29th at 7:15pm

With a trove of lost-and-found archival footage and a cast of characters endowed with the gift of gab, "The Catskills" journeys into the storied mountain getaway north of New York City that served as refuge for Jewish immigrants fleeing poverty as well as a lavish playground for affluent Jewish families. As bungalow colony proprietors, guests, waiters, comedians, hoteliers, and beauticians share colorful tales of Catskill farms, boarding houses, and luxury resorts, they paint a picture of vibrant American Jewish life and culture in the 20th century.

85 MINUTES • ENGLISH • UNITED STATES • DOCUMENTARY

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Children of Nobody	Tuesday, Feb. 6th • 7:15PM
The Jews and the Blues	Thursday, Feb. 8th • 7:15PM
Lost Transport	Tuesday, Feb. 13th • 7:15PM
Israel Swings for Gold	Thursday, Feb. 15th • 7:15PM
Matchmaking	Tuesday, Feb. 20th • 7:15PM
Farewell Mister Haffmann	Thursday, Feb. 22nd • 7:15PM
Imordecai	Sunday, (Matinee) Feb. 25th • 3:00PM
The Shadow of the Day	Tuesday, Feb. 27th • 7:15PM
The Catskills	Thursday Feb. 29th • 7:15PM

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# We must raise our voices in support of Israel

By Rabbi Nicole Luna

It's only been two days since Hamas brutally attacked Israel and, yet, I fear the war will be ongoing even when you read this. During this time of heartbreak, we so desperately want to help, support and show solidarity with Israel.

One concrete thing we can do is talk to our neighbors and non-Jewish friends. Share your concern and your love for Israel with others.

Let them hear our voices — not the voices of the media, which too often are biased against Israel, and not even the voices of Israeli politicians with whom we may or may not agree.



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

No one needs to be an expert in Israeli politics to say, "I'm upset that Israelis were murdered in their homes." "I'm disgusted that the Palestinian leadership isn't condemning the brutal slaughter of innocents." "I can't imagine what it's like to not let your children play outside." When someone asks you about your weekend, say "Friday evening, I lit candles and prayed for Israel."

I do not expect anyone to give history lessons or political discourses on Israel. But the more we share our personal concern for Israel, the more we combat the mistaken impression

**The best advocacy for Israel is one that transcends politics; the best advocacy is a personal story about who we are as Jews**

that Israel is a colonialist and imperialist entity, and the more we showcase Israel's humanity and guarantee its survival.

We each have something to say, a personal story, an intimate connection. This is the time to find our truth and

share it. Why do you feel a connection to Israel? How does Israel make you proud? How does Israel bring you closer to your Judaism? The best advocacy for Israel is one that transcends politics; the best advocacy is a personal story about who we are as Jews.

I don't know what the situation will be in Israel by the time this issue of the paper comes out. I can only pray for peace and a swift victory. But, alas, we know that we have had to defend and support Israel against her enemies again and again. Let us raise our voices to those around us, explain why we love Israel, share why we're horrified by the vicious attack from Hamas and speak about Israel from a place of love, connection and hope. 🌍

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# Critical thinking

By Rabbi Bruce Diamond

For many years, I taught Interdisciplinary Department Studies upper college courses at FGCU. A key component in most of these courses was developing critical thinking skills necessary in forming social ethics and civic engagement goals and strategies.

We often used Gerald Nosich’s textbook on critical thinking, “Learning to Think Things Through.” In it, Nosich offers a useful short definition for critical thinking: “thinking about what you’re thinking about.”

We learn to ask key questions about what we are thinking such as “why am I thinking this?,” “how do I know this is true?,” “what preconceptions are coloring my thinking?,” “when do I have enough information to form a conclusion?” and “am I prepared to act on my conclusion?”

Above all, critical thinking is learning to think for yourself and avoiding “group think” (“everybody knows that...”) and arguments from authority (“we’ve always done it this way.”) Of course, it’s important to develop consensus in a group and to understand how a particular matter was handled



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

in the past but there is no substitute for taking the personal responsibility to think things through in a disciplined objective way before choosing a course of action that will have a real effect on you or others.

For sure, most of the little choices that we make all the time are hardly important at all (Cheerios or cornflakes, the red tie or the blue one, where to go

for dinner, etc.) don’t require critical thinking. People who spend too much time thinking about these insignificant things are generally considered obsessive types.

However, as Hannah Arendt observed, critical thinking is essential in what she called “borderline situations” where the choices we make contribute to real and serious consequences. The author of “Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil,” Arendt observed that we are capable of causing great harm without knowing it at the time by “going along to get along,” mindlessly obeying authority, trying to be accepted by a group we judge to have a higher status,

and other shallow reasons. Eventually, after the terrible outcomes and our mindless role in them become evident, we may be surprised, even stunned, but mostly bewildered as to why others now consider us bad people or even monsters.

A famous midrash (Bereshit Rabba 38) teaches that the young Abraham used critical thinking skills to arrive at the existence of only one God. Maimonides (Mishneh Torah: Laws of Idolatry 3) restates this midrash

Deep thought requires both the courage to intellectually let go of the comfort of the familiar, and an even greater courage to act on what you’ve discovered.

as young Abraham employing Aristotelian principles to renounce idolatry and paganism. It was probably in the second grade in yeshivah that

we were taught how young Abraham shattered his father’s idols after some deep thought about how they could not be gods.

In any event, all the versions of this story point to the same thing: Jewish monotheism is the product of critical thinking and is not dependant on miraculous revelation. It results from looking behind the surface obvious for the truth. Deep thought requires both the courage to intellectually let go of the comfort of the familiar, and an even greater courage to act on what you’ve discovered. In that Abraham folktale, his critical thinking and subsequent actions get him tossed into King Nimrod’s furnace. In real life, it can be the stuff of all different kinds of martyrdom.

In a country riven by mindless factionalism, being a critical thinker and sorting things out for yourself is bound to provoke all sides and leave you in a wilderness of your own creation. But we Jews have come to understand that to find truth, the wilderness is where you have to go, right?

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



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# Responding to the attack on Israel

By Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

Last month, we heard the blasts of the shofar. Among those trumpet calls is one known as Shevarim, the shatterer.

Then, before we even completed our Tishrei cycle of observances of teshuvah and subsequent celebration, our lives were shattered.

Israel, our homeland, our heart, was heinously attacked without warning.

While transfixed before video screens and smartphones to horrific events unfolding before our eyes and after checking in with loved ones here and in Israel, many of us responded to the myriad appeals for help with our checkbooks and credit cards. With each passing day, the needs became greater. For many, the response became greater. For others, the continual calls for assistance became more than we could bear.

Compassion fatigue and donor fatigue crept into our psyche. We might ask; How much more can I be expected to give?

The answer of faith, is more, more and more. Each person, the Jewish tradition teaches, is a world, a unique reflection of God. You have the power to build your world.

What do we do with the appeals for help that arrive every day? We may not be able to give as much to each as we wish, but we can pay attention to them. We can refuse to be coarsened. It is evil to give in to moral despair. We cannot stop up our ears against the cries around us just because we feel we just cannot listen anymore.

A better response might be to heed the promise of our High Holiday Machzor: "repentance, prayer,



■ Rabbi  
Sunny  
Schnitzer

and charity reverse evil." The Jewish people are confronting, again, a great evil.

Too many Jews confuse the easy part of Yom Kippur with the hard part. The hard part seems to be spending the day in fasting and prayer, reflecting on our actions in the year gone by. But that is the easy part.

The hard part comes after Yom Kippur. Have we changed the way we move through the world? Did we search our

souls, merely beat our breasts or even sit cynically in the pews echoing the thoughts of the evil son of the Pesach story and say to ourselves, "What is this to me?" The central prayer of Yom Kippur, the *Unetaneh Tokef*, graphically reminds us that the fate of a human being is unknowable. *Mi Yichyeh* (who will live)?

But, perhaps, we can make a difference in how we will live. Not just for ourselves but for others as well. Do

we carry the tragedy of other human beings in our hearts, in our willingness to help or have we moved on?

Our tradition demands our attention even when we are weary, even when we are unsure. In this time of crisis, this must be the year where you give more and do more despite the economic

pressures we all face and the time constraints we all deal with. If we do so, then we will lead lives truly worthy of blessing.

*Im Eshkacheich Yerushalayim!*

"If I forget you Jerusalem, may my right hand forget how to function. May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not place Jerusalem above my highest joy." Psalm 137

**Do we carry the  
tragedy of other  
human beings  
in our hearts, in  
our willingness  
to help or have  
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# If you want to be happier, find a place to show up

By Rabbi Marc Sack

Maybe it's the material I'm inclined to read, maybe it's the things my members give me to read, but there is a cluster of themes that comes up repeatedly. On Oct. 3, the *New York Times* ran an op-ed, "Why So Many Americans Are Losing Trust in Science." During the holidays, a congregant shared with me the blog post of Scott Galloway, a professor of Marketing at NYU, entitled "Losing My Religion." (Galloway's mother is Jewish, by the way.)

In the spring of this year, Jessica Grose, an opinion writer for the *Times* (and Jewish), ran a series of four articles on how Americans are dropping out of religious life. And, a few months before that, *Tablet*, the online Jewish magazine, published the story "Aliens: Jews of all types are turning away from institutions" (April 2, 2023).

I am not being simplistic when I suggest that the lack of trust in institutions and the decline of involvement in religious life are linked. David Brooks wrote in *The Atlantic*, "Social trust is



■ Rabbi Marc Sack

the confidence that other people will do what they ought to do most of the time ... Social trust is a generalized faith in the people of your community. It consists of smaller faiths. It begins with the assumption that we are interdependent, our destinies linked. It continues with the assumption that we share the same moral values. We share a sense of what is the right thing to do in different situations." A few pages later, he wrote, "It's not clear that there is more betrayal in America than there used to be – but there are fewer faithful supports around people than there used to be" ("America Is Having a Moral Convulsion," October 2020).

Americans are losing trust in institutions and other people (also in that Brooks article) because we are showing up less at synagogue and church and Rotary and every other group to which we used to belong. We have fewer "faithful supports" — friendships, fellow congregants, neighborhood gatherings, volunteer gatherings

— than we used to. And the loss of in-person gatherings during which we talk with a wide variety of people is leading to a broad loss of trust. We are lonelier and angrier at the same time. And we are doing this to ourselves.

By the way, it is easy to point to the internet and smartphones as the perpetrators of this breakdown, but the problem began decades before the first mobile phone. In 1979, Christopher Lasch wrote "The Culture of

...the loss of in-person gatherings during which we talk with a wide variety of people is leading to a broad loss of trust.

Narcissism." We've been isolating and self-absorbed for a long time. The internet and smartphones just threw gasoline on the fire.

The only solution is a hard one: show up. Go to synagogue. Join a club. Volunteer at a place where there are others working with you. Talk to your neighbors. Don't do it just once, do it regularly.

My wife and I lived in a neighborhood with its own Fourth of July parade. The kids decorated their bikes with red, white and blue streamers and rode through the neighborhood. Parents walked alongside them or stood in front of their houses and waved and talked with neighbors. Do this. Have a neighborhood block party. Find places to show up.

Here's one place to show up: Five congregations, including those at Temple Judea and Temple Beth El, are joining together for an interfaith Thanksgiving service on Sunday, Nov. 19, 4 p.m. at the Thomas A. Edison Congregational Church, 1619 Llewellyn Drive. It will be a good place to meet and sing together with your neighbors and some people you do not know.

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers. 🌍

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# “Endowed with days”

By Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

In the Torah portion, Chayei Sarah, that we learn from Nov. 5 to Nov. 12, we read of Sarah’s passing, Abraham’s purchase of the Cave of the Machpela in Hebron for her burial place and Abraham’s dispatching of his trusted servant Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac. All of these events took place when Abraham was at a well-advanced age. In fact, the Torah tells us, “And Abraham was old (zakein), well endowed with days.”

The Midrash comments, “Some people are old but not endowed with days; others are endowed with days but not old. In this instance we find a person possessing both qualities.”

What does this tell us about our forefather Abraham’s greatness? A



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

zakein, an elderly person, is defined as one who has acquired wisdom. By studying Torah, he has learned a great deal. The zakein has achieved a high level of perfection of his soul.

“Endowed with days,” however, refers to a person whose every day is perfect and whole. Not only does he perform the mitzvot properly, but he does so every single day of his life.

Through his actions, the days themselves are elevated. He illuminates his environment by the commandments he observes, and he raises his surroundings to a higher state of perfection.

The terms “old” and “endowed with days” refer to two types of people and, indeed, to two types of tzadikim. Some

**He illuminates his environment by the commandments he observes, and he raises his surroundings to a higher state of perfection.**

righteous people are concerned only with themselves and their own pursuit of excellence. By toiling greatly in the study of Torah, they attain the level of zakein, but the people around them and the world at large are ignored. Time

and effort are devoted solely to their own concerns.

Other tzadikim turn outward to disseminate their light upon their surroundings, devoting themselves to each and every person with whom they come in contact. These righteous people forget about themselves entirely, selflessly ignoring personal considerations for the sake of others.

Abraham, however, simultaneously embodied both of these qualities. “And Abraham was old, well endowed with days.” While managing to achieve the highest level of personal perfection, Abraham sought to perfect his surroundings as well, thereby illuminating the entire world with holiness. 🌍

## The best things in the worst times

By Rabbi Solomon Agin

When we start out on a personal venture, there is no guarantee that we will succeed. But the one thing we can be absolutely sure of is that unless we persist and endure, we certainly never will succeed.

Whether beginning a career, starting a business or establishing a family, we need to have the kind of faith that will carry us through until we reach our final goals. It is faith that must sustain us, not for days or weeks or months but for years. As we look about us and see individuals who have succeeded in their personal lives — and particularly those who have resolved personal problems — we also find them to be people who were not short on spirit but rather long on faith in themselves.



■ Rabbi Solomon Agin

**It is faith that must sustain us, not for days or weeks or months but for years.**

In Westminster Abbey in London, there are monuments to those who performed great services to England. Most of them were very famous people like the Duke of Wellington, Queen Elizabeth and Alfred Lord Tennyson. However, there is one inscription that is often overlooked. Its words contain a great deal of inspiration: “In the year 1653 when all things sacred were throughout the nation either demolished or profaned, Sir Robert Shirley Baronet found this church, whose singular praise it is to have done the best things in the worst time.”

These are times when all of us are pressed, and it is precisely in those times that we have to be long on spirit and full in faith. 🌍

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# We are strong

By Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

Just a few weeks ago on Shabbat and Simchat Torah and 50 years to the day of the Yom Kippur war in 1973, Hamas terrorists broke through the Gaza border fence and infiltrated Israel by land, by sea and by air. The number of Israelis murdered and injured by Hamas terrorists is staggering. Civilians and military personnel were taken hostage in Gaza. The stories of Israelis, young and old, being brutally targeted is unspeakable and the images of these crimes has been difficult to see, but we must not look away.

Shortly after thousands of rockets overwhelmed the iron dome and began falling across Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu immediately announced that this is not another “special operation,” we are at war. And this is a war the likes of which we have not seen in 50 years. With armed Hamas terrorists firing indiscriminately into crowds, entering homes, killing civilians and taking Jewish families, women and children away, we must face the realization that this is nothing short of a pogrom evoking terrible memories from our past during the Nazi reign in Europe.

Hamas has blatantly committed war crimes, proudly displaying videos of their cowardly acts on social media. As we witness our brothers and sisters in Israel fighting to stay safe, to protect their fellow citizens and to defend their country from multiple assaults, we here in the diaspora share their pain and suffering from thousands of miles away. For many of us, feelings of helplessness and powerlessness are pervasive.

What can we do? While anytime is a good time for prayer, at this moment in time, more is needed from us. We must act. This is a time of



■ Rabbi Lawrence Dermer

**This is a time of existential crisis, a moment when Israel’s very survival is at risk.**

existential crisis, a moment when Israel’s very survival is at risk. This struggle is our struggle. Hatikvah, the Hope of Israel is the Hope of Jews and all good people of faith the world over.

Consequently, I encourage everyone to support Israel in any way possible by making a contribution to the organization of your choice.

Secondly, write to your elected officials letting them know in no uncertain terms that we do not support our administration unfreezing assets or loosening sanctions on Iran. This is a nation that supports Hamas and Hezbollah and a nation whose leadership openly espouses it’s efforts and it’s desires to completely annihilate Israel.

Let’s also write and tell our elected officials we refuse to send our tax dollars to the Palestinians that are intended to provide humanitarian relief unless the Palestinian leadership adheres to its former pledge of not financially rewarding the families of suicide bombers.

On Simchat Torah, we unrolled our entire Torah with great joy, not knowing that the following Saturday morning we would awaken to the horrors of war in Israel for the first time in 50 years. As we chanted from the final Parsha of V’zot Habracaha, we all heard the last few words in our Torah that reminded us how Hashem delivered us from Pharaoh and the bondage of servitude in Egypt and led us to the Promised Land.

The final word in the Torah: Yisrael!

May G-d continue to protect and watch over us now as He has done throughout history. We will win this war. We are strong.

Am Yisrael Chai!  
Rabbi Lawrence Dermer serves Shalom Life Center in Fort Myers

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Photos courtesy of Mike Shapiro



## TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Fort Myers

Allison Fego, Religious School Coordinator

After a busy holiday season, our religious school was back in full force. We had a beautiful sukkah in which we celebrated Sukkot at the beginning of the month. All our families gathered under the sukkah for tefilah and talked about what they had been up to over the holidays.

The classes made decorations for the sukkah. Morah Brianna's class made and hung beautiful welcome signs and then got a chance to shake the lulav and etrog while saying the prayer. Morah Helen's class made Star of David dreamcatchers, which were stunning and super creative. They also got to take part in shaking the lulav and etrog. Moreh Sam's class made painted mad hung compact discs that shined under the sukkah. Our confirmation

students had an activity where they had to build their own sukkahs with balsam wood and palm fronds. It was nice having all our children take part in celebrating Sukkot.

While the children were in classes, they were busy learning about Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Hakarot Hatov and their Hebrew letters/words. They all participated in the congregation's Simchat Torah celebration, where they got to witness the unrolling of the Torah and see how we read from the end of the torah. During our service, we also welcomed our new students who joined our school this year by being consecrated and given certificates and mini torahs. We said prayers, sang songs and wrapped our new students in the Torah, which was an amazing sight.




Our kids made shofars and blew them like real shofars.

When Rabbi Luna read about Noah and bringing the animals into the ark, we brought the animals to TBE. Not only did our religious schools' students and families bring pets but so did members of our congregation. Everyone got a chance to introduce their family pet and then Rabbi Luna made a special blessing for all the animals. Seeing all the different animals was super cute and special for everyone.

At the end of the month, we had our first Parent's Night Out at LYNQ. While the parents got to spend time together and have a chance to schmooze and eat a delicious meal, the children were in

the Dubin center observing and participating in a magic show. The kids had a blast while watching and learning how to do magic. There is no doubt they took what they learned and did it at home. A busy month, indeed, and so much more to come in the next couple months before winter break.

If you are interested in our upcoming events or in possibly joining religious school, please feel free to contact Allison Fego at [religiousschool@templebethel.com](mailto:religiousschool@templebethel.com) or call the office. We are a bright and growing school and would love to have your family become part of it. 



Rabbi Luna and her confirmation students

## The Jewish Federation Seeks Volunteers with Foreign Language Skills.

The Jewish Family Services division of the Jewish Federation has found that clients with limited English language skills encounter difficulty accessing social services otherwise available in our community. We would like to help break this language barrier.

If you speak languages besides English, we invite you to serve as an occasional interpreter, by phone or in person, for our clients, when they communicate with various social service agencies.

**Do you speak**

**Spanish, Russian, French, Creole, Haitian, Mandarin, etc.?**

**Please share your gift of language with the needy in our area.**



**Send your response to Jodi Cohen at 239.481.4449 x1 or [jodicohen@jfedlcc.org](mailto:jodicohen@jfedlcc.org). She will contact you as needed. Thank you.**



Tefilah morning prayers during Sukkot



Students painted rocks with kind sayings during Yom Kippur junior congregation.



Religious School students sing L'Shana Tova at Neilah services



TEMPLE JUDEA PRESCHOOL  
Fort Myers  
Suki Kelly, Preschool Director

October was a busy month for Temple Judea Preschool. We celebrated Sukkot by reading stories and eating snacks and pizza in the sukkah. The children went out to decorate throughout the week and our Tiny Toddler class built their own sukkah. The children fingerpainted the walls and placed paper leaves on the top for the roof. The morahs took pictures of the children sitting on a picnic bench and placed them in their little sukkah. Children loved seeing themselves in their little hut.


Our school garden is starting to thrive. During the week of planting in the garden, the children planted radishes, green beans and tomatoes. We are excited to harvest and try all the vegetables we planted in the coming months.

On Oct. 27, we hosted our annual Fall Fest trunk or treat event. Funds raised from the trunk or treat help us purchase many items for the children and allows us to maintain our preschool. It was a great success, as always, and we loved seeing our current and immediate alumni families. We saw some really wonderful and unique decorations this year and are excited to see more next year! Thank you to the Lee County Sheriff's Office for responding with the Ice Cream Response Truck!

On Oct. 31, the children enjoyed a yummy gelato treat during the day from Gelato-Go. Thank you, Gelato-Go, for such an authentic experience! We can't wait to have them back.

This year, for our silent auction, our goal is to raise enough money to update our playground equipment. We are looking to purchase a new playset and a few permanent fixtures that allow children to explore art and music. If anyone is interested in sponsoring our playground, please reach out to us. Any help is appreciated!

While our Pre-K building is under construction, DNA Academics will hold Mommy and Me classes with Ms. Lisa as the Mommy and Me teacher. It is a wonderful opportunity for families to make new friends and for babies to interact with their peers. DNA Academics will make a donation to TJP from the program tuition. We are so grateful to them. If you are interested in the class, please reach out to DNA Academics at 239-427-3037 or shanon.a@dnaacademics.com.

We currently have a few openings for the Tiny Toddler and Pre-K class and very limited openings for the Terrific Twos class. If you are interested in registering or coming in for a tour, please reach out to Suki Kelly at templejudeapreschool@gmail.com or 239-482-1121. 

TEMPLE JUDEA RELIGIOUS SCHOOL  
Fort Myers  
Abbie Grossman, Religious School Coordinator

In September, Temple Judea Religious School embraced the essence of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Tot Shabbat with our young learners at the heart of it all.


During Rosh Hashanah, our children's participation in services was a touching moment. They courageously recited the Shema, reminding us of the beauty of childlike faith. Rosh Hashanah also brought the sweetness of apples and honey, symbolizing hope and introspection.

We delved into Yom Kippur, teaching our students the significance of atonement and forgiveness. They learned that this holy day involves seeking forgiveness not only from God but also from one another.


In our Tot Shabbat gathering, we focused on "Modeh Ani," a simple yet profound prayer of gratitude. Our

young ones learned the power of acknowledging blessings and saying "thank you." Through stories and crafts, they discovered the beauty of gratitude.

As we move forward into the upcoming months, we find ourselves settling into a routine of weekly religious school sessions with the high holidays behind us. With the anticipation of Hanukkah on the horizon, we look forward to the warmth, light and joy that this festival of lights will bring to our Temple Judea Religious School community. Stay tuned for more exciting adventures in Jewish learning and celebration in the weeks to come!

To learn more or get involved in our programs, contact Abbie Grossman at 239-770-4546 or tjswfledu@gmail.com. 

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## BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

Sanibel

(773) 251-8862 • [www.batyam.org](http://www.batyam.org)

Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer has designated the theme for Bat Yam Temple of the Islands this year as “Restoring Our Spirits – Restoring Our Home.” It was in this spirit we celebrated Rosh Hashanah evening and morning services at Peace Lutheran Church. Rabbi Schnitzer blew the shofar to proclaim the new year. We heard meaningful readings from members of the congregation. A reception afterwards was hosted by Annette Pacyga and Wendy Harriman.

Later that day, we gathered on Fulgur Street Beach on Sanibel to observe Tashlich. Rabbi Schnitzer played his guitar and sang as we whispered our sins into conch shells and cast them into the water.

When we celebrated Shabbat Shuvah, the rabbi explained the word Teshuvah literally means to turn. We

sang Hashiveinu, the first verse of which is “Cause us to return to you Adonai.” The new year is the time for returning, returning to our best selves, returning to our roots. The synchronicity which life sometimes gifts us happened that evening when President Janice Block-Chaddock announced that on Oct. 20, we would be returning to our beloved Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel for the first time since Hurricane Ian.

So, for Bat Yam, this season is not only a spiritual return but a physical return. We are returning to our home on Sanibel Island!

We met at Peace Lutheran Church for the Kol Nidre service and the Yom Kippur service. As we have done since 2017, a part of the Yom Kippur day’s experience has been “Our Congregants’ Hour,” which takes place



Bat Yam's Sukkah/Sukkot with Rabby Sunny Schnitzer

immediately after the conclusion of the morning service. Each year, three congregants offer personal reflections on their hopes, dreams and perspectives on Judaism and Yom Kippur. The speakers this year were Michael Hochschild, Yaffah Schnitzer and Dr. Mort Tavel.

On Sept. 28, many congregants joined Rabbi Schnitzer and other clergy and city leaders at St. Michael’s on Sanibel to mark the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Ian.

The next day was Sukkot. Again, congregants arrived to help decorate a Sukkah and celebrate at the home of two of our congregants.

On Oct. 6, we were once again at Peace Lutheran Church, with congregants and clergy from Bat Yam Temple of the Islands, Peace Lutheran Church and Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ. We gathered to celebrate Simchat Torah, the annual cycle of reading the Torah. Rabbi Schnitzer led us through the text, pointing out highlights common to our faith traditions and, as always, we enjoyed food and the added bonus of live music afterwards.

### Calling all foodies!

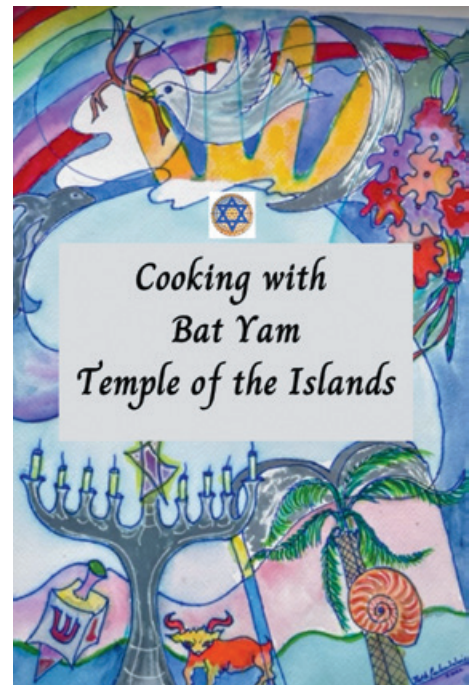
Speaking of food, with the taste of the traditional food of the High Holy Days, the round challah, the apples and honey, pomegranates and the kugels fresh in our memories, Bat Yam announced a forthcoming cookbook, “Cooking with Bat Yam Temple of the Islands.”

The genesis of the cookbook came from an idea after our Passover meal, which was catered by the Bat Yam Seder Committee. The 50 guests raved about the meal and requested recipes. This cookbook delivers. You will find chopped liver, chopped herring, charoset, chicken soup with matzo balls, brisket, different kinds of kugel, and many other dishes which extend beyond the Passover meal.

The authors of the cookbook, led by co-chairs Riv Swartz and Dr. Mort Tavel, also extend beyond the original committee. Friends and families have contributed their recipes handed down from generation to generation. As with many other cultures, Jews celebrate, mourn and share around the dining

room table. Food is always a part of our ongoing story. But there is more to the cookbook than treasured recipes. The proceeds are going toward rebuilding our Temple and community after the ravages of Hurricane Ian. Our wish is to continue providing weekly Shabbat services and observe holidays throughout the entire Jewish calendar, High Holy Days services, Torah study classes, numerous adult education programs as well as raising money for local charities.

Bat Yam’s first cookbook was published in 2007 and is still being used today. This cookbook is a proud product of the next generation of Bat Yam



congregants. Beth Weiss, an artist and member of the congregation, created the beautiful cover. The cost is \$10, and the book will be ready for sale for Hanukkah or as Christmas stocking stuffers, birthdays and housewarming gifts.

Cookbooks will be available at all Temple services. Books may also be bought by sending a request with a check to Bat Yam Temple of the Islands, P.O. Box 84, Sanibel, FL 33957. For more information, please email [batyamsanibel@gmail.com](mailto:batyamsanibel@gmail.com). The book can be shipped directly to family and friends at a minimal cost. Once you open the book, you will experience the aroma of traditional foods which feed the soul and nourish the body. 🌿

## Marcia Can Help

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

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



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

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



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TEMPLE BETH EL  
Fort Myers

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

Our High Holiday season began with a Selichot service extraordinary! In a sacred manner, volunteers transformed our seven torah scrolls from their usual covers to pristine white ones. With our choir, Cantor Marshall Portnoy and the spiritual leadership of Rabbi Luna, observing the High Holidays in our own space was something to love, especially after being displaced by Hurricane Ian last year.

Three-part class

Rabbi Luna presents a new three-part class: “Jewish Answers to Life’s Biggest Questions.” Each class stands alone. You may attend one, two or all three classes. These free classes will be live at the temple on Thursdays, Nov. 2, 9 and 16 at 5 p.m. Please register in advance.

Choir

Have a nice voice? Love to sing? Our choir practices Thursday evenings. Please email your interest and contact information to [info@templebethel.com](mailto:info@templebethel.com).

Bar mitzvah

Ethan Boxer will be called to the bimah as a bar mitzvah on Nov. 4. Mazel tov to the proud family on Ethan’s accomplishment.

Men’s Club

It’s a busy month and our Men’s Club is having fun! The first of a three-part Music Lecture Series begins live in the Dubin Center Nov. 5 at noon. This first session, The Beatles: A Global Sensation, will follow a journey from Liverpool to worldwide stardom. Then, on Nov. 12, join Men’s Club at 3 p.m. for some Top Golf fun. Please register for these events.

Book signing

Yashir Koach to Rabbi Barras on the publishing of his book, “A Reason to Rise.” He will be having a book signing event on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 7-9 p.m. in the Dubin Center.

Kristallnacht program

Eighty-five years since the Night of Broken Glass, antisemitism is real in 2023 in the U.S. and abroad. Let us remember and learn together during



Temple Beth El's brand-new and most beautiful Sukkah took place this year.

our Kristallnacht program on Thursday, Nov. 9, 7-9 p.m. on Zoom.

Ladies who Lunch

Our Sisterhood “Ladies who Lunch” is Nov. 13, 12:30-1:30 p.m. at Cantina Laredo Restaurant. Join them for food, fun and fellowship. Sisterhood or Temple membership is not required but a reservation is needed.

Save these dates!

With Hanukkah just around the corner, Sisterhood’s Hanukkah Bazaar and Bake Sale starts at 9 a.m. on Dec. 3. Our gift shop has one of the largest collections of Judaica. Arrive early for the greatest selection!

Men’s Club is still having fun! All are invited to a Men’s Club Chinese dinner event on Dec. 24. More information to follow; mark your calendar.

Recurring Temple Beth El programs continue:

- Drop off nonperishable food items in the lobby shopping cart whenever the temple is open.
- All are welcome Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. for Torah study with Rabbi Luna on Zoom.

• Our Israel Committee meets on Zoom the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. Visit our calendar to see the broad purpose of this earnest group. Temple membership is not required, just a love and interest in all things Israel.

• Book club: Nov. 1 at 2:45 p.m. on Zoom. “Saving the Music” by Vincent B “Chip” LoCoco is historical fiction. Jewish musicians attempt to flee the Nazis trying to navigate a path to safety. Dec. 6: “The Book of Lost Names” by Kristen Harmel.


• Tot Shabbat, a kid-friendly service: Nov. 3 and Dec. 1 at 6 p.m. Come for the fellowship, the fun and the pizza. Please RSVP so we can be sure to we have enough food.

• History & Heritage of Our People: the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. on Zoom.

• Shabbat services: Fridays at 7:30 p.m. live in the sanctuary, on Zoom and on Facebook.

• 12-Step Recovery Group: Every Saturday at 11 a.m. on Zoom. Experience the Twelve Steps from a Jewish perspective, seeking a path to recovery through Judaic spiritual principles.

There’s always something happening here, and our members make it happen: Current Events, Coffee & Chat, Theology & Life, Francophone & Hispanophone Groups, Environmental Group, Solo Travelers, Caring and Visitations... Follow us on Facebook @Temple BethElFortMyers and on Instagram @templebethelfortmyers. You can always contact the office at 239-433-0018.

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## TEMPLE JUDEA Fort Myers

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

November is a busy month at Temple Judea as we welcome back our friends from their summer locations.

Rabbi Marc Sack's introduction to Judaism class continues. This class is a must for anyone interested in conversion to Judaism but is open to all who have an interest in learning. Please call the office with questions.

Adult education classes will resume Monday, Nov. 6, continuing on Monday evenings. "Rebbe Nachaman's

Prescription: Ten Psalms for What Ails You" will be taught by Rabbi Michael Schorin, 6:15-7:30 p.m. "Morality" by Rabbi Jonathon Sacks, "Concerns for Modern Life" and his final book will be taught by Rabbi Marc Sack on Zoom, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Temple Judea Religious School continues Sundays, 9:30 a.m.-noon and Tuesdays, 4:30-6 p.m. There will be no classes Thanksgiving week and Nov. 19, 21 and 26. Classes resume Nov. 28. Tot Shabbat is Nov. 10 at 5

p.m., an interactive program of music and Shabbat Stories with Morah Abbie, including challah and juice.

Friday, Nov. 3, join us for services at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:30, honoring our outgoing Board of Directors and its president, Dan Fox, for his five-year term, and welcoming our new board members and all new members. RSVP is required by Oct. 30. Contact the office at 239-433-0201 for further information.

Please join us for the Interfaith Thanksgiving service on Nov. 19, 4 p.m. at Thomas A Edison Congregational Church, 1619 Llewellyn Rd., Fort Myers. Please bring a bag of non-perishable groceries to be distributed in Lee County. Participating congregations include Temple Judea, Temple Beth El, Cypress Lake United Methodist, Iona Hope Episcopal and Thomas A Edison Congregational Church.

Hazak will offer activities in November. For information, please contact the office at 239-433-0201.

Chaverot: Mark your calendar for Sunday, Dec. 3 at 12:30 p.m. for our Chanukah card-making event, led by Barbara Lewitt in the social hall! It will be creative and fun! Chaverot continues to look for ideas for events of all kinds. Please email Lynn Talone at [talonefm@comcast.net](mailto:talonefm@comcast.net) with suggestions.

Temple Judea continues to accept food donations to the Cadkin Foundation

Food Pantry at Jewish Federation. There are collection envelopes near the front door for contactless monetary or gift contributions. Contributions may be mailed. Please call the office to ensure your contribution has been received.

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

### Regularly scheduled events

Friday evening Shabbat services preceded by wine and cheese at 6:15 p.m., services at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. Kiddush luncheons served every Shabbat. To sponsor, contact JoAnn Lewin.

Morning minyan every Monday at 9 a.m., followed by breakfast and Jewish current events with Rabbi Sack at First Watch, 13211 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers.

Every Monday, Jan Klein, our Temple President, will be at Temple Judea from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. to meet, listen and discuss ideas, suggestions and concerns.

We would love to see you in person or on Zoom. 🌐

## TEMPLE SHALOM Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands

(941) 625-2116 • [www.templeshalomfl.com](http://www.templeshalomfl.com)

The High Holy Days and the fall cycle of Jewish holidays (Sukkot and Simchat Torah) were well received with wonderful participation. We were overjoyed with the number of people who affiliated with the Temple.

The Temple is gearing up for an exciting year. The North Port High School Coral Group will be performing on Hanukkah. Jane Gallery will be presenting a Jewish music program together with Rabbi Agin and Glenn Stern. Odette

Port and her committee will present a slate of movies for the Jewish Film Festival. Plus, there will be a joint fundraiser with St. Vincent Church "Old Bags and Jewelry" — a fun time not to be missed that includes lunch.

There will be many more programs and events to announce. If you would like to receive the Temple newsletter, please call the Temple office at 941-625-2116.

Temple Shalom a Center for Jewish Life. 🌐

## TEMPLE BETH SHALOM Cape Coral

(239) 772-4555 • [www.templebethshalomcc.org](http://www.templebethshalomcc.org)

When we hired Cantor Barry Butensky, we had no idea what we were in for. Looking back on his first year with us, we started out with a hurricane. Keeping in touch with our scattered congregation, he managed to do a beautiful service via Zoom. During the year, he has introduced us to new music, new traditions, new energy and new ways of doing things. We had family services with pizza for everyone, Brunch and Learn on Sunday morning to discuss topics of interest, puppets at children's services, candlelit services for Selichot and Simchat Torah and we purchased a new Sukkah where we could all join together for an Oneg and a dinner.

This year, High Holiday services were a tour d'force. Cantor Barry, as we call him, has a unique ability to make everything personal. This year, Yom Kippur was the most meaningful holiday that I had ever experienced. From giving everyone the opportunity to mention the names of their loved ones during the Yiskor service to including everyone, including guests, to participate in the service either by reading, opening the ark or chanting the blessings, no one was left out.

Stephanie Levine gave the most moving High Holiday appeal I have ever heard, telling of her own experiences with Judaism and expressing the love and support she has received at Temple Beth Shalom. Lynne Laufer followed Stephanie's emotional speech with an essay about the last Jew in America. It was so powerful, it had most of us in tears.

### Going forward

We have restarted the religious school on Thursday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. with Marc Einstein as lead teacher. He has plenty of assistance from Cantor Barry and several volunteers. The children are not only learning our history, traditions and the aleph bet, but are absorbing the joy of being Jewish. Children's services were full of music and crafts. They decorated the Sukkah and danced in the rain.

We are proud to be hosting a PJ Library event Dec. 3. We hope this will be the first of many events for young people at our synagogue.

Ruthie Belkin restarted mahjong on Wednesday mornings, so come join in the fun. The book club is now reading "Ravage & Son" by Jerome Charyn. You are welcome to join us at Jaycee Park on Thursday, Dec. 7 at 1 p.m. Now that the weather is cooling off, the photography club is busy planning their outings.

For a full list of our activities, check our website, [www.templebethshalomcc.org](http://www.templebethshalomcc.org), and check the events calendar. You can also access our weekly newsletter. While you are there, check out the event pictures.

We are a very unique, welcoming and inclusive community. Guests are always welcome. Come join us for a Shabbat service, Saturday morning Torah service/study or anything else you see on our website. You will be welcomed with open arms. 🌐

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Once again, we are indebted to Rich McConville and Lee Pavel for erecting our Sukkah; to Keith Bremer of Maverick Landscape for delivering the royal palm fronds for the *skhakh*, the sukkah's topping; to the very many CFSers who "topped off" our sukkah just before the festival began; and to Shayne Brown who baked three wonderful holiday *hallot* — this year plain, dark chocolate and Cinnabon style. And we feasted on Kim and Baron Cohen's sweet noodle kugel left over from the break-the-fast. It was worth the calories!

Letters of invitation to our annual Hanukah 1st Nights Celebration Dinner catered by Cohen & Cohen will be going out after Thanksgiving. It is free but reservations are a must, and the letters will tell you how to make yours. If you not currently on our mailing list, send us your street address by email ([synfree@comcast.net](mailto:synfree@comcast.net)) or to our mailing address: The Community Free Synagogue, 7210 Falcon Crest Court, Fort Myers, FL 33908.

Registration is now open for our 12 days in Israel starting May 25. To find out more, visit our website, [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com), or call

Go-Ahead Tours Groups Department at 800-438-7672 in order to enroll in the tour. Mention the group reference # 70961726.

Sabbath eve meals begin at 6:30 p.m. every Friday. They are open to all and free. You are welcome to bring a nondairy dish to share, dessert or a bottle of wine. Worship begins at 7:30 p.m. followed by a social hour.

Sabbath morning Torah Study with the rabbi is from 9:30-11 a.m. each week on Zoom only. The C.F.S. Zoom room is easily accessed through the synagogue's website, [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com).

C.F.S. was founded over 18 years ago as an open synagogue that does not sell memberships or tickets, charge for any event or have fundraisers and is open to all. Its purpose is prayer, study, mutual support and benevolence in a harmonious setting with the guidance of the rabbi and the consensus of its active participants, free from conventional institutional pressures. Its practices lean towards the traditional. Its principles of inclusion are contemporary.

To receive our weekly email newsletter, email [synfree@comcast.net](mailto:synfree@comcast.net).



THE FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM

Are you experiencing loneliness or isolation?



Do you wish you had a companion who shares your interests?

Our program connects caring volunteers with aging adults for meaningful interactions.

Safe, flexible, and enriching.



For more information please contact:  
[NancyKlein@jfedlcc.org](mailto:NancyKlein@jfedlcc.org)  
239-481-4449 x 2



Visit British scholar Sebastian Kenny speaks to a C.F.S. gathering that the Diamond home.



Scenes from the C.F.S. Sukkah "topping off"



Sharing Shabbat



Sharing Shabbat is a chance to gather together for a half hour to sing Shabbat songs and say the prayers over the candles, challah and wine.

We'll talk about upcoming holidays, the weekly Torah portion or special memories connected to the time of year.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2023  
4:00 PM  
BROOKDALE COLLEGE PARKWAY





## CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA Fort Myers

(239) 433-7708 • [www.Chabadswf.org](http://www.Chabadswf.org)

The month of Tishrei was a huge success as was the Holiday of Sukkot. Our kitchen angels prepared delicious community meals last month. And the Sukkot Mivtzoim was great. People were happy that we

brought them the Etrog and Lulov to shake and make special blessings.

The War in Israel has shaken us to the core. We support Israel by praying, studying Torah and giving charity. 🇮🇱



## THE CADKIN FOUNDATION FOOD PANTRY

# FOOD DRIVE



**WHAT WE NEED:**  
peanut butter, jelly, cereal, tuna, soup,  
vegetables, tomato sauce, fruit, rice,  
pasta, mac & cheese, toiletries.

**DROP OFF FOOD, GIFT CARDS,  
CASH OR CHECK. MAIL A CHECK.  
DONATE ONLINE.**

9701 Commerce Center Court | Fort Myers, FL 33908  
[www.jewishfederationlcc.org](http://www.jewishfederationlcc.org)  
239-481-4449, ext 1



## SHALOM LIFE CENTER Fort Myers

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

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

Shabbat evening services are held every Friday at 7:30 p.m., both in person and by livestream. SLC welcomes everyone to experience joyful, meaningful and inspiring services, special events, activities and clubs, dinners, concerts, and more all year long.

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

the ancient wisdom of Torah into our daily lives.

SLC offers individualized bar/bat mitzvah preparation, weekly Torah study, Café Kabbalah, The Neshama Mamas Women's Wisdom and Wellness Group, book club, The Shalom Shmoozers Social Club and other opportunities to enhance your Jewish life and learning and to further your involvement in community service. If you'd like to learn more, please send us an email or give us a call.

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



# Collier/Lee Hadassah announces third annual Inspiring Women honorees

By Diane Schwartz, Collier/Lee Hadassah Past President

Collier/Lee Hadassah announces and celebrates the 2024 Inspiring Women from Collier and Lee counties. Ellaine Rosen, Gayle Dorio and Sonya (Sunny) Lubner will be honored on Sunday, March 3, 2024. Hadassah is proud to present each honoree with the Lynn Wilner Award, in recognition of the chapter's late past president who inspired so many to join and become active in Hadassah.

Through its programs, training and work around the globe, Hadassah empowers women to learn and lead in their career, volunteer and community leadership roles. With this emphasis in mind, the Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah has created the Inspiring Women event to recognize the importance, value and impact empowered women make in our communities. The honorees have used their leadership skills, dedication, experience, generosity and time to make a difference in their organizations and the quality of our lives. Ultimately, their efforts impact so many people in our communities and Hadassah is proud to honor these inspiring women.

"It's exciting to recognize Ellaine Rosen, Gayle Dorio and Sunny Lubner, not only for their individual accomplishments but also for their impact," said Chapter President, Joyce Toub. "Geared to the community as well as Hadassah members, attendees and supporters of these Inspiring Women will have an opportunity to celebrate their talents, gifts and their passion for what they do."

## Ellaine Rosen

A Renaissance woman, Ellaine Rosen has many talents and interests, which she shares with family, friends and the public at large. She is known for her lectures, guided tours and enthusiastic presentations. Her educational background prepared her for expertise in a variety of scholarly areas. Earning her Bachelor of Science degree from Columbia University, at the same time, she also achieved a bachelor of religious education from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Rosen then earned a Master of Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. From there, she earned a degree in interior design at LaSalle University and crowned her education at the University of Pittsburgh as a doctoral candidate in a customized program of Judaic studies, art history and religion, completing all but the dissertation.

To put her talents and background to practical use, Rosen has lectured on secular art, Jewish art and the Holocaust. She served as a docent at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh for 35 years, where she wrote an impressionist guide for docent training. In Naples, she has been serving as a docent at the Holocaust Museum

of Southwest Florida for 16 years, was a docent at The Baker Museum for 13 years and, for the last two years, has been serving as a docent at the Naples Art Institute. Rosen has also presented numerous lectures at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh; at numerous synagogues in Pittsburgh, New York and Naples; and for Jewish Federations in Pittsburgh, Boca Raton and Naples.

She even managed to find time to establish "Art 'n Facts," a business selling works of art at wholesale prices to the public, interior designers, corporations and museums around the country for 20 years.

Rosen has served her Jewish communities, chairing various programs and fundraisers for synagogues, Israel Bonds, the Zionist Organization of America and Jewish Federations. For many years, she chanted the Yom Kippur Haftorah at Beth Shalom Congregation in Pittsburgh and has now done so at Temple Shalom the last two years.

For 60 years, she has been happily married to Rick, with whom she built a wonderful family of two accomplished daughters and five grandsons. Rosen is a proud Life Member of Hadassah.

## Gayle Dorio

Always on the move from across the country to around the world, Gayle Dorio is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in architecture/design. After graduation, the Dorio family, including two sons, Paul and Jay, relocated 17 times as husband, Marty, was heavily recruited by headhunters for executive positions from around the country all the way to Paris.

Dorio began her career, working as the interior designer for a large furniture company, ultimately establishing her own business as Gayle M Dorio Interior Design, doing both residential and commercial design. Passing the two-day NCIDQ exam on her first attempt and after the requisite experience requirement, she became a professional member of the American Society of Interior Designers. She has worked at design studios, for furniture companies — including the local Robb & Stucky in Fort Myers where she won two awards in her first year and helped set up and train staff for the Bonita Springs location where she was sales manager. Happily, her own design business has continued for more than 40 years.

A career highlight was being gallery director for Circle Fine Art located on the stylish Michigan Avenue in

Chicago. It was there that Dorio won several sales awards and organized many artists' shows. She also travelled around the country to several Circle galleries providing staff sales training. A project to remember was as a member of the American Women's Group in Paris, Dorio ran a successful fashion show held at the American Embassy when Pamela Harriman was the ambassador.

Personally, Dorio is committed to Tikkun Olam in her community wherever she lived across the country. She was both a board member of the Lexington Arts Council and the Museum for Culture and Diversity while living in Lexington, Kentucky. She cofounded a band booster club in Highland Park, Illinois.

Here in Naples, Florida, she chaired the Jewish Book Festival of Greater Naples for two years (2021-2023). She created the idea of having a magic show to benefit Jewish Federation of Greater Naples and pursued world-renowned magician Joshua Jay to make it happen.

Dorio has been an instructor for FGCU Academy (continuing education) for the past 12 years and teaches different levels of mahjong and growing orchids. Having been recognized as one of the top orchid growers at Naples Orchid Society, she was asked to teach for their culture classes. She has lectured many times on the subject, even appearing at the Naples Botanical Garden.

She volunteers at the Harry Chapin Food Bank. Dorio was a member of Naples Jewish Congregation for six years, organizing the Aliyot for High Holy Days. Since 2002, she has been a proud member of Temple Shalom. She has also volunteered time doing stand-up comedy for various Naples organizations and is always happy to speak up and speak out.

Dorio's devotion to Hadassah is evident as she was secretary of the Collier-Lee Chapter, nominating committee chair and a past president. She was featured in the Hadassah magazine and website as an outstanding Hadassah leader. She served as vice president for philanthropy for the Hadassah Central Region. She supports and practices philanthropy in many ways on behalf of Hadassah and Israel. Dorio is a life member of Hadassah and is proud to be a Hadassah Legacy Society member, remembering Hadassah in her estate planning.

## Sonya (Sunny) Lubner

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, Sunny Lubner is the daughter of

influential anti-apartheid activists, Hymie and Esther Barsel, who spent their lives fighting for justice and equality alongside Nelson Mandela. This message resonated for her throughout her adult life.

After graduating from Trinity College of London with studies in literature and theatre arts, Lubner taught speech and drama while performing in repertory, mainly the classics: Shakespeare, Ibsen and Shaw. She and her husband, Clive, married in 1968 and bore two children, Claudia and Daniel.

Refusing to raise their children under the apartheid system, they immigrated to America in 1978. The family came directly to Fort Myers, a small town in those days compared to the cosmopolitan, cultured city they left.

They missed family but loved the warmth and acceptance of the American people. They forged long-term bonds in Southwest Florida; in fact, she has been in a book club with the same women for over 40 years.

Lubner was a happy stay-at-home mom while her husband worked hard and became an icon in the furnishing industry. Clive and their son, Daniel, have successfully rebuilt their design business, Clive Daniel Home. It was an easy decision to start again in Naples, and the family recently opened a fourth showroom in their hometown of Fort Myers.

Led by her parents' activism, Lubner has devoted much of her life to causes benefiting women and children, human rights and the arts — so many aspects close to her heart. The Lubners value their Jewish heritage and have supported their synagogue Temple Beth El since 1980 and are active in the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties.

Over the years, she has served on Mayor Henderson's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board for the City of Fort Myers, was a panelist on an international conference on racism and has been an active member of several community service organizations. She is on the governing board of Progressive Women of SW Florida. After retiring from the stage, Lubner has been a proud board member of the prestigious Actors' Equity-sanctioned Florida Repertory Theatre for over two decades. She was honored as a grande dame by PACE Center for Girls in 2023.

As an empowered woman, Lubner says she deeply appreciates the privilege of being named an Inspiring Woman.

You are invited to mark your calendar for the March 3, 2024 event, a luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Audubon Country Club. For information and to receive an invitation, please email [collierleehadassah@gmail.com](mailto:collierleehadassah@gmail.com).



Ellaine Rosen



Sunny Lubner



Gayle Dorio



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

# Hadassah deploys emergency measures in Israel

By Joyce Taub, Collier/Lee Hadassah President

The scope of Hadassah's work cannot be overstated. The "ideal community" is in its hospitals, an agglomeration of Arabs and Jews as medical providers and as patients, which serve as a model for the world. This is how I was beginning the article I was going to write, but I had to change midstream because of the situation in Israel.

I hope and pray that by the time you read this, the conflict will be over! The terrifying news that Israel was under a deadly attack by Hamas and was now at war reminded me so much of where I was exactly 50 years ago, when I was sitting in Shul during Yom Kippur services. The similarity is astounding.

I paraphrase an urgent message from Hadassah leadership, who, along with many synagogues, JCCs, Federations

and other Jewish institutions, sent out messages on Shabbat morning — something they usually refrain from doing. On the Shabbat morning which coincided with Simchat Torah, we learned of the terrifying attacks by Hamas on Israel. Israel responded by declaring it was at war. We saw the news reports with video of brutal assaults on Israeli civilians, tactics that are against the Geneva Conventions and any rule of international humanitarian law.

Our collective heartbreak is for the families and communities of the hundreds who have been killed. And the number of casualties is rising. May their memories be a blessing! Hundreds more have been critically injured. The Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) is treating many wounded from around the country.

We are grateful to our HMO colleagues for caring for those injured in this vicious assault and pray that Israel overcomes this terrible crisis as quickly as possible. Hadassah is deploying emergency measures to protect and heal the people of Israel. The potential horrors are unprecedented. We urgently need your support. Hadassah is monitoring the situation closely, assessing the needs and acting wherever we can help.

Our youth villages are supporting their students, staff and families with counseling and other services. They are also standing by to take in many more students and families of those who have been injured or killed.

**Please support Hadassah today!**  
Hadassah National President Rhoda Smolow and CEO Naomi Adler sent

their message with pride, passion and purpose.

You can help the people of Israel and contribute to advances in medicine by joining our Collier/Lee Hadassah chapter. Mark your calendar to attend our next program called "Keeping Our Faith" on Nov. 15, 11 a.m. at Audubon Country Club. Cantor Donna Azu of Temple Shalom joins us and will be interviewed by Diane Schwartz. The event also features a Crafty Women's Artisans' Showcase and a delicious luncheon.

I hope that a peaceful year lies ahead. We pray that all our wishes during our September holidays will be honored. I look forward to seeing you soon! 🌍

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

# Our obligation is to history and memory

By Shelley Lieb and Ida Margolis

Readers of this paper are likely to receive a great many emails each day and rarely have time to read them all. It's certainly easier to delete than to read all those emails, but perhaps we overlook something of importance or great interest. As Ida was about to delete another email from Gideon Taylor, president of the Claims Conference (claimscon.org), she stopped to look at an illustration of an old Rosh HaShanah postcard with a greeting in Yiddish that was included, then continued to read the accompanying article that described a trip Taylor took with his family to a cemetery in Janow, a stetl in Poland where his great-grandfather is buried. All that remains today is the cemetery gate and a few weather-beaten tombstones, representing "the last physical reminder of what was once a vibrant and dynamic Jewish community of six hundred souls."

The heartbreaking story that Taylor told of what happened to the Jews from Janow is one of millions of heartbreaking stories of Jews during the Holocaust. But what also caught my attention in this article was the following sentence:

"Our obligation is not only to history, it is also to memory." As stated by the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, "In history, we recall what happened. Through memory, we identify with what happened so that it becomes part of us and who we are."

As Holocaust survivors pass away, we are now all guardians of the history of the Holocaust. But 2Gs and 3Gs have an additional obligation — that of memory. That is why the mission statement of GenShoah SWFL includes "Preservation of history and memories of the Holocaust."

Membership in GenShoah is open to anyone who is interested in our mission statement, which also includes "Promotion of Holocaust education and human rights; connecting the second generation with one another; and Support of the Holocaust Museum &



Cohen Education Center." There are no fees or attendance requirements.

If you would like to receive the GenShoah newsletter and program announcements or volunteer to help with future programs, send an email to [liebro@gmail.com](mailto:liebro@gmail.com). The GenShoah newsletter includes future GenShoah events, a fun Yiddish lesson, programs of community interest, and more.

GenShoah sponsors the film series, Movies that Matter. The last film, "The Invisible Class," will be discussed via Zoom on Nov. 1. Visit [www.hmcec.org](http://www.hmcec.org) to RSVP for the Zoom discussion. You will then receive information on how to watch the film.

Another upcoming program of community interest is the annual Kristallnacht commemoration, on Sunday, Nov. 5, 2:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church, 5225 Golden Gate

Parkway, Naples. We are very fortunate that the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue of Collier County has presented this program for a number of years. This 85th Anniversary of Kristallnacht is an opportunity for community members to be reminded of the night that most historians recognize as the "beginning of the Holocaust."

Please support this program and support our Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center. Plan a visit for yourself and a friend to the newly expanded and updated Museum, which reopens to the public on Nov. 4. You will be immersed in the history of the Holocaust, one of the most well-documented genocides in history, as well as learn more about other genocides and what we can all do to fight against bigotry and hate. 🌍





# THE JEWISH FEDERATION & TEMPLE BETH EL PRESENT

A portrait of Rabbi Jeremy Barras, a man with glasses, a dark suit, a light blue shirt, and a red patterned tie. To his right is the cover of his book, "A Reason to Rise," which features a blue background with a city street scene at night and the title in white and yellow text.

## AN EVENING WITH

The logo for the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties, featuring a blue menorah icon to the left of the text "Jewish Federation" in blue and "OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES" in smaller blue text below it.

The logo for Temple Beth El, featuring a blue menorah icon to the left of the text "TEMPLE BETH EL" in blue. Below the text is the tagline "TORAH • MITZVOT • COMMUNITY" in smaller blue text.

## RABBI JEREMY BARRAS

DISCUSSING HIS LATEST BOOK, "A REASON TO RISE," WHICH EXPLORES THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE IN THE 20TH CENTURY. RABBI BARRAS, A FORMER RABBI OF TEMPLE BETH EL PROMISES AN INSPIRING DISCUSSION!

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH @ 7:00PM**

**LOCATION: 16225 WINKLER RD, FORT MYERS, FL**

**TO REGISTER: [JEWISHFEDERATIONLCC.ORG/CALENDAR](http://JEWISHFEDERATIONLCC.ORG/CALENDAR)**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: [DANIELLEB@JFEDLCC.ORG](mailto:DANIELLEB@JFEDLCC.ORG)**

**OR 239-481-4449 EXT. 4**





## JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 566-1771

# On the topic of longevity

By Marina Berkovich, president

Using a readily available free internet tool, longevity calculator, I recently discovered that my individualized life expectancy is estimated at 98 years. Hallelujah, two-thirds down, one third to go. It brought to mind something my grandfather said, having outlived everyone else of his generation in the family and neighborhood, “No witnesses left who know how it was.”

Abraham lived 175 years, a biblical youngster compared to Adam’s 930 years and Methuselah’s 802. “Who were their witnesses,” I wonder. Who chronicled their life stories? Someone did, whether mortal or not. The last of the extremely long-lived Antediluvian patriarchs, Noah, died at the age of 950. The human lifespan that was detailed in the Torah, gradually diminished from almost 1,000 years to the “mere” 120 years of Moses. May we all live to 120! We know that King Saul was killed in battle at 80, King David died at 70 and King Solomon at 60. Longevity is not typical in times of war and destruction.

In the post-WWII U.S., with abundance of food and improved living conditions, life expectancy is on the rise. We noted it in our work. Among

the people already interviewed for the Southwest Florida Pioneers films or other JHSSWF projects, longevity is not uncommon. In fact, 98 seems to be realistic. Anecdotally, I am reminded of that 114-year-old Italian woman, the oldest European resident a decade back, who had revealed the secret to her longevity was a daily serving of spaghetti she prepared herself.

Perhaps the secrets to contemporary Jewish longevity are the fluffy kneidlach or matzah balls or the Jewish penicillin itself? Or maybe it’s the healthier lifestyle we live here in Southwest Florida? At any rate, we have so many longtime area residents who witnessed the creation of Jewish life in the region, and we cannot emphasize enough how much your help in recording those memories is needed and how much we appreciate preserving every recorded story.

One of my frequent correspondents, esteemed heir to the Hirsch-Einhorn legacy, Emil G Hirsch, God willing, will be celebrating his 98th birthday this November. Another longtime friend of the Jewish Historical Society of SWFL, Helen Weinfeld, already broke 100 and will turn 100 something this month. Elena Rosner turned 99

years young in September. Chief Richard Plager is 97. Gene Goodman left us last year at the impressive age of 106. We are so glad to preserve some of their impact on this community.

To continue expanding the roots of our communal tree, we are looking for more stories, more information, more exhibits and more pictures about the elders in our midst.

King Solomon said, “Joyful is the person who finds wisdom, the one who gains understanding.” We’ve been on the path of building our Southwest Florida Jewish History from the tidbits and remnants of people’s memories and it has, indeed, been a joyful experience thus far. We invite you to take this ride with us.

Your generosity helps continue the work of The Jewish Historical Society of SWFL. No amount is too small. Donate online, by mail or contact us at [office@jhsswf.org](mailto:office@jhsswf.org).

Join the organization online at [JHSSWF.org](http://JHSSWF.org) or mail us a check. Family membership is \$54; individual membership is \$36; student membership is \$18; and corporate sponsorship is \$300. If mailing a check, please send to The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida, 8805 Tamiami Trail North, Suite #255, Naples, FL 34108.

Members receive announcements, reminders and other wonderful information you would not want to miss.

We can be reached at 833-547-7935 (833-JHS-SWFL), [www.jhsswf.org](http://www.jhsswf.org) or [office@jhsswf.org](mailto:office@jhsswf.org). The Virtual Museum of SWFL Jewish History is located online at <http://jewishhistorysouthwestflorida.org/>.

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

## CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

[chavuratshalom@gmail.com](mailto:chavuratshalom@gmail.com)

# November Jewish and non-Jewish holidays

By Cheryl Fulmer, Ellen Feingold and Marcia Rudin

November is a quiet month for Jewish festivals. Of course, American Jews generally celebrate Thanksgiving but that is not a uniquely Jewish holiday, even though it is based on our holiday of Sukkot. So what does November offer Jews?

It offers us the respite from those September and October holidays that took up so much of our time, allowing us precious moments we can spend on learning Torah. And what wonderful Torah portions we have in November! We find ourselves smack in the middle of the Book of Genesis. November brings us Abraham and Sarah; then Isaac and Rebecca; then Jacob, Leah and Rachel and 12 sons. What a feast!

In addition, November brings us to the resumption of the programming part of the year for Chavurat Shalom. On the first Saturday morning of every month at 10 a.m., we will have our Torah Talk led by Dr. Ellen Feingold, where we study the Parsha of the week together. Then, for the other Saturday mornings of the month, we have Leonard Minsky Jewish Current Events, also at 10 a.m., organized by Dr. Don Bachman. If you are interested in leading a Jewish Current Events session, please contact Don at [dbachmanmd@yahoo.com](mailto:dbachmanmd@yahoo.com).

And November brings the new season of our lecture and discussion series coordinated by Irene Skolnick and Barry Fulmer. The programs will be held every second and fourth Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. On the first Tuesday evening of the month at 7:30 p.m., we will enjoy our informal “Schmooze” session hosted by Marcia Rudin. The third Tuesday of the month is reserved for our 7:30 p.m. Chavurat Shalom board meeting to which the general membership is invited.

November is also a serious month. Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 7. It is

vital that all eligible individuals exercise the privilege of voting. Kristallnacht remembrance is Thursday, Nov. 9. It’s important to remember what happened to the Jews in Germany in 1938. Veterans Day is Saturday, Nov. 11. We must remember all the men and women who served the U.S. in the military during all its wars. Thursday, Nov. 23 is Thanksgiving, a day to share with family and friends and to acknowledge all things big and small which we appreciate.

Chavurat Shalom members have the opportunity to show their thankfulness by making a donation to the Tzedakah Committee. If you wish to contribute, send your check, payable to Chavurat Shalom of SWFL, to Cheryl Fulmer, 20031 Sanibel View Circle, Unit 202, Fort Myers 33908. (Please mark “Tzedakah” on the memo line.) The focus of this year’s drive is to help remediate the devastating consequences of addictive diseases from opioids, fentanyl and alcohol. In this manner, we contribute to “Tikun Olam.”

Of course, our Friday night Shabbat Services continue every week throughout the year at 7:30 p.m. Services are led by Chavurat Shalom members, with readings, singing and Torah reading and commentary. The weekly services are coordinated by Drs. Ellen Feingold and Kathy Zoss and include volunteer participants.

All Chavurat Shalom activities will be held over Zoom until further notice. All times are Eastern Standard Time. Everyone is welcome to attend. To join these events, send an email request to [chavuratshalom@gmail.com](mailto:chavuratshalom@gmail.com) to receive the Zoom link. For more information, visit our website [www.chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org](http://www.chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org) or email [chavuratshalom@gmail.com](mailto:chavuratshalom@gmail.com).

## Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties presents



## SHALOM SINGLES

Geared towards men and women age 50 & up.

## THE LAST EVENTS OF 2023!

DEC

3

**Mitzvah Singles Mingle  
at the Jewish Federation  
9701 Commerce Center Ct.**

**Pack Hanukkah gift bags, eat  
pizza, mix & mingle!**



**5:00-7:00pm**

DEC

5



**GELT & GAMBLING  
@ Seminole Casino  
506 S 1st St,  
Immokalee**

**Join us for some fun. Your jackpot  
awaits! Every participant will  
receive a free play gift card.**



**5:00-8:00pm**

**To Register: [Jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar](http://Jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar)**

For more information contact: [Danielleb@Jfedlcc.org](mailto:Danielleb@Jfedlcc.org)  
or 239-481-4449 Ext. 4



### BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS REFORM

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

### CHABAD OF BONITA SPRINGS/ESTERO ORTHODOX

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

### CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF CAPE CORAL ORTHODOX

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

### CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY ORTHODOX

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

### CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ORTHODOX

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

## SYNAGOGUES & JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES



www.JewishFederationLCC.org

### COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE CONTEMPORARY TRADITIONAL

11120 Ranchette Road  
Fort Myers, FL 33966  
Rabbi Bruce Diamond  
Phone: 239-247-4556  
E-mail: synfree@comcast.net  
Web site: www.fortmyerssynagogue.com  
Free Friday dinner each week at 6:30 PM open to all followed by worship at 7:30 PM  
Weekly Torah Study, Sabbath worship and Adult Education visit  
www.fortmyerssynagogue.com for the schedule of events and Zoom logon  
Information.  
All events are free and open to all

### SHALOM LIFE CENTER TRANS DENOMINATIONAL

19691 Cypress View Drive  
Fort Myers, FL 339067  
Rabbi Lawrence Dermer  
Phone: 239-218-3433  
E-mail: info@shalomlifecenter.org  
Web site: www.shalomlifecenter.org  
Shabbat Evening Services  
7:30 p.m. (Oct-Apr)  
7:00 p.m. (May-Sept)  
Saturday Torah & Kabbalah Study  
10:00 a.m.

### TEMPLE BETH EL REFORM

16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908  
Rabbi Nicole Luna  
E-mail: rabbiluna@templebethel.com  
Learning Tree Preschool Director: Amy Amon  
Email: learningtreefortmyers@gmail.com  
President: Reina Schlager  
Email: tbeboard@templebethel.com  
Phone: 239-433-0018 • Fax: 239-433-3235  
Office Manager: Karen Kagan  
Email: manager@templebethel.com  
Web site: templebethel.com  
Shabbat services: 7:30 p.m. Friday  
Torah study 9:00 a.m. Saturday  
Religious & Hebrew School:  
9:30 a.m.- Noon Sunday  
Judaica Gift Gallery  
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism;

### TEMPLE BETH SHALOM REFORM

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

### CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SWFL CHAVURA

20031 Sanibel View Circle unit 202  
Fort Myers, FL 33908  
Chavuratshalom@gmail.com  
www.chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org  
Cheryl Fulmer, President  
Shabbat services - 7:30 p.m. Friday  
Jewish current events - Saturday morning  
Speakers series - Tuesday evening

### TEMPLE JUDEA CONSERVATIVE

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

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

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

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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





# 2024 Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida

Regal Belltower, Fort Myers

Individual film tickets: \$13, On Sale 12/1

Festival Pass: \$130, On Sale 11/1

[www.JewishFederationLCC.org/JFF2024](http://www.JewishFederationLCC.org/JFF2024)

## Films

## Dates

Dead Sea Guardians	Thursday Feb. 1st 7:15PM
Remembering Gene Wilder	Sunday (Matinee) Feb. 4th @ 3:00PM
Children of Nobody	Tuesday Feb. 6th 7:15PM
The Jews and the Blues	Thursday Feb. 8th 7:15PM
Lost Transport	Tuesday Feb. 13th 7:15PM
Israel Swings for Gold	Thursday Feb. 15th 7:15PM
Matchmaking	Tuesday Feb. 20th 7:15PM
Farewell Mister Haffmann	Thursday Feb. 22nd 7:15PM
Imordecai	Sunday (Matinee) Feb 25th 3:00PM
The Shadow of the Day	Tuesday Feb. 27th 7:15 PM
The Catskills	Thursday Feb.29th 7:15 PM

\*Sponsorship opportunities are available.

For more information, please email Danielle Bernstein at [danielleb@jfedlcc.org](mailto:danielleb@jfedlcc.org) or call 239-481-4449 ext. 4

