

# SCHMOOZE NEWS

*Happy Hanukkah!  
from the  
Jewish Federation  
of Oklahoma City*



## *Light one Candle*

BY MARCY PRICE

Every winter, during the darkest time of the year, we light one candle for eight nights to celebrate Hanukkah. This year Hanukkah begins on December 18 and goes through the 26. It is a good time to remember the uplifting words of folk singers, Peter, Paul and Mary, “Don’t let the light go out...”. Their chorus is a call to action and the verses remind us of our power to make the world a better place, whether that means volunteering in the community, baking *challah* for others, providing a ride or just showing up.

In this issue, we shine a light on Roberta Sloan, a member of Emanuel Synagogue and the founding Director of the Jewish Theatre of Oklahoma. Their mission is to explore the rich social, cultural, and spiritual heritage of the Jewish people through theater-going experiences.

Most recently Roberta directed and starred in a staged reading of “Oklahoma Samovar” by Alice Eve Cohen, winner of the 10th annual National Jewish Playwriting Contest 2021.

The Jewish Federation continues to offer many opportunities to connect with each other and to deliver holiday goodies for homebound seniors. If you would like to volunteer sometime or if you have an idea for a new program, please don’t hesitate to contact Margo Nechtow, Senior Care Director.

### **As Peter, Paul and Mary harmonized back in the day,**

“Don’t let the light go out!  
It’s lasted for so many years;  
Don’t let the light go out!  
Let it shine through our hope and our tears.”



**Schmooze News is a project of the Jewish Federation of Greater Oklahoma City's Senior Program.**

#### **Senior Committee Chair:**

Marcy Price

#### **Senior Care Coordinator:**

Margo Nechtow

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# Chai on Life Events

## Scissortail Park Tour on a Golf Cart!



John Greiner, Hank Asin, Janice Segell, Joan Korenblit, Diana Robinson, Helene Harpman



Rhoda Zaretz, Anita Barlow, Alice Lutwak, Sandi Fogelson, Ella Sprung, Jude the guide



Alice Lutwak, Anita Barlow, Rhoda Zaretz



jewishtheatreok.org

## Spotlight Shines on Roberta Sloan: Founder of the Jewish Theatre of Oklahoma



**Act 1:** Roberta Sloan is a first generation American who calls Oklahoma City home with her husband of 48 years, Stephen Sloan. Her parents were from Zhitomer, Russia and Odessa; her father immigrated to the United States and her mother to Canada. Her father was an American Citizen when she was born, still serving as a Lt. Colonel in the US Army, and her mother went back to Canada when she was pregnant with her since her dad was overseas. Her parents relocated when she was four years old to an area of Chicago, which was humorously called “the Gilded Ghetto,” populated with their social circle of Jewish friends and family.

**Roberta's lifelong passion for theatre began at a very early age.**

*“I’ve been told that I started singing, dancing, and entertaining my parent’s friends at about 3 years old. By the time I was in high school, I was teaching acting at a children’s drama school. Theatre and teaching have always been my passion...and has enriched my life considerably.”*

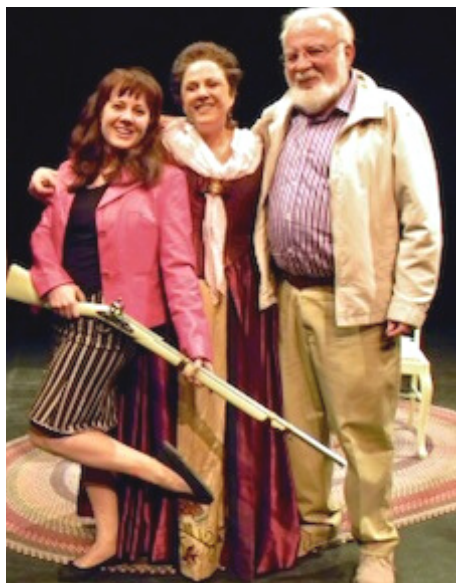
Roberta’s academic studies began at Northwestern University in Drama Education, and then she completed her higher degrees at University of Michigan, where she was only the second woman to receive a doctorate, as well as the second woman hired in the Theatre Department at the University of Central Oklahoma. Roberta joked that during the early 1970’s and beyond, “she hit her head on the glass ceiling so many times” while advocating for equity and opportunity within academic departments.

**Act 2:** Roberta came to Oklahoma in 1972 and first took a position as an Assistant Professor of Theatre at OU where she met Stephen a year later. Dr. Stephen Sloan was a rising scholar and Professor in Political Science where he taught for forty years. He is an internationally known scholar who researched and taught in the areas of terrorism insurgency, intelligence and crisis management and national security. Together they raised three children - Stephen’s sons, Chris and Greg, who were preschoolers when they married, and their daughter Maya, who is a professional writer living in Los Angeles.

Over the decades, Roberta and Stephen traveled to 80 countries serving as professors at Semester at Sea and lecturing on 18 cruises in a six year period! They have lived on both coasts, the deep South and in OKC twice when not at sea. In their home, a world wall map is filled with red pins denoting all the places they have traveled together and blue pins for the many locales worldwide where Stephen has lectured and taught.



Roberta's prime passions are theatre and teaching. "Teaching students about acting is also about teaching them about life... listening, observing and understanding emotions..." During her time in Philadelphia, Roberta created and starred in a one-woman show about the life of Deborah Franklin (Ben's wife), because there is a story there that most people do not know.



Maya Sloan, Roberta Sloan, Stephen Sloan

**Act 3:** We are so fortunate that Roberta and Stephen chose to return to OKC in 2019 after a fifteen-year hiatus. Taking center stage now is the Jewish Theatre of Oklahoma, a dream that has been a long time in development. When Roberta lived in Philadelphia, she became involved with a Jewish theatre company, "Theatre Ariel" where she played a role in one of their productions and later served on the board. Her experiences in Philadelphia and with the Jewish Women's Theatre in LA provided the backdrop and motivation for establishing the Jewish Theatre of Oklahoma company.



Roberta Sloan, directing *Oklahoma Samovar* during a rehearsal at Emanuel Synagogue

*"So, the third act of my life has involved a lot of work, creative effort and joy. It is very fulfilling, although sometimes nerve-racking, yet age does not have to limit our creative efforts"*

Roberta recently played Madame Arcati in Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park's production of "Blithe Spirit," and she noted that it had been 10 years since she was last on stage - and memorizing lines was much more of a challenge! Roberta meets challenges head on as founder and Artistic Director of Jewish Theatre of Oklahoma, including raising funds while making arrangements for upcoming shows, finding venues, casting, public relations, acting and directing!

Ticket sales do not begin to cover the costs of presenting shows, and JTO pays the actors, director, and tech staff. The most recent staged reading of "Oklahoma Samovar" drew a supportive crowd to the Rodeo Cinema recently. Roberta both directed and performed a role in the show. JTO's first musical production was "Jerry's Girls" premiered at OCU's Wanda Bass School of Music in early December. Roberta is already busy scouting out new opportunities to bring Jewish themed shows to our community. In her 3rd act, Roberta wears many costumes and hats on stage and off, while continuing to break glass ceilings wherever necessary! Bravo and Mazel Tov to Dr. Roberta Sloan - a class act on stage and in the community.

## Holiday Card Workshop with Nataly



Gail Marrs, Karen Bergman, Diana Robinson, Jiji Pollack, Carol Reznik



Janet Isaacman, Nataly Rome, Shelly Gold



Sandi Fogelson, Karen Graham



## HANUKKAH COOKIES!

A huge "THANK YOU" to our bakers, Pamela Richman and Marcy Price for making beautiful Hanukkah cookies for our holiday gift bags this year!



Pamela Richman, cookie maven



## Upcoming Events

Rose Family Glass Collection  
Oklahoma City Museum of Art

The *NEW* Crystal Bridge  
Conservatory at Myriad  
Gardens

Movie Day

## Hanukkah Cooking Corner

### Miracle Latkes - Veggie Version

Here's a low carb, low oil but tasty latke recipe to add to your traditional fried potato latkes. These "Miracle Latkes" got their name because they don't use very much oil, according to Judy Bart Kancigor in her cookbook "Cooking Jewish". This recipe is also "kid-friendly" to enjoy with grandchildren or nieces and nephews.

Makes 18-20 small latkes

#### Ingredients:

2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil  
5 medium-size zucchini, unpeeled  
3 scallions, white parts only, thinly sliced  
2 large eggs, beaten  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  to 1 cup of Italian flavored dry bread crumbs  
Kosher salt (coarse) and ground pepper to taste

#### Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 425 F. Coat two baking sheets with 1 T oil each

Scrub the zucchini and pat dry. Grate them by hand, or in batches in a food processor (do not over process - just shred). Spread the zucchini out on paper towels and allow to drain for 30 minutes

Place the drained zucchini in a bowl and mix in the scallions, eggs,  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup of the bread crumbs, and salt & pepper. Use your hands to form a "dough", adding up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup more bread crumbs if necessary for it to stick together.

Using a soup spoon, mound the zucchini mixture on the prepared baking sheets. Press down with a fork to form pancakes about 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide. Bake until they turn brown on the bottom, about 12 minutes. Turn the pancakes over and bake until brown on the other side, 5 minutes more. Serve immediately.

NOTE: The batter can also be fried in hot oil if preferred. "Maybe not as miraculous but decidedly yummy".



## Michael Barlow Israel Education Fund

A highlight of the Oklahoma Israel Exchange 30th Celebration, Edie Roodman, Executive Director, made a poignant tribute to Michael Barlow, of blessed memory. His passions for education, mentorship and Israel led to a student exchange program between Israeli and Oklahoma high school students. Now in the program's 13th year, we celebrate the creation of the Michael Barlow Israel Education Fund to help underwrite the cost for students who may not otherwise be able to participate. Generous grants of \$18,000 from the Oklahoma City Jewish Foundation and OKiE were matched by the Barlow family for a total launch of \$54,000. His family accepted the President's Highest Honor for Michael's many contributions to OKiE. Contributions can be made on the OKiE website [www.okisraeexchange.com](http://www.okisraeexchange.com).



Lou Barlow, Laura Barlow, Anita Barlow and Alan Barlow



# A Note from the President, Michael Korenblit

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as Jewish Federation president.

This has been an interesting two years. After beginning my tenure, Covid broke out again in Oklahoma; therefore, we had to switch gears and return to virtual programming. Throughout that time, Margo Nechtow, our Senior Care Coordinator, did not miss a beat as she continued to set up programs virtually.

Once we began meeting back in person, interest and participation increased. Two of my favorite senior events were:

- 1) Kugel lunch in Anita Barlow's home. The buffet was filled with a variety of Kugel, enjoyed by all.
- 2) The tour of the First Americans Museum where we learned about the unique cultures, diversity, history, contributions, and resilience of the First American Nations in Oklahoma. We also enjoyed dining at the museum's Thirty Nine Restaurant, offering modern, indigenous cuisine.

We are so very grateful to David and Amy Singer, and the Wasserman Family Fund whose financial assistance has made the Senior Care program possible.

## **Other highlights of the last two years are:**

1. The Greater Oklahoma City & Tulsa Jewish Federations played a significant role in helping pass Oklahoma's new Holocaust Curriculum Law that requires all six through twelfth grade social studies students to study the Holocaust.
2. For our *Yom HaShoah* event this year, the Oklahoma Philharmonic performed a musical piece written by a victim. Also, Maestro, Alexander Mickelthwate, created a special musical arrangement to honor our Oklahoma Holocaust Survivors.
3. The 80th Anniversary Celebration of the Jewish Federation where we honored Michael Baron for the extraordinary work he has done for our *Yom HaShoah* programs.
4. I'm proud of the humanitarian efforts by Jewish Federations throughout the world (including Oklahoma City) to help Ukrainians since the start of the war. I had the opportunity to travel with members from thirteen Jewish Federations, throughout the country, to the Ukrainian border in Poland, to bear witness.
5. In November, the Jewish Federation's Fall Luncheon theme was Stopping Hate, Promoting Acceptance. Kari Watkins, from the Oklahoma City Memorial Museum, was our keynote speaker. She spoke about the importance of speaking up against anti-semitism and all forms of hate.

These were some of the many highlights of the last two years. I'd like to thank the Jewish Federation's staff for all their help during these last two years; especially Rachel Johnson. I appreciate the dedication of senior care committee co-chairs Marcy Price and Cheryl Herling and Program Staff, Margo Nechtow. And I thank members of our Board of Directors for all the work they do to make our organization successful.

*Our mission is to support Jewish living, learning, and welfare in the greater Oklahoma City Jewish community; to support Jewish communities throughout the United States, Israel and the world; and to foster understanding and cooperation between the Jewish community and the community-at-large.*



Michael Korenblit

**JFED Annual  
Meeting January  
19th**



If you know anyone who is ill, or could use some homemade chicken soup and Challah, or a check-in please contact Margo at [margo@jfedokc.org](mailto:margo@jfedokc.org) or call 405-286-1781.

# *Hanukkah Sugar Cookies*

adapted from The Complete American-Jewish Cookbook,  
Anne London, Bertha Kahn Bishov

## Ingredients

2 cups sifted unbleached flour, separated  
1 ½ tsps. Baking powder  
½ tsp. salt  
1 stick butter  
1 cup sugar  
1 egg, well beaten  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 Tbsp. milk or cream  
Preheat oven to 375°

- Cream butter; gradually add sugar and cream until light and fluffy. Add egg, vanilla, and milk.
- Sift together 1 ½ cups flour, baking powder, and salt; add to the batter. Then gradually add remaining ½ cup flour until the dough is stiff enough to handle.
- Chill for at least one hour.
- Roll out dough (1/8-inch thick) on lightly floured board and shape with cookie cutters.
- Place on un-greased cookie sheets and sprinkle with tinted sugar.
- Bake for 8 to 10 minutes.
- Place cookies on rack to cool.

Note: Do not let cookies sit for longer than a minute or two on the cookie sheet or it will be difficult to remove them.

This recipe makes 50 to 60 cookies depending on the size of the cookie cutters.

