

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**Jewish Federation**  
of Reading/Berks

## YOUR IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY



# Our Mission

Creating a vibrant, healthy Jewish community by strengthening our connections, inspiring Jewish identity, providing for those in need and promoting greater understanding.



At home and throughout the world, these **Core Values** guide Federation's programs and services to our Jewish community.

## Tzedakah Charity & Social Justice



Appreciating those who support Federation and allow us the opportunity to give back to our community.



Our Maimonides Society meets quarterly to enhance knowledge and friendships.



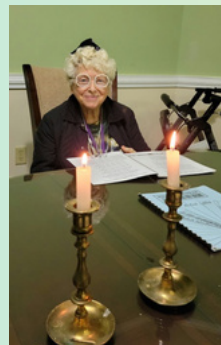
Working with local colleges to provide programming and interfaith outreach.

## Tikkun Olam Repairing the World

JFR Staff participated in United Way's Big Cheese event, helping package 500,000 units of macaroni and cheese.



Bringing our Jewish youth together, building friendships and strong community.



Our Jewish Family Service brings Shabbat services to those living in senior living communities.

## Kehilah

Building Community



Building friendships across the generations and across the globe.

## Torah

Jewish Learning



PJ library provides free Jewish themed books for children thanks to the Sue Viener Fund.



## LETTER FROM THE FEDERATION CHAIR



Dear Jewish Community Members of Reading/Berks,

For the past year, I've been honored to serve and lead the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks. The Board of Directors and our incredibly dedicated staff worked hard to guide the Federation through an initial difficult period. Our key team of Amanda Hornberger, Carole Robinson, Laurie Waxler, Sari Incledon, Margo Levin, Brenda Seidel, Adi Shalev and Ziv Laskin (both on loan from Israel) worked an extraordinary number of hours during the transition period from Bill Franklin's retirement in July, until we welcomed our new CEO, Brian Chartock, in January. With over 25 years in Jewish not-for-profit organizations, Brian brings additional energy and leadership to our Federation and we look forward to his leadership and vision for our future.

I want to recognize and thank the volunteers who serve on the various committees and those who help bring our programs to life. Your continued efforts allow us to support both the Jewish community and the Reading/Berks community as a whole as we continue operating two food pantries each month, offering programs, and assisting struggling individuals and families.


During the 2021-22 school year, the Federation regained ownership of the Lakin Preschool, housed inside Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Our preschool director, Holli Winick Viau, our teachers and aides strive to mold the future of our community. an important part of our mission. We are committed to maintaining its excellence and growing its enrollment.

On behalf of the board, we truly appreciate our dedicated leaders and staff, but also look to our community to help us fulfill our mission and goals. Your intelligence, skills, experience, enthusiasm, ideas, activism, and presence are needed for our Federation to continue to serve our community. We can't grow our community without your physical participation through volunteerism or participation in one of our many activities.

Finally, we wouldn't be able to do what we do without our donors. We thank each and every one of you. We need your continued support to maintain and expand our programs, particularly in view of our shrinking community base, aging population, and increasing need for services. I ask you, if possible, to consider increasing your annual financial commitment to the Federation. Alternatively, if you are need of help, please reach out to us. In short, Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) is the basis for our mission and I am so proud of all that we've done, what we continue to do and what we will do for years to come.

With sincere appreciation,

Sheila Bornstein  
JFR Board Chairperson





# 2022 VOLUNTEERS

We asked, and you appeared. Sometimes we didn't even have to ask and you were still there. Special thanks to our volunteers, for their gifts of time and talent; helping us make a difference in our community.

*"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart."*  
– Elizabeth Andrew

Cindy Balchunas  
Barbara Bender  
Linda Bloom  
Jeff Bornstein  
Sheila Bornstein  
Jason Bram  
Phyllis Dessel  
Jeff Driben  
Michael Farrara  
Sue Farrara  
Raymond Gehring  
Anzie Golden  
Neil Hoffman  
John Incledon  
Pete Jacobson  
Karen Kabakoff

Myron Kabakoff  
Sam Kabakoff  
Luba Karchevsky  
Michael Karchevsky  
Dorie Karp  
Eddie Kazin  
Nancy Knoblauch  
Jennifer Koosed  
Lin Langlois  
Elliott Leisawitz  
Sid Lempiner  
Jeanine Levy  
Michelle Mart  
Haia Mazuz  
Paul Mintz  
Debra Montanino

Tootie Moyer  
Jody Musso  
Mary Neville  
Mick Neville  
Mike Pardo  
Annette Peppard  
Gordon Perlmutter  
Lee Radosh  
Jennafer Reilly  
Tim Reilly  
Mike Robinson  
Nancy Russo  
Mike Schein  
Robert Schneier  
Jim Schwank  
Judy Schwank

Paul Schwartz  
Ellen Schwartz  
Jannine Shapiro  
Joan Sherman  
Ellis Sokoloff  
Vicky Sokoloff  
Jeff Sternlieb  
Sharon Syret  
Gail Tomrell  
Oleg Umanov  
Michael Warshaw  
Phyllis Warshaw  
Andrew Waxler  
Corinne Wernick  
Yvonne Wittels  
Ryan Zeitzer

*Special Thanks to: Bluestone Family & Cosmetic Dental, Phyllis Dessel, Fox Theatres, Ben Leisawitz of Barley Snyder, Sweet Street Desserts, Wyomissing Optometric Center, and Jeff Gernsheimer for their continued in-kind support.*

## STAFF

Brian Chartock | Chief Executive Officer  
brianc@jfreeding.org

Amanda Hornberger | Chief Operating Officer &  
Coordinator, Holocaust Library and Resource Center  
amandah@jfreeding.org

Laurie Waxler | Development Director  
lauriew@jfreeding.org

Carole Robinson | Jewish Family Service Director  
caroler@jfreeding.org

Sari Incledon, Social Worker  
sarii@jfreeding.org

Holli Winick Viau, Lakin Preschool Director  
MsHolli@jfreeding.org

Margo Levin, Programming Coordinator -  
Jewish Community Relations  
margol@jfreeding.org

Amanda Wertz, Administrative Assistant  
info@jfreeding.org

Ziv Laskin, Shaliach  
zivl@jfreeding.org

Irene Mouchlisis, Bookkeeper  
irenem@jfreeding.org

Mark Nemirow | Shalom Editor

Brian Yaffee | Web Master

Peter Alvarez | Maintenance



# HOW YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY



## 2022 GRANTS AND DISTRIBUTIONS



### 2022 Total Revenue:

Annual Campaign: \$275,624

Grants Received: \$5,938

Program Income: \$29,449

JCC Membership: \$22,256

Honorariums/Memorials: \$7,242

Shalom Income: \$16,120

JFS Donations: \$37,949

United Way: \$82,658

**Total: \$477,236**

# JEWISH CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT



*PJ Library participants gather for a book walk at the Exeter Library.*

Offering a variety of programming is one element that strengthens both our Jewish identities and our community connections. We do our best to provide something for all ages, from toddlers to adults. We also collaborate with other organizations to maximize our offerings.

Please look for our Program Book that is published and mailed late summer for a full offering for the year ahead.

## Programming Committee

Paul Schwartz, Chair  
Nancy Russo  
Michele Leisawitz  
Corinne Wernick  
Luba Karchevsky  
Amanda Hornberger, Staff  
Margo Levin, Staff



Our Jewish Youth gathered at Wyomissing Hills Park to welcome our new Shaliach, Ziv Laskin.



Perry Levine's art exhibit at the JCC.

## Youth Advisory Group

Paul Schwartz, Chair  
Jacob Gurwitz  
Luba Karchevsky  
Jessica Leisawitz  
Michele Leisawitz  
Tracy Weiss  
Brian Chartock, Staff  
Ziv Laskin, Staff  
Margo Levin, Staff



Honoring our Holocaust survivors during the Kristallnacht service.



Yom Ha'atzmaut is fun for kids and adults of all ages!



Annual Meeting 2022





# JEWISH CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

*Connecting our Community through Programming*



Yashek lecturer Ellen Germain from the U.S. Dept of State.



A warm Federation welcome from our Board Chair, Sheila Bornstein, to our newest religious leader, Cantor Ted Prosnitz.



Youth activities were offered at the Annual Meeting held at Berks Nature in June.



Ira Forman was our invited speaker for the annual Leo Camp Lecture.



*"Memory in the Living Room"*  
Mariette Jacobson shares her Holocaust story with attendees, alongside daughter Rachel.

## 2022 Milestones

- PJ Library enrollment: 72 children (birth - 8 yrs)
  - 11 PJ Library events with a total of 135 attendees.
- PJ Our Way enrollment: 33 children (ages 9 - 12 yrs.)
  - Special grant-funded program with author Erica Perl.
- Literatour Author Events: 10
- Great Decisions Participants: 16
- Annual Yashek Lecture held on Albright's campus with Ellen Germain, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues from the U.S. Department of State.
- Annual Leo Camp Lecture held on Albright's campus on November 16th with guest speaker Ira Forman, from Georgetown University, focusing on the rise of antisemitism.
- Bus trip to Jewish Heritage Night at the Philadelphia 76ers.
- Violins of Hope Essay Contest winners were honored on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.
- Reading Jewish Film Series - featured 2 films this year.
- Community member and artist Perry Levine displayed her artwork at the JCC.
- Holocaust education event - Memory in the Living room with local survivor Mariette Jacobson and her daughter Rachel.
- Antisemitism workshop with Rachel Fish at the JCC.
- Kristallnacht Commemoration with Christ Episcopal Church in Reading with over 125 participants.
- Yom Hashoah memorial program at the Highlands at Wyomissing with 100+ in attendance.



# JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE

Jewish Family Service is an integral part of the Federation providing human services for the entire community. Serving all age groups, it is dedicated to maintaining and strengthening the quality of individual and family life in the Jewish community through outreach, counseling, emergency financial assistance and information and referral.

With the introduction and growing audiences of Noontime Knowledge and Movie Mondays, Jewish Family Service provides a opportunities for retirees to join together each month, enhancing both knowledge and friendships.



Paul Schwartz and Jason Bram blow the shofar for the Friendship Circle Rosh Hashanah celebration.



Food Pantry volunteers are hard at work twice monthly, rain or shine to help those in need.



Phyllis Dessel volunteers every year to help our seniors navigate Medicare options.



Helene Berne at the Friendship Circle Thanksgiving meal.

## 2022 Milestones

- Twice monthly Friendship Circle programs.
- Holiday outreach & gift delivery to 115 seniors on Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover and Rosh Hashanah.
- Two monthly Food Pantries in conjunction with Helping Harvest:
  - 182,000 lbs of food, valued at \$300,000, distributed throughout the year
  - 400 families served each month
- "Noontime Knowledge" - monthly educational program for JCC members.
- Passover Seder and Rosh Hashanah service for seniors.
- Enlist volunteers to help throughout the year.

JFS Director Carole Robinson prepares meals for home deliveries.



## JFS Committee

Sue Farrara, Chair  
Cindy Balchunas  
Phyllis Dessel  
Elliott Leisawitz  
Carole Robinson, staff  
Sari Incledon, staff

# SHLICHACH / SHALIACH

*Building Living Bridges to Israel*

**Shlichim** is the collective word for the emissary program our Federation has adopted over the past few years to provide a living connection to Israel by promoting personal Israeli experiences for both adults and children. Adi Shalev, our Shlichach (female emissary) from Modi'in, was with us through July, 2022, and our Shaliach (male emissary) Ziv Laskin arrived in September. Speaking authentically about their faith and culture in Israel, they bring a unique opportunity for our community to connect with the cultural side of Israel and being Jewish.



There were always smiles at Adi's monthly cooking classes.



Connecting with our community, Ziv shares his experience celebrating Hanukkah at the Reading Public Museum.



Jewish Youth Event at the Escape Room with Ziv.

## 2022 Milestones

- Israeli Culture
  - Israeli cooking classes
  - Lectures from Israeli speakers and organizations
  - Weekly Hebrew Classes
- Youth Outreach
  - Youth volunteer opportunities with Opportunity House
  - Youth group activities for kids in grades 8 - 12
  - Religious school activities with RCOS & Chabad
- Young Adults
  - Monthly Shabbat dinners
  - Holiday programs
- Connection to Israeli Holidays
  - Yom Hazikaron commemoration
  - Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration
- Coordination with local institutions including RACC, Alvernia, Albright, Kutztown and local churches
- Community Outreach
  - Adults' Night Out
  - Connections with community members



Hebrew Class graduation with Adi.



# JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

*Jewish Culture / Engagement / Identity*  
*~ Building Bridges ~*

The Jewish Community Relations Council continues to fight for social justice and combat antisemitism in Berks County and beyond.



Kristallnacht service and  
candlelight vigil

## Committee

Debbie Goldberg, Chair

Margo Levin, Staff

## 2022 Milestones

JCRC focused on building bridges with other minority communities in the area including:

- Centro Hispano of Reading
- LGBT Center of Reading
- Islamic Center of Reading
- NAACP
- ADL of Philadelphia
- Bring the Change
- JCRC meets regularly as part of the Greater Reading Unity Coalition made up of JFR, NAACP, Centro Hispano, the Islamic Center of Reading, Bring the Change and the LGBT Center and participates in the annual Berks Cultural Diversity Festival in Reading.
- Participated in a GRUC effort to organize a Candidate's Forum in Fall '22.
- Participated in and helped organize a candlelight vigil and Kristallnacht service at Christ Church in Reading.
- Collaborated with "Bring the Change" to host a Thanksgiving Dinner in Reading for those in need. Meals were provided for over 200 people.
- Participated in a candlelight vigil organized by the LGBT Center in memory of those lost at Club Q in Colorado.



Introducing our new CEO, Brian Chartock,  
to the group in early 2023



Members of the Greater Reading Unity Coalition



# MOMENTUM TRIP TO ISRAEL

*"The **MOMentum** Year-Long **Journey** empowers women to connect to Jewish values, engage with **Israel**, take action, and foster unity, without uniformity."*

*The subsidized trip is 9 days long, followed by a year-long journey here at home, learning more about bringing Judaism into our lives and our homes.*



Momentum moms atop Masada, overlooking the Dead Sea

## July 2022 Itinerary

- Tel Aviv - Anu Museum, Battae Ethiopian Heritage Center.
- Tsfat - Tour of the beautiful city perched on a mountaintop in the Upper Galilee, Tour Tsfat Mikva and Education Center.
- Visit Yad Vashem, Israel's living memorial to the Holocaust and Har Herzl, Israel's national cemetery.
- Tour of Jerusalem, followed by a visit to the Kotel - Western Wall.
- Visit to Nefesh B'Nefesh, an organization that welcomes those who wish to make aliyah to Israel.
- Shabbat candle lighting together followed by dancing at the Kotel.
- Lunch with a Shabbat host family in Jerusalem.
- Desert experience at Eretz Bereishit including camel rides, pita making, yoga and personal meditation in the desert. Several members of our group also participated in a ceremony to receive their Hebrew name.
- Dead Sea swim followed by a tour of Masada.
- IDF Soldier's Experience - the group heard from a group of female soldiers currently serving followed by a tour of Ammunition Hill, commemorating the liberation and reunification of Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War.

### Trip Participants:

Erica Cohen  
Jennifer Gurwitz  
Antoinette LaPrince  
Shelley LaPrince  
Lisa Nemeroff  
Jodi Radosh  
Stephanie Rotenberg  
Oda Schwab  
Jillian Storch  
Laurie Waxler  
Tracy Weiss  
Jennifer Koosed, Educator  
Amanda Hornberger, Leader  
Margo Levin, Leader



JFR's Momentum moms celebrating new friendships with their trip leader Cheryl (6th from right.)



As part of the continued learning curve, the group met to hike Monocacy Hill.

# ISRAEL & GLOBAL NEEDS

*The Jewish Federation of Reading helps provide advocacy & justice in Israel, and throughout the world, by supporting these two programs.*

**Meir Panim** - based in Israel, their mission is to alleviate and diminish the harmful effects of poverty on thousands of families across Israel by supporting a range of food and social service programs aimed at helping the needy with dignity and respect, including free restaurants, meals-on-wheels, school lunch programs, prepaid food card distribution, vocational training and after-school youth clubs. For more information on this organization, please visit [www.meir-panim.org](http://www.meir-panim.org)



A client being served at one of several Meir Panim locations.



This refrigerated truck was donated to Meir Panim by a Jewish Federation in New Jersey.



Yemin Orde students come from around the world.



Synagogue of Yemin Orde on Mt. Carmel.

**Yemin Orde** - a Youth Village in Israel that is a home, school and safe-haven to 450 children from around the world. The Village has welcomed children from France, North Africa, Iran, India, Yemen, Eastern Europe and South America. Most of the children have suffered trauma in their young lives from isolation and neglect, to abandonment and extreme poverty. At Yemin Orde, they find a home, a family and a future. For more information about this organization, please visit [www.impact-israel.org](http://www.impact-israel.org)



# LAKIN PRESCHOOL

*Offering preschool programming for toddlers and children up to age 5. The preschool is located within Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom and funded, in part, by the Federation's Edwin A. & Alma Lakin Philanthropic Fund. As of February 2022, the Lakin preschool is now under the full ownership and management of the Jewish Federation of Reading.*



## 2022-2023 Programming

### Program Offerings:

**Little Stars** Playgroup

**Discovery** - for 3+ yrs

**Adventurers** - for 4+ yrs

**Pre-K** - new for 2023-24 school year

### Directors:

Judy Synnamon for 2021-2022

Holli Winick Viau for 2022-23 school year

### Enrichment Programs

- Amazing Athletes
- I Love Stories
- Kaleidoscope
- Soccer Shots
- Stay & Play
- Early Morning Drop off at 8:00 am



LPS kids enjoying a visit from the Wyomissing Fire Department.



Celebrating 100 days of preschool.



Lakin preschoolers celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday.



# A Letter from our Chief Executive Officer



While having just arrived in January, in a few short months' time, I already feel a part of the community and the "Federation family." Thank you to everyone who has welcomed me. Our volunteers are in a word: Incredible.

We have much to do. Among the many challenges facing us, one major opportunity is philanthropy. Over the next few years, one of Federation's major goals will be to strengthen and to grow our philanthropic efforts; we will endeavor to expand our annual campaign and look for additional revenue streams. Why? Simply put, to allow the Federation of Reading Berks – Your Federation – to remain the best in class while serving our community. Of course, this goal can only be achieved with the 100% commitment of the Board and staff. I remain confident that we will have both. I am reminded of a quote told to us in the Pirke Avot: "You are not required to finish your work, yet neither are you required to desist from it." It is incumbent upon all of us – as one Jewish Community – to work together to achieve greatness and to leave our Federation community in the best possible future position as our predecessors did for us.

It is a privilege and an honor for me to serve as the Federation's CEO. My pledge to the community is to do my very best to continue to strengthen and to preserve all the good work and efforts of those who came before me; moreover, I would like to thank the Board for serving as a 100%, fully committed partner in these efforts.

I would like to personally acknowledge the hard work and resourcefulness of the JFR team: Amanda Hornberger, Carole Robinson, Laurie Waxler, Margo Levin, Sari Incledon, Ziv Laskin and Holli Winick Viau. Your dedication and commitment to Federation's mission is truly exemplary. Thank you.

L'Shalom,

Brian Chartock



Following the retirement of William Franklin on July 31, 2022, Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks welcomed Brian Chartock as our new Chief Executive Officer as of January 1, 2023.

# Board of Directors

## Officers 2022-2023

Chairperson: Sheila Bornstein  
1st Vice Chair: Paul Schwartz  
2nd Vice Chair: Jennifer Koosed  
Treasurer: Radene Gordon-Beck  
Secretary: Debbie Goldberg

## Board of Directors for 2022-2023

Irving Ehrlich	Michele Leisawitz
Jacob Gurwitz	Leah Rotenberg
Michael Karchevsky	James Rothstein
Jennifer Koosed	Jonathan Simon
Jessica Leisawitz	

## Affiliate Members 2022 - 2023

Rabbi Yosef Lipsker, Chabad Lubavitch  
Sue Wilson, Keshar Zion  
Rabbi Brian Michelson, Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom



Lakin Preschoolers helped us commemorate the retirement of President William Franklin in July, 2022.

At the June 11, 2023 Annual Meeting of the Jewish Federation of Reading, the members in attendance will vote on the slate of Officers and Directors below. This information is provided in accordance with the Federation's bylaws.

## Officers 2023-2024

Chairperson: Sheila Bornstein  
1st Vice Chair: Jennifer Koosed\*  
2nd Vice Chair: Susan Wilson\*  
Treasurer: Paul Schwartz\*  
Secretary: Debbie Goldberg

## Board of Directors for 2023-2024

Jonathan Avins	Jessica Leisawitz
Ronald Berman*	Michele Leisawitz
Irving Ehrlich	Leah Rotenberg
Jacob Gurwitz	James Rothstein
Michael Karchevsky	

\*denotes new positions and nominations

## Affiliate Members 2023 - 2024

Rabbi Yosef Lipsker, Chabad Lubavitch  
Cantor Ted Prosnitz, Keshar Zion  
Rabbi Brian Michelson, Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom



Federation Board members present at March, 2023 meeting.

## Past Board Chairs

Robert Caster	Yvonne Frey Oppenheimer	Donald Fox	George P. Viener	Edwin Lakin*
Haia Mazuz	Michael Fromm	Neal Jacobs*	Bernard Fromm	Leo Camp*
Larry Rotenberg	Kenneth Lakin	Paul Kozloff	David N. Farber*	George Eligman*
Paul D. Cohn	Gordon Perlmutter	Alma Lakin*	Gerald A. Goodman*	Norman Dunitz*
Alvin Katz	Sheila Lattin	Victor H. Hammel	Benjamin Cutler*	Max Fisher*.

\*Deceased



ENRICHING LIVES  
מעשירים חיים



1100 Berkshire Blvd.  
Wyomissing, PA 19610  
610-921-0624

[ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://ReadingJewishCommunity.org)  
[info@JFReading.org](mailto:info@JFReading.org)

