



# Shalom04|25

The Journal of the Reading Jewish Community published by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks

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## Granddaughter of Holocaust survivors to lead YomHaShoah program

By Vicki Haller Graff  
*Program Director*

“Civilization hangs suspended, from generation to generation, by the gossamer strand of memory. If only one cohort of mothers and fathers fails to convey to its children what it has learnt from its parents, then the great chain of learning and wisdom snaps. If the guardians of human knowledge stumble only one time, in their fall collapses the whole edifice of knowledge and understanding.”

This quote, attributed to Rabbi Dr. Jacob Neusner, applies to so much of Jewish life, especially Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day.

This year, we are pleased to welcome Cindy Silverman Chronister, granddaughter of Holocaust survivors Karl and Mathilde Reiser. She will be the speaker for our program commemorating Yom HaShoah on Wednesday, April 23, at 7 p.m., at the JCC (1100 Berkshire Blvd., Wyomissing). This event is open to the public.

Cindy’s grandparents were refugees who both escaped Nazi-occupied Vienna.



Cindy Silverman Chronister

They never wanted to share their story with others despite repeated requests. After the

death of her grandparents’, Cindy’s family discovered an archive with documentation about their life in Vienna before and during the occupation as well as documentation of their rescue.

In May 2019, Cindy and her family went to Vienna to not only learn about her grandparents’ lives but to have memorial stones placed at her great-grandparents’ former residences.

Cindy continues to scan, preserve, and translate dozens of letters between her grandparents and great-grandparents from during the war.

Local Holocaust survivors and their family members have been invited to join us for the program, which includes a candle lighting along with a name reading of victims of the Holocaust with ties to our local community. We will recite the Holocaust Kaddish and a special memorial prayer.

If you have family members who were murdered in the Holocaust and would like their names read aloud, please email the names to [vickig@jfreading.org](mailto:vickig@jfreading.org) or call 610-921-0624 by April 16.

## Honored guests coming to Reading for Yom HaZikaron, Yom HaAtzmaut

By Vicki Haller Graff

The Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks is thrilled to announce that two honored guests will be joining us in Reading at the end of April and beginning of May to observe Yom HaZikaron, Israeli Memorial Day, and celebrate Yom HaAtzma’ut, Israeli Independence Day.

There will be multiple times during the week they are here for each member of our Jewish community to meet them, hear their stories and learn about life in Israel. Please watch your email for details and invitations.

Why is it important for us in Reading to observe Israeli holidays and uplift Israeli culture? Israel unifies all Jews — we may have different opinions on the politics, just like at home, but we can all agree that Israel is a deeply meaningful and vital homeland for our people.

Our interest and love for Israel builds bridges between us and to the greater community. We celebrate Israeli holidays because they are Jewish holidays — we amplify their memories and joys in our own community.

Some events you can look forward to:

**Tuesday, April 29:** Our guests will meet with all Hebrew school aged

children in our community to share stories of life in Israel and introduce some Hebrew language. That evening, a special presentation in a community member’s home will allow our guests to share their stories from October 7 and the aftermath in an intimate conversation with donors to the Israel and Annual campaigns. Light fare and drinks will be served.

**Wednesday, April 30:** At noon, we will observe Yom HaZikaron together as a community with our guests at the JCC. Later that evening, we will invite the young adults in our community to meet our guests for a dessert reception and discussion.

**Thursday, May 1:** we will host community leaders from government, education, and our partner organizations to build understanding and connections between the Jewish and non-Jewish community.

- Thursday afternoon, we will celebrate Yom Ha Atzma’ut at Keshet Zion with a fair for all ages — games, food and wine tastings, music and dancing, and more — to celebrate Israel’s 77th birthday with our honored guests!
- Thursday evening, we’ll have a pizza party for tweens and teens to



meet our guests and talk with them in a smaller group. On Friday, they will visit Lakin preschool for Shabbat and story time and visit a local church to build more understanding and goodwill.

More is planned, and all will be communicated in detail by email in the coming weeks.

We look forward to commemorating and celebrating Israel’s past, present, and future with you.

# Importance of family

By Laurie Waxler

Fresh off the plane from Wyoming for a whirlwind wedding weekend, I'm reminded of the importance of the family unit.



My husband's family is very small, as he is one of only three cousins, living in Wyomissing, New York City and Los Angeles, respectively. While we don't get to spend much time together, we have found unique ways of connecting. We have a family text chain that includes the three cousins, spouses, and the adult children.

A family of comedians, it can be a very funny chain, and sometimes inappropriate. With several texts a week and everyone engaged, when we do get together in person, it's like we just saw them yesterday.

This text chain was the first place we went to announce my daughter's engagement and it's also where pictures of the LA fires were shared when our cousin's house burned to the ground. Things like texting and FaceTime have given us this amazing avenue to connect with loved ones when we're unable to travel in person. I have friends who FaceTime their grandchildren every day from a different city or state, and for some, it's even from another country.

In addition to immediate family, our cousin was lucky enough to share her wedding with friends from across the country. She referred to all us as both her biological family and her chosen family and together, we shared our excitement that she finally found her man; whom we think is awesome, by the way!

When you think about our Berks County Jewish community, we have plenty of biological families, but we have more chosen families with whom we celebrate weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, births and a plethora of life's ups and downs. How lucky we are to have such a warm and welcoming Jewish community and a Federation that works every day to keep it connected.

If you find yourself looking for a little more 'family', our Federation doors are wide open and ready to welcome you.

What makes our Federation strong is the people who support it by attending programs, supporting us financially through the Annual Campaign, and volunteering. Together, we will always be stronger, so I encourage you to join us in whatever way you can.

Development



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Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 1st 10am-12pm  
at the JCC, 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Wyomissing

Installation of board members, officers and  
brunch to follow





# A tradition of giving: Jewish philanthropy and its connection to Passover

By Brian Chartock  
CEO

Passover, or Pesach in Hebrew, is one of the most significant holidays in the Jewish calendar, commemorating the Exodus of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt to freedom in Eretz Yisrael.

The holiday is filled with rituals, traditions, and teachings that reflect the core values of Judaism, including freedom, justice, and community. Among these, the concept of philanthropy — or tzedakah — holds a special place. While the Seder, the central ritual meal of Passover, focuses on remembering the hardships of slavery and celebrating the miracle of freedom, it also emphasizes the importance of helping those in need.

This connection between Passover and Jewish philanthropy is connected through both the holiday's narrative and its customs, making Passover a powerful time to reflect on the values of charity and generosity.

At the heart of Passover is the story of the Exodus, where the Israelites were freed from the oppression of the Egyptians. This narrative instills a profound sense of empathy for those who are suffering and a commitment to fighting for justice and freedom. The Exodus story itself emphasizes the importance of compassion and the responsibility to ensure that others are not oppressed.

In Judaism, freedom is not just a personal pursuit but a communal value. The Seder's recitation of the ma nishtana ("Why is this night different from all other nights?") and the retelling of the Exodus serves as a reminder that every generation has a duty to remember the plight of the oppressed; moreover, this theme resonates deeply with the concept of tzedakah, or charity. Just as the Israelites were freed from slavery, Jewish teachings stress that it is our responsibility to support those who are still in need — whether through financial donations, volunteering, or advocating for justice.

The Haggadah, the book read from during the Passover Seder, tells the story of the Exodus and contains numerous teachings about justice, compassion, and charity. One of the key components of the

Haggadah is the call to remember the less fortunate. During the Seder, it is traditional to set aside a portion of the meal for the poor or needy, emphasizing the concept that no one should be without sustenance during such a significant festival.

In addition, the Haggadah includes the four questions, which encourage reflection on the significance of the Seder and the holiday. These questions also urge participants to think about the world beyond themselves and consider how they can make a difference. The act of reaching out to others in need during Passover reflects the Jewish principle of tzedakah too — the idea that we are all responsible for helping those less fortunate, just as our ancestors were once helped by God.

Another important tradition associated with Passover is the opening of the door for the prophet Elijah, symbolizing our hope for peace, justice, and redemption for all. While this tradition is often seen as a way to invite the spirit of Elijah into the home, it also carries deeper meaning about hospitality and welcoming the stranger. The act of offering a place for Elijah is symbolic of the broader Jewish value of welcoming those in need.

Throughout Jewish history, there has been a strong emphasis on caring for the stranger, whether they are an orphan, a widow, or someone without resources. In fact, the Torah commands the Jewish people to "love the stranger" (Deuteronomy 10:19) because they were once strangers in the land of Egypt. Passover, as a time of remembering our journey from slavery to freedom, reinforces this message of inclusivity and compassion. It's a reminder that our freedom is not complete unless we ensure the well-being of those who are vulnerable, marginalized or in need of assistance.

This idea connects directly to Jewish philanthropy, where helping others — especially those who are disadvantaged or in distress — is considered a sacred responsibility. During Passover, many Jewish communities (like through our own Federation's Passover Campaign) participate in charity campaigns or fundraisers to help feed the hungry, assist the homeless or support local or global causes that align with the values of justice and compassion. It

is a time for Jews to demonstrate their commitment to these ideals through tangible acts of giving.

Passover's observance of the Ten Plagues — while a reminder of the suffering of the Egyptians — is also a call to action for those who see injustice in the world. In the story of the Exodus, the plagues were a result of Pharaoh's refusal to let go the enslaved Israelites. Each plague represents a form of suffering, and the eventual liberation of the Israelites is seen as God's response to oppression.

This theme of justice and the fight against oppression ties into Jewish philanthropy, which often includes advocating for the rights and dignity of the oppressed. Just as the Jewish people were liberated from Pharaoh's oppression, Jews today are called upon to take action against forms of modern-day oppression. The holiday provides a poignant opportunity to support initiatives that promote social justice, equality and human rights, such as funding programs for refugees, fighting against racial injustice and supporting global efforts to combat poverty.

The Passover Seder itself is often accompanied by charitable giving. Many Jewish families make a habit of donating a portion of their holiday meal to a local charity, synagogue or Jewish Family Service, which helps

provide food and resources to those in need.

This act of giving is not just about fulfilling a commandment but about symbolizing the spirit of tzedakah in a very practical way. Just as the Israelites shared their resources during their journey to freedom, Jewish families today are encouraged to share their blessings with others, particularly those who are struggling to make ends meet.

Passover is more than just a celebration of freedom; Passover is a call to action for those who are committed to social justice, compassion, and charity. The holiday's emphasis on remembering the suffering of the past encourages Jews to give generously and ensure that others — especially the less fortunate — are not forgotten. From the traditions of the Seder to the lessons of the Exodus story, Passover serves as a reminder that philanthropy is at the core of Jewish values.

By donating to causes that promote justice and equality, and by reaching out to those in need, Jews continue to fulfill the enduring mitzvah (commandment) of tzedakah, thus ensuring that the light of Passover extends far beyond the dinner table and into the broader world.



L'Shalom and happy Passover,  
-Brian

### It's Simcha Supplement time

If you had or are having a bar/bat mitzvah or graduation (high school or higher) in your family this Jewish year, share the good news with the community. Please submit a few sentences about the person and their accomplishment, along with a photo.

Text and photos can be sent to [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) or to the Federation office.

**DEADLINE IS APRIL 30.**

April★ Nissan-Iyar	
	
Shabbat Candle Lightings	Torah Portions
April 4 7:12 p.m.	April 5/7 Nissan Vayikra (Leviticus 1:1-5:26)
April 11 4:37 p.m.	April 12/14 Nissan Erev Pesach- Tzav (Leviticus 6:1-8:36)
April 18 7:26 p.m.	April 19/21 Nissan Passover (Leviticus 22:26-23:44)
April 25 7:33 p.m.	April 26/28 Nissan Shemini (Leviticus 9:1-11:47)

## Shalom

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General Offices:

1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125  
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Phone:

610-921-0624

Web site:

FAX: 610-929-0886  
[www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org)

Jewish Federation of Reading


CEO: Brian Chartock

Chair: Sheila Bornstein

Communications Director: Mark Nemirow, Editor


Proofreaders: Federation staff

*The opinions expressed in Shalom are of the writers and not the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks*



Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks






# LITERATOUR BERKS

CELEBRATING AUTHORS AND BOOKS

**TUESDAY, APRIL 22ND, 2025**  
**12:00 PM AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF READING/BERKS**



## ARTHUR J. MAGIDA



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Join us for a Noontime Knowledge with Arthur J. Magida, author of the compelling book "Two Wheels to Freedom". He'll be discussing this amazing true story, as well as signing & selling copies at the event. This program is brought to us by Literatour Berks, Jewish Book Council, The Jewish Federation of Reading & Berks, and the Exeter Community Library.



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# A flight from El Paso and a president’s mitzvah: The struggle for a Minyan in a small community

**By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker**  
*Chabad Center of Berks County*

As we prepare for Passover — the Festival of Redemption — we are reminded not only of the grand miracles of our history — the Ten Plagues, the splitting of the sea, the revelation at Sinai — but also of the everyday moments when everything falls into place.

Ensuring a Minyan every week in a small community like Reading is never easy. Last month, however, the challenge reached a new level.

As a rabbi, I have many talents — but reading from the Torah is not one of them. Normally, we have dedicated Torah readers like Dr. Mazuz, Dr. Ehrlich or visiting students. This week, every single one was unavailable.

And it wasn’t just any Shabbat. It was a special occasion, the 10th of Shevat — the 75th yahrtzeit of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe. More pressing, my dear friend Paul Delfin was marking the 44th yahrtzeit of his mother and



the anniversary of his bar mitzvah. He needed a Minyan for Kaddish and to hear the Torah reading on such a significant day.

I spent hours making phone calls—reaching out to friends. I wasn’t getting a confirmed count.

Then, in the midst of my frustration, my wife, Chana, made an unlikely suggestion:

“Call my brother.”

He lives in El Paso, Texas — over 2,000 miles away — so the idea of him flying in at the last minute seemed absurd. But Chana urged me to give it a try.

On Thursday, I picked up the phone. “Pinny, I have a crazy idea.”

Before I could finish, he replied, “I’m coming.”

Without hesitation, he accepted the challenge — an overnight layover in Houston, a 5 a.m. flight to Philadelphia and a 90-minute drive to Reading — all to read the Torah for our community.

By Friday afternoon, he had arrived. With my brother-in-law on board and the other commitments finally secured, everything was set.

Shabbat morning, I arrived at shul feeling relieved. But as I looked around, I noticed only nine men. One was missing. I checked my watch and scanned the door, hoping he would appear. Minutes passed with no sign.

Determined to have a full Minyan, I grabbed my coat and started knocking on doors in search of a solution. Then I remembered Bruce Cohen, the president of Reading’s Reform congregation. I hurried to his house.

Bruce opened the door, saw me standing there, and before I could explain, he smiled and said, “Instead of putting on my ski cap, I’ll put on my kippah. I’ll be there.”

Moments later, Bruce arrived at shul, completing our Minyan.

That Shabbat, the Torah reading carried special meaning. Paul was called up for an Aliyah. And because Bruce is a Kohen, for the first time in a long while we were able to properly call up a Kohen for the first Aliyah—a delightful, unexpected blessing.

The night before Shabbat, at our gathering, we discussed miracles—the

grand ones, like the splitting of the sea, and the quieter ones we notice only in retrospect.

Was it a miracle that my brother-in-law flew cross-country on a whim?

Was it a miracle that Bruce, who stepped up when we needed him most, also happened to be a Kohen?

Was it a miracle that Paul was called to the Torah again, echoing his bar mitzvah years?

Perhaps these moments aren’t as dramatic as ancient miracles, but when small things fall perfectly into place — when an unexpected “yes” changes everything — they are miracles, too.

As we gather around our Seder tables this year, retelling the story of our redemption, may we also pause to recognize the quiet miracles in our own lives. May we see the hidden hand of Hashem, G-d, in the people who say “yes” when we least expect it, in the moments when everything aligns, and in the faith that carries us forward.

After all, sometimes redemption begins with something as simple as a flight from El Paso and a knock on a door.

## Passover Seder is much more than a meal

**By Rabbi Brian Michelson**  
*Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom*

As a child, I remember paging through the Haggadah at the Passover Seder, trying to figure out how many more pages we needed to read before we could finally eat. Passover was all about the food, and the Seder was just an obstacle we had to overcome to eat.

The Passover Seder is more than a family banquet, a chance to roll out the favorite family recipes or experiment with something different. The Seder is a seminar in Jewish history. It is the way we fulfill the biblical commandment, “and you shall tell your child on that day, ‘it is because of what the Lord did for me when I went free from Egypt.’”

Our celebration is a fusion of two festivals — a farmer’s festival, the feast of unleavened bread, where people in preparation of the coming wheat harvest cleaned out their homes and storehouses of all Chametz — all the leavened goods they had. This



was combined with a shepherds’ festival, when many lambs are born. The shepherds celebrated the flock’s fertility by sacrificing a sheep and smearing its blood on the doorposts of their tents.

For many years, the two festivals remained separate. It was not until the Babylonian exile that these two separate festivals became one.

During the exile, the Israelites’ intense desire for freedom and their exile from the Temple in Jerusalem, where they would have made sacrifices, fused the two as a memorial of celebrations past and redemptions hoped for.

By the time of the Second Temple, Pesach had become a festival of newness, creation, creativity, and freedom. The ancient Israelites would flock to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival. For a week, they would remain in Jerusalem, eating only unleavened bread and telling tales of freedom. After the end of the seventh day, they would return home.

During the late Second Temple period, under the influence of Greek and Roman culture, the Pesach celebration became a carefully ordered

meal that borrowed the pattern of the Greek and Roman symposium or discussion banquet. The symposium was an opportunity for eating, drinking, and intellectual discussion on a set theme. It would begin with hand washing and hors d’oeuvres. Lively, freewheeling conversation, and often a lot of wine, were also part of the symposium.

Compare this to our Seder, and you will see the resemblance. We start our Seder with hors d’oeuvres (the Karpas/parsley) and hand

washing. We share at least four cups of wine, and we begin our discussion of the story of the Exodus by asking questions and becoming personally involved with it. The later into the Seder you get, the louder the celebrations become. Regardless of the origins of the Seder, it is still a meaningful and vital part of our Jewish tradition.

I wish you all a Chag Samayach v’Kasher. May your Seder table be filled with fun, food, family, and good discussions.

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Jewish Family Service  
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**PASSOVER SEDER**  
**Thursday, April 10**  
**11:45 am at the JCC**  
Led by Sari Incledon and Carole Robinson  
Reservations Required  
by April 1  
610-921-0624



**By Margo Levin**

importance of improving transparency and

"In the time of rising antisemitism, it was very meaningful for me to be able to attend

*Esme Platt, Alexandra Levin and Bella Karchevsky at the ADL convention in New York in March.*

“Wonder Woman” star Gal Gadot accepted the ADL’s International Leadership Award and emphasized the urgency of confronting Jew hatred.

Please report antisemitic and related incidents to the ADL online at [adl.org/reportincident](https://adl.org/reportincident) or text "hatehelp" to 51555. The Federation is readily available to assist with questions or concerns as well.

RSVP requested: [info@jfreeding.org](mailto:info@jfreeding.org).  
or call 610-921-0624



# Farewell from Lakin Preschool

By Wendy Bright & Judy Lefante

You must all know by now, Lakin Preschool is closing at the end of this school year. Lakin has been the neighborhood preschool for many years.

We would like to take this time to remember and thank all of the former teachers and aides who nurtured children and used their special talents and educational background to make Lakin Preschool the unique place that it is. We are grateful to have worked with such a fantastic group of children and their families.

Over the years, we have cherished the opportunity to nurture, educate and watch our children grow. Our primary focus has always been on providing a safe, vibrant and nurturing environment where every child could thrive.

It has been an honor to be a part of your child's early development and education. We treasure the memories we have created together and will miss the daily joy of witnessing your children grow.

Thank you once again for being a part of the Lakin Preschool family. We wish you and your children continued success, health and happiness in all of your future adventures.



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## "HOLOCAUST'S IMPACT ON ONE FAMILY"



APRIL 24 2:00 P.M.  
at the JCC, 1100 Berkshire Blvd Wyomissing

Join Jeff Gernsheimer as he shares the incredible story of his mother, Hilde Gernsheimer's journey from Germany to England to the U.S. to escape the Holocaust.

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# Jewish Summer Camp

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Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks



# Celebrating our JFS volunteers

By Carole Robinson

National Volunteer Week, which was established in 1974, is celebrated annually during the third week of April. It spotlights volunteers who are improving their local communities and working to build a more equitable society. In 1989, President George H.W. Bush called on volunteers to become a “thousand points of light.”



Without further ado, I would like to recognize some of those “points of light” that I have been fortunate enough to work with, starting with our youngest volunteers.

1. The children at Lakin Preschool donate tzedakah every week, filling their decorated cans with coins and adding them to the school tzedakah container on Shabbat. On March 7, they invited me to join them for their Shabbat observance, delighting me with their weighty gift (in pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters) of \$220 for our JFS food pantries. Then the preschoolers enthusiastically packed lunch bags for children whose families struggle with food insecurity. I would like to thank all the Lakin families for their generosity and for taking action to help those less fortunate!

2. A big shout-out to all the volunteers keeping our food pantries running! Food pantries play a vital role in addressing food insecurity and providing essential nutrition to those in need. Our food pantry volunteers are the backbone of our operation. Without them, we would be unable to help the 600 households we serve each month. Our volunteers sort and pack food, assist with client intake, distribute food to clients, and help with data entry. We distributed 290,000 lbs. of food valued at \$533,000 to 1,885 households in 2024, thanks to our invaluable volunteers:
- Allison Althouse

Paul Mintz

Mary Anne Avins

Debra Montanino

Cindy Balchunas

Annette Peppard

Sam Flamholz

Jennafer Reilly

Sarah Flamholz

Mike Robinson

Raymond Gehring

Patty Hartman

Paul Schwartz

John Incledon

Russ Shanahan

Pete Jacobson

Joan Sherman

Sid Lempiner

Jannine Shapiro

Lisa Levine

Oleg Umanov

John Lozar

Mike Schein

Anzie Golden

Ellen Schwartz

Michael Warshaw

Lisa Lozar

Phyllis Warshaw

3. In addition to our pantry volunteers, we have volunteers who willingly help in a variety of ways as the need arises. Thank you to our volunteer drivers who take our seniors to appointments or programs: Jeff and Sheila Bornstein, Anzie Golden, John Incledon, Carol and Gordon Perlmutter, Mike Robinson, Ellen and Paul Schwartz and Lila Shapiro. You enable our seniors to stay engaged in our community and they are so appreciative!
4. We don't stop there! Thank you to the volunteers who help us serve our senior meals, bake holiday treats, make decorations, or deliver holiday gifts: Cindy Balchunas, Sheila Bornstein, Sue Farrara, Carol and Gordon Perlmutter, Robert Schneier, Ingrid Solysik, Claudia Strauss, Sharon Syret, Gail Tomrell, Corinne and Andy Wernick, and Louise Zeidman. You help our seniors celebrate the Jewish holidays and know that they are remembered!
5. Thank you to Nancy Knoblauch, who makes weekly phone calls to her phone “buddy” and to our volunteers who visit shut-ins. You help our community stay connected! And thanks to volunteer Phyllis Dessel, who does Medicare consultations to help seniors select the best insurance plan for them.

You, too, may want to consider joining our wonderful team of JFS volunteers to become a “point of light” for the following reasons:

- Making a positive impact on the community by offering support to those in need.
- Building connections, friendships, and a deeper sense of belonging
- Sense of purpose and fulfillment through giving back.
- Health benefits. Volunteering can lower stress levels, combat depression, and improve overall-well-being.
- Creating a sense of purpose, an opportunity to align your actions with your values
- It's often fun. Volunteering can be enjoyable and fulfilling!

If you want to help JFS shine a little bit brighter, please contact me for a volunteer opportunity at [caroler@jfreading.org](mailto:caroler@jfreading.org) or 610-921-0624.



Lakin Preschool children, including Isaac Missan, above, pack meals for children whose families struggle with food insecurity.



Volunteers distribute food at the SDA Church food pantry.

Many thanks to our Food Pantry volunteers who distributed food to over 600 households in March.

Mary Anne Avins

Cindy Balchunas

Sam Flamholz

Sarah Flamholz

Sharon Gernsheimer

Patty Hartman

John Incledon

Pete Jacobson

Sid Lempiner

Lisa Levine

Paul Mintz

Annette Peppard

Jenn Reilly

Mike Robinson

Mike Schein

Ellen Schwartz

Paul Schwartz

Russ Shanahan

Oleg Umanov

JewishFamilyService

- Food Pantry
- Friendship Circle
- Counseling Services
- Transportation
- Financial Assistance
- Hospital and
- Home Visitations
- Living with Loss
- Information and
- Referral
- Case Management
- Holiday Programs

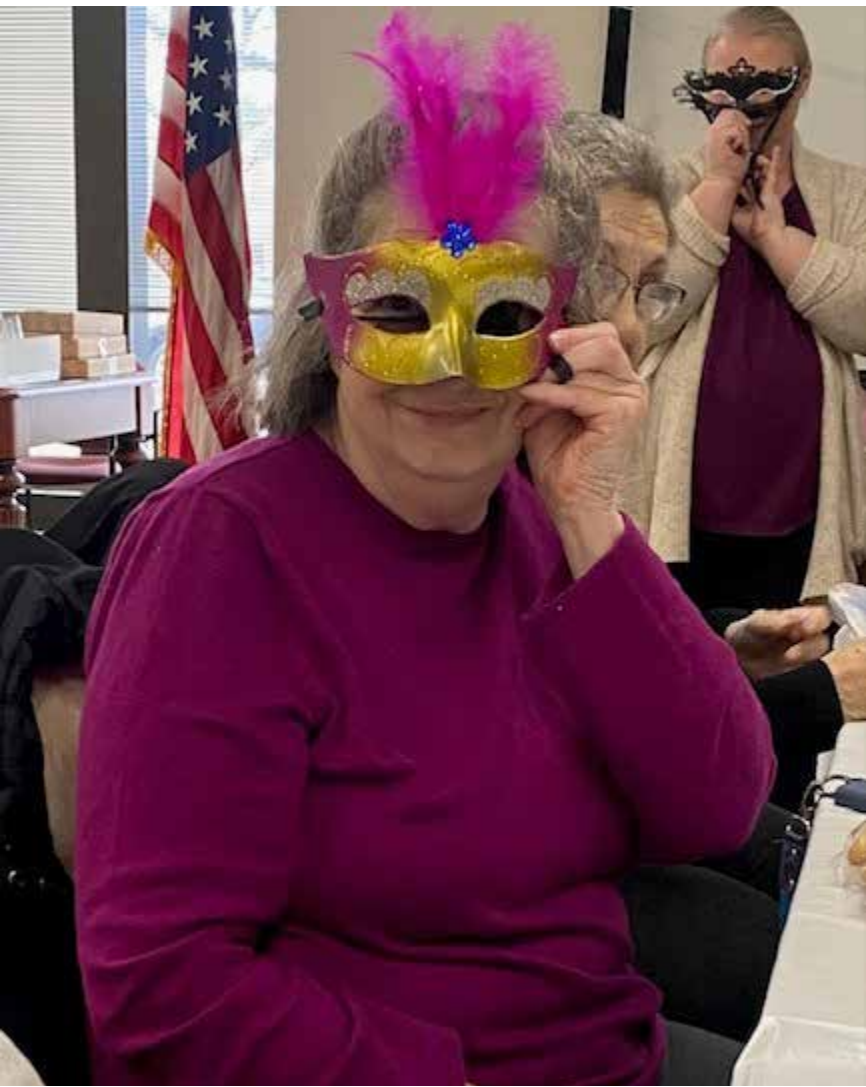


# Spreading Purim sweetness around community



Shirley Kauffman with her hamantaschen delivery.

## Holiday fun and more at Friendship Circle



Clockwise from left, Mary Engleson celebrating Purim on March 6, and Carole and Sari get into the holiday spirit. Yiddish lotto winners Louise Zeidman, Sylvia Wenger, Bret Miller, Lila Shapiro and Ingrid Soltysik on Feb 20

Friendship Circle meets twice monthly at the JCC on Thursdays at 1 p.m. Each program includes an optional luncheon followed by a fun or educational program.



### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

**April 10- "Passover Seder and Meal" 11:45am**

Jewish Family Service invites you to a Passover Seder led by Sari Incledon and Carole Robinson. Reservations are required by April 1st. Call 610-921-0624 or email CaroleR@jfreeding.org to RSVP or with questions.

**\*Please note the time change for this program\***

**April 24 - "Holocaust's Impact on One Family"**

Jeff Gernsheimer will share the incredible story of his mother, Hilde Gernsheimer's journey from Germany to England and then to the U.S. to escape the Holocaust.

Friendship Circle is held twice a month on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 p.m at the JCC. An optional lunch is served, followed by an entertaining or educational program or holiday celebration.

Programs are free; optional lunch is \$7. Contact Carole at 610-921-0624 to make lunch reservations.





# CENTERPIECE

## Jewish Community Calendar – April 2025

Upcoming events offered by the Jewish Federation of Reading (listed as JCC, JFS, JFR), Keshet Zion Synagogue (KZ), Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom (RCOS), and Chabad-Lubavitch of Berks (Chabad). To learn more about any event below, read articles throughout the Shalom or see our online calendar at [readingjewishcommunity.org/calendar](http://readingjewishcommunity.org/calendar).  
Questions? Contact Amanda at 610-921-0624 or [info@jfreading.org](mailto:info@jfreading.org).

### JCC Romeo Club

Tuesday, Apr. 1, 12pm-2pm

**Retired Old Men Eating Out** will meet at Paolo's (2480 Lancaster Pike, Reading) for conversation and camaraderie. New members always welcome.  
Meets the first Tuesday of every month.

### RCOS Pirkei Avot Class

Tuesday, Apr. 1, 7pm-9pm

Join Rabbi Michelson as we explore **Pirkei Avot, The Ethics of our Ancestors**, a two-thousand-year-old collection of teachings that can still speak to us today.  
Tuesdays at RCOS from April 1 to April 22.

### RCOS Balis Mediterrean Nights

Saturday, Apr. 5, 6pm-8pm

A fun evening of music, mediterranean cuisine, and the presentation of the **Balis Volunteer Appreciation Award** to Carol Cohn. Ticketed event, RSVP only.

### JCC Noontime Knowledge

Wednesday, Apr. 9, 12:30pm-1:30pm

Dr. Ivan Bub presents the early history of the **Reading Public Museum** with old photos and historic documents. Learn the history and see the exhibition honoring its centennial.  
Meets at the Reading Public Museum (500 Museum Rd., Reading - parking on site).

### JFS Friendship Circle

Thursday, Apr. 10, 11:45am-2pm

Join us for a **Passover Seder and meal** led by Carole Robinson and Sari Incledon. \*Please note the time change.\*  
Reservations required by April 1.

### RCOS 1st Night Passover Seder

Saturday, Apr. 12, 6pm-8pm

Join Rabbi Michelson and Oheb Shalom as we gather together as a community to share a **Seder meal** on the first night of Passover.

### Chabad Passover Seder

Saturday, Apr. 12, 7pm-9pm

Please join Rabbi Lipsker and Chabad for our first night of **Passover Community Seder**.

### JCC Arts, Culture & Ideas

Monday, Apr. 21, 1:30pm-3pm

Watch a powerful musical tribute led by Rabbi David Ingber for **Remembrance, Israel and Hope**. Prerecorded program.  
A monthly series hosted by the JCC at The Highlands in Wyomissing.



For more event information visit  
[www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org/calendar](http://www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org/calendar)



# CENTERPIECE

## Jewish Community Calendar – April 2025

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Questions? Contact Amanda at 610-921-0624 or [info@jfreading.org](mailto:info@jfreading.org).

### JCC Noontime Knowledge

Tuesday, Apr. 22, 12pm-1pm

Literatour Berks author **Arthur Magida** will discuss his book, **Two Wheels to Freedom**. Book sale and signing will follow. Literatour Berks is a program of this Jewish Federation, Exeter Community Library, and the Jewish Book Council.

### JCC Yom HaShoah Service

Wednesday, Apr. 23, 7pm-8pm

Observe **Holocaust Remembrance Day** with a special ceremony and the story of Holocaust survivors, Carl and Mathilde Reiser, shared by their granddaughter Cindy Silverman Chronister. At the JCC.

### JFS Friendship Circle

Thursday, Apr. 24, 1pm-3pm

**Jeff Gernsheimer** will share the incredible story of his mother, Hilde Gernsheimer, and her journey to escape the **Holocaust**. Optional lunch is \$7 at 1pm, free program at 2pm.

### JCC Movie Monday

Monday, Apr. 28, 1pm-3pm

Come watch **June Zero**, a historical drama based on true accounts from three distinct perspectives of the 1961 preparations for the execution of Adolf Eichmann.

### JFR Youth Program

Tuesday, Apr. 29, 3:30 - 5:30pm

Honored guests will lead a fun and **interactive program about Hebrew language and life in Israel**. All Jewish community youth in grades 3-8 are welcome. At RCOS/KZ. RSVP required.

### JCC Yom HaZikaron Ceremony

Wednesday, Apr. 30, 12pm - 2pm

Observe **Yom HaZikaron, Israel's Memorial Day**, and honor fallen IDF soldiers as a community and with our honored guests. **BYO** vegetarian lunch and stay after the program. RSVP required.

### JCC Young Adult Discussion

Wednesday, Apr. 30, 7pm - 8:30pm

Young adults, in their 20s and 30s, are invited to a **dessert reception with our honored guests** to hear about life in Israel and build new connections. At the JCC. RSVP required.

### JCC/KZ Yom Ha'Atzmaut

Thursday, May 1, 4:30pm - 6pm

Celebrate **Yom Ha Atz'maut, Israeli Independence Day!** Meet our honored guests, sample Israeli food and snacks, dance to Israeli music, play Israeli games, and more! RSVP required.



For more event information visit  
[www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org/calendar](http://www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org/calendar)



# New Israeli tech doubles IVF success rates

**Israel21c.org**  
A recent Israeli advancement in fertility science may hold the key to combating the ongoing global decline in fertility rates, by nearly doubling the success rate of in vitro fertilization. The new technology, developed in the lab of Tel Aviv University Professor Natan T. Shaked, allows embryologists to visualize and analyze the internal structure of live sperm cells with extreme accuracy.

Until now, embryologists have had to rely on subjective criteria when evaluating the viability of a given sperm sample. “Currently, about 90% of sperm cells that appear suitable to embryologists actually fail to meet internal morphological criteria,” explained Shaked. “Our technology changes that, offering a new tool to significantly improve IVF outcomes.” The result is an increase in IVF

success rates from 34% to 65% — nearly twice the amount. In a clinical trial at Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon, the technology resulted in 20 pregnancies out of 31 embryo transfers, compared to just 14 pregnancies out of 41 transfers in the control group. The technology is currently being implemented in clinics throughout Israel (in Ashkelon, Kfar Saba, Ramat HaHayal, Afula and Nahariya), as

well as internationally in California and Japan. Dozens of couples have enrolled in clinical trials. Shaked describes it as providing “a new and essential tool to identify sperm cells that meet the World Health Organization criteria for IVF labs.” A description of the new method was published in the journals PNAS, Advanced Science, and Fertility and Sterility.




## Happy Passover

The Jewish Federation of Reading wishes you a meaningful Passover. We will be closed Monday, April 14th in observance of Passover.

Passover begins on Saturday, April 12, at sundown, and ends at sundown on Sunday, April 20.




Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks



## YOM HAZIKARON


**OBSERVE ISRAEL'S MEMORIAL DAY, HONOR FALLEN IDF SOLDIERS, AND HEAR FROM OUR HONORED GUESTS**

Wednesday, April 30, noon  
BYO vegetarian lunch and stay after the program at the JCC, 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Wyomissing



Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks

RSVP required: [info@jfreading.org](mailto:info@jfreading.org) or 610-921-0624





## Mahjong at the JCC



**Every Monday, 1pm - 3pm**  
**at the JCC (1100 Berkshire Blvd, Wyomissing)**  
**Experienced and new players welcome!**



Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks



## Yom Ha'Atzmaut Israel @ 77 Celebration!

**Celebrate Israeli Independence Day**  
**Thursday, May 1, 4:30pm - 6pm**  
**KZ/RCOS Social Hall**  
**555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing**





Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks

RSVP Required: [info@jfreading.org](mailto:info@jfreading.org) or 610-921-0624



# Family shares its Holocaust story

By Margo Levin

At a time when there isn't much optimism, you have a moment that you deeply appreciate and that gives you hope. Friday, March 14, was one of those days.

Wyomissing High School hosted Holocaust survivor Esther Bratt. Helping Esther share her story was her great-granddaughter Leah Leisawitz, a seventh-grade student at Wyomissing Junior High School and a member of a fourth-generation Holocaust survivor family.

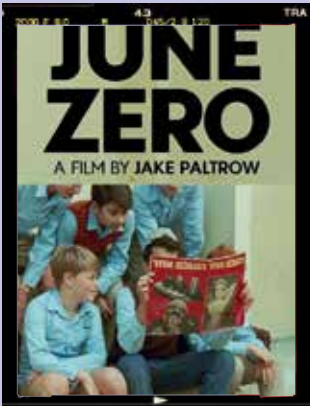
The ninth-grade class attended the presentation, and they will now better understand today's antisemitism in historical context and perhaps better grasp what "Never Again" truly means.

Sadly, fewer survivors are left to share their firsthand accounts, so the students were truly fortunate to hear from Esther as she answered their questions after Leah had the opportunity to share the story of resilience and survival of her great-grandparents Esther and Sid Bratt.



Leah Leisawitz and Esther Bratt

## Movie Monday at the JCC April 28, 2025, 1pm



### June Zero

historical drama

The 1961 preparations for the execution of Adolf Eichmann are revisited in a gripping and new drama.  
run time: 105 minutes



A historical drama based on true accounts from three distinct perspectives: Eichmann's Jewish Moroccan prison guard; an Israeli police investigator and a Holocaust survivor, and a precocious young Libyan immigrant.




Grab a seat for a Jewish themed movie each month at the JCC (1100 Berkshire Blvd., Ste. 125, Wyomissing). It is usually held on the 4th Monday of the month, and the popcorn and the movie are both free!

Give back to Jewish Family Service by donating your gently used items to CommunityAid!


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# Finding hope after shattering experience

By Hudi Lipsker

Being in Israel for Tu B'Shvat, I had the privilege of helping on a farm at a campus dedicated to those recovering from the trauma of October 7th. The garden we worked in was unique — adorned with discarded objects like old airplane seats splattered with paint and decommissioned city buses. These items, once seen as trash, had been repurposed, turned into art that added beauty to the space.

There was something powerful about that transformation — taking what had been disposed of and giving it new life. It wasn't just about creating a garden; it was about transforming something broken into something meaningful. It felt like the perfect metaphor for Tu B'Shvat — the renewal and rebirth the holiday represents. We weren't just planting seeds in the ground; we were witnessing the act of transformation, of starting fresh.

As I looked around, I noticed a quote painted on an old airplane window: "They tried to bury us, but they didn't realize we were seeds." How relevant, I thought. In the face of destruction and loss, we rebuild. This message resonated deeply. It wasn't just about trees; it was about the resilience of our people, the strength of our roots. No matter how much the world may try to suppress us, our roots remain unshaken. Our foundation is unbreakable. That knowledge is comforting because it reminds us that, no matter the storm, our seeds endure.

A week later, I traveled to Poland with my school to witness the history of our people before and during the Holocaust. The emotions were overwhelming; the feelings, raw. Everything we saw, everything we heard — nothing could have truly prepared me for the reality of it. The atrocities were worse than I had ever imagined. No story, book or documentary, could capture the full horror.

I walked into Auschwitz and Birkenau, past the train tracks that carried so many to their final destination. The memory of those who were transported like cattle, treated worse than animals, haunted me as I walked those same tracks. It was a place of terror, where death seemed the only certainty. The wooden bunks stacked like cages, the suffocating spaces where people were forced to sleep, breathe, and live — if you could even call it that. I broke. Endless rows of shoes — heels, work boots, even shoes of babies just learning to walk. Piles of hair. The barracks where they stood freezing and starving, waiting for an end that never came soon enough. The gas chambers. The ashes. The silence, which screamed louder than anything.

I've heard survivors speak of the unimaginable horrors they endured, but to stand there, to witness it firsthand, hit me in a way words can't fully capture. The rawness of their suffering is still felt by anyone who stands on those grounds. The air felt heavy, thick with sorrow, with stories of lives erased. The reality of it all cannot be processed without a gut-wrenching sense of loss.

Shema Yisrael — the words that so many Jews cried out just before walking to their deaths — a final act of defiance. You thought you could bury us, but you couldn't break us. You stole our clothes, our belongings, our hair — you stole our very humanity — but you did not steal our identity. Here we stand, as one with Hashem, our G-d, we are deeper than our physicality. We are alive.

I walked proudly out of Auschwitz, past the haunting sign "Arbeit Macht Frei" — "Work will set you free." I walked out for all those who couldn't. I walked out stronger than ever, in a place where the Nazis had tried to destroy us. Where they wanted us dead, I walked out, carrying their memories with me — the memories Hitler tried to erase. Auschwitz and the other camps aren't just places on a map — they're part of our collective consciousness. Once you visit, they never truly leave you. Elie Wiesel, a well-known survivor, once wrote, "If you have never been to Auschwitz, you can never enter. If you have been there, you can never leave." These words are profound — not just because they speak to the physical and emotional weight of the Holocaust, but because they reveal a truth about memory, survival, and identity.

For me, this truth became real as I stood at the Umschlagplatz in Warsaw, where the Nazis began the horrific process of deporting Jews to their deaths. Etched into the walls of the Umschlagplatz in the Warsaw Ghetto were 400 of the most common Jewish names of the time. Though we may never know the story of every person whose journey began there, we can say their names, and remind the world that they

are forever etched into this wall, into our history, our hearts, and our souls.

One name caught my eye: Faiga. It's the name I too was given at birth, and I connected with it deeply. I carried that name with me to Treblinka, a place that no longer exists in the way it once did — only a memorial remains, a whisper of what once stood. No buildings, only stones marking where lives were crushed and erased. It was a place where entire families walked in, and no one ever walked out. I stood there before the 17,000 monuments representing the cities from which Treblinka's victims were taken. I chose one monument to light a candle by and spent a moment with Faiga. A common name at the time, Faiga could have belonged to anyone — a wise elderly woman, a young mother, an innocent child. Very likely, Faiga was a name carried proudly by all three, just as I carry it today.

I stood there, in essence, with a stranger, and mourned for her as though she were my own blood. I whispered prayers through my tears for an elderly woman whose story I will never hear, for a young mother with whom I will never speak, for a sweet, innocent child I will never hold. I felt the ache for families I never met but would have given anything to protect. Deep in the dark forest, the silence of Treblinka was chilling, but the echoes are still there if you listen closely.

The snow glistened, and I looked up at the sky, filled with stars, brighter than I had ever seen. In that moment, despite the brokenness and helplessness I felt for a past I could not change and a future I could not determine, I remembered G-d's promise to Abraham — that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the earth. In a place where nearly a million people were gassed and burned within an hour and a half of their arrival, in the deepest darkness, I saw only stars. Their souls still shine through those stars, through the promise of a better future, through me. We, the descendants of those who perished, are the living proof of that promise. We are still here. Still standing.

In the coming day, we journeyed deeper into a forest, where, as we enjoyed the peace of the sunlight shining through the trees, our hearts were shattered once again. There, we were told how the Nazis stole children and infants from their parents' arms, tossed them into trucks, and took them to pits where they were murdered in cold blood. We sang Hamalach Hagoel, a prayer traditionally sung before sleep — a prayer once cherished by parents as they lovingly tucked their children in, a prayer they could never sing again. I thought of the Bibas babies and Shiri. Though I can't fully understand her pain, I know that the deepest fear of any parent is knowing they can't protect their children. We thought we had banished that fear in 1945, but then we saw it reemerging in Shiri's eyes — the same fear — as she held onto her babies while Hamas dragged them from their home. Shiri's story echoes across time, the same fear that haunted Holocaust-era parents. Even with all the might of the Israeli army, there was no one to protect her children.

It's painful to stand on this side of history, the side whose roots are stained with blood. But I wouldn't trade this experience for anything. Despite the overwhelming darkness, I couldn't help but feel pride. Pride in my people's resilience. Pride that, after everything we've been through, we are still here.

As I left Poland, I asked myself, "Am I living for what they died for?" The answer was yes. I have the privilege of walking out of those camps while so many never had that chance. I owe it to them to carry their stories, to feel their pain and to channel that grief and anger into something meaningful. I carry their memory, their strength, their faith. I also leave with Jewish pride. Despite everything, we are still here. When I walk through those camps, I'm proud to do what they couldn't. I am walking out because I can. Not everyone had that privilege. For them, there was no way out of those wired fences.

I returned to Israel with a heavy heart, broken into millions of pieces. The past seemed to be reverberating in my ears, repeating itself before my very eyes. I was overwhelmed. I asked G-d, "How could this happen? How could this story have no happy ending? Why can't we be a nation that lives without fear or pain? After all we've been through, do we really deserve this? Does Yarden Bibas deserve this?"

I decided to visit the Bibas family and be with them during their period of mourning. There, they sat, stone-faced, watching as people poured in, thanking



*Ariel and Kfir Bibas at their last Purim celebration.*

each person for coming.

I directed my gaze at them—something harder than I expected. What do you say to someone who has lost so much? Who has lost a life — or three? Or four, including their metaphorical life, their entire world? I looked at their faces, stunned, and blurted out a verse they must have heard on repeat: "May G-d comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem." They said thank you, and as I continued on my way, trying to compose myself, I impulsively blew them a kiss. I couldn't comfort them in the way I wished, but I could show them my eternal love. And in that moment, I saw Shiri's sister, Dana, shed a single tear, and in a strained voice, repeat the same "Toda Raba" to me. But this time, it was far more meaningful.

To see that the world had stopped for them, to see that people truly cared — that, despite the loneliness they may feel, they are not alone. An entire nation stopped for a moment to be with them, to comfort them.

As I walked away, I let the dam of tears break. I wept for Ariel, a sweet little boy who must have been terrified in his last moments. For Kfir, who never even got to celebrate his first birthday. For the beautiful redheaded little boys who will never live to experience their lives. For Shiri, who must have felt so helpless and anguished as her children were torn from her. For Yarden, who endured months of torture — mental and physical — only to return to a life destroyed.

I looked around and noticed that I wasn't the only one who let their tears flow. Everyone did. I asked myself why. Why do we weep for a stranger? The answer was clear: We simply love each other. We come from different places, we may look different, we may practice Judaism differently, but we feel for him so deeply in his pain. It's natural. We are one nation with one heart, and that's what helps our nation endure. Let's embrace the love we have for one another. Do an extra good deed, smile at the next person — for the Bibas family, for all of us.

The tributes I see daily for the hostages — especially for the Bibas children — warm my heart. On Purim, as the streets flowed with thousands of people celebrating the continuation of Judaism, the miracle of a nation that survives and the belief that we will see the miracles of old in our times, the streets were filled with color. But the overwhelming color was orange. People dressed as Batman for the Bibas babies, the last Purim costume they wore before being kidnapped. They turned Batman's logo into a symbol of orange for our most cherished redheads. I'll never forget the streams of orange I saw as I walked the streets of Jerusalem this Purim.

Once again, we face mortal enemies — from Haman to Hitler to Hamas. We have survived them all, and Hamas too will meet their end. We will see our hostages come home and experience the peace we so deeply deserve.

*Donate to help the Bibas family at <https://yad.reachhands.com/en>*



# Coldest Night of the Year



A team led by Rabbi Brian and Holly Michelson took part in the Coldest Night of the Year fundraising walk Feb. 22 at Penn State Berks in support of New Journey Community Outreach

B7H

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PASSOVER

seder

SECOND SEDER

SUNDAY

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MORE INFO & RSVP:

www.ChabadofBerks.org/RSVP



## Obituary

**Temmie Drucker**, 91, of the Heritage passed away on February 15. Born in Brooklyn, Temmie and her husband Sanford (Sam) raised their family in Freeport, N.Y., before moving to Pennsylvania in the late 1970's. The couple celebrated 73 years of marriage. She had a diverse career, with jobs in health care, social services, and business, but was most proud of her volunteer leadership work for the Long Island Chapter of Cancer Care. She loved to read, play mahjong and attend cultural events. She is survived by her husband Sam, children Glenn (Cynthey) of Florida, Lynn Gold of New York, and Mark (Marian) of Florida; nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her daughters Karen and Susan and son-in-law Roy Gold. Her family and friends will remember her kindness, wisdom and boundless love.

---

**Helen Katz Fox**, a woman of style, resilience, and deep love of family, passed away on Feb. 28 at age 90 in Boca Raton, Fla.. Born in Leipzig, Germany, she fled Nazi persecution with her family in 1939, settling in Buffalo, NY. There, she met Richard

"Dick" Fox, whom she married at 17. They later moved to Reading, where they raised four children. Helen had a sharp mind, a deep love of the arts, and a flair for the dramatic. A gifted pianist, she had planned to study music formally before choosing marriage and family life. Music and theater remained lifelong passions, and she starred in numerous local productions. She had a beautiful singing voice and a commanding stage presence. She was deeply engaged in her Jewish community and served as president of the Keshar Zion Sisterhood. In the early 1990s, Helen moved to Allentown, where she embraced independence and built a successful real estate career. Helen took immense pride in her grandchildren, whom she loved dearly: Sami Myerson (Kris Khang), Shay Myerson, Mika Fox (Noam Zaid), Elan Fox, Stella Fox, Benjamin Fox, and Ruby Fox. She is also survived by her children Donald "Don" Fox (Julie Gabriel), Sheryl Myerson (Jay Dunitz), and Herrick "Rick" Fox (Jen Daniels); and her sisters, Mary Gilbert and Renée Garsson. She was predeceased by her son Howard (1978), her first husband Richard "Dick" Fox, her brothers William Katz and David Katz, and her adopted brother, David (Wolkowitz) Katz.

## JFS hospital, outpatient visits

By Carole Robinson and Sari Incledon

Jewish Family Service social workers visit Jewish patients at local hospitals, senior communities, nursing homes and rehab centers.

Our goal in these visits is both to be friendly and supportive at a difficult time, and to provide access to social services that supplement and complement the case managers at these locations.

If you or a loved one is at a local hospital or nursing home and would like

a visit, please call us.

If you or a loved one are treated at a hospital out of our area we are also available for follow-up visits upon discharge.

At times of ill health, stress or crisis, families are often looking for information about home care, transportation services, senior communities, nursing homes and rehabs. This is what we're here for.

Please call Jewish Family Service social workers for help at 610-921-0624.

## Keshar Zion's April Events

3		Minyan Thursday April 3 7:00PM
12		Birthday/Anniversary Shabbat Shabbat April 12 9:30AM (Pesach Begins )
13		Shabbat/Pesach Service Sunday April 13 9:30AM
14		Pesach Service Monday, April 14 9:30AM
17		Minyan Thursday April 17 7:00PM
18		Friday Services April 18 6:30PM
19		Jr. Congregation Shabbat/ Pesach Service Sat. April 19 10:30AM
20		Sunday, April 20 Pesach Service 9:30AM Yizkor 11:00AM (Pesach Ends )



# Purim around the community



Clockwise from left, it was a super fun pre-Purim ladies event at “Estherbucks” held at Chabad. Amy Garrison shared a makeup demo and tips. Children at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom ready to celebrate the holiday. Purim in the Palace celebrated with the community at Chabad featuring lighting Shabbat candles together and then enjoying Shabbat dinner. The Purim Spiel returned to Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom under the leadership of Vicki Haller Graff. This year’s theme was “Fiddler on the Roof.”



JOIN US FOR A PASSOVER COOKING DEMONSTRATION

Tuesday, April 1st at 6:30PM

Featuring Kosher Chef, Baker & author of several cookbooks

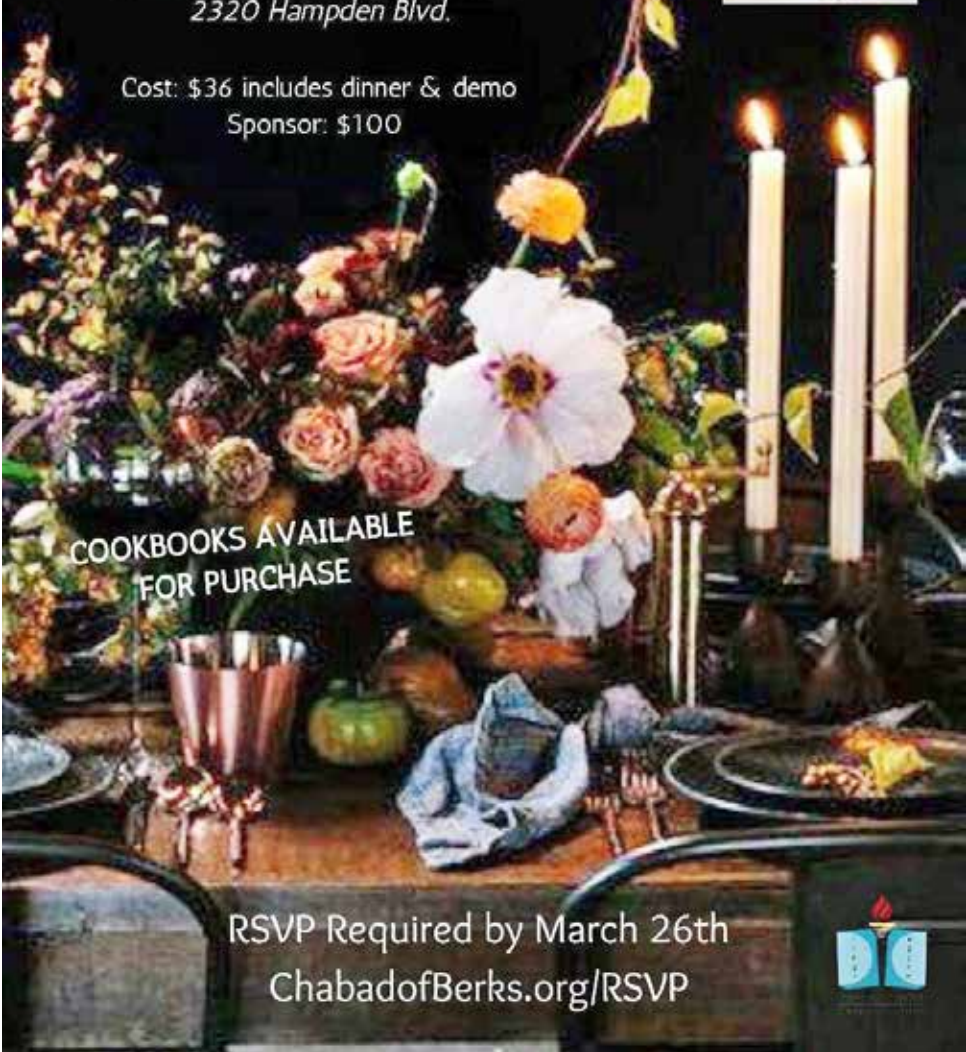

Paula Shoyer

AT CHABAD OF BERKS COUNTY  
2320 Hampden Blvd.

Cost: \$36 includes dinner & demo  
Sponsor: \$100

COOKBOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

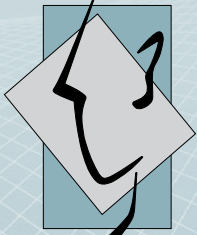
RSVP Required by March 26th  
ChabadofBerks.org/RSVP



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**"WE'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO TACO 'BOUT"**

— *Nancy Knoblauch*

Because your  
life is on a  
**NEED TO  
KNOW  
BASIS.**



## Person Detected

**Current Security  
Provider for JFR Offices**



## When You Need to Know.

**610.372.8872**

**Reform Congregation Ohel Shalom**  
555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing PA 19611  
ohelshalom.org • 610-376-6034

and paragraph type

<sup>1</sup> You must actively fund.



# Working hard to promote unity



Greater Reading Unity Coalition members at the Community Shabbat.



Margo Levin celebrates Black History Month with Alex Civil from Bring the Change and Dr Osumonu from the Islamic Society of Reading

**KESHER ZION  
SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE  
MITZVAH PROJECT  
TO BENEFIT COMMUNITYAID**

CommunityAid is a faith-based nonprofit that is partnering with Jewish Family Service. A percentage of sales from CommunityAid's thrift store is given back to JFS.

Items being accepted are new or lightly used clothing and accessories for men, women, and children.

Please place donations in the bin located in the lobby of the synagogue at 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing

Donations will be collected until April 7th.

If you have questions or need an at home pick up of items, please call the KZ office at 610-374-1763

## Clothing Drive



**Please support  
our advertisers.**



Sunday, May 4th, 2025  
12:00 noon - 3:00 pm  
Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom  
555 Warwick Drive

\$13 Kauffman's Chicken BBQ Platter

\$22 Quarter Apple Cake &  
Chicken BBQ Combo Platter

\$10 Quarter Apple Cake

Credit Card Preferred or  
Cash Accepted on Event Day

Pre-Order Starts April 14th  
Credit Card Only

[www.ohebsholom.org](http://www.ohebsholom.org)

*Prices same as last year!*





**Federation Honorarium-Memorial Card Information**

Please mail your payment with complete information to the Jewish Federation, PO Box 14925, Reading, PA, 19612-4925 or bring to the Jewish Cultural Center, 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125, Wyomissing. You may set up a “savings account” for the purpose of sending cards. Please contact the Federation at 610-921-0624 for further information.

**Contributions as of March 14**

**Jewish Family Service**  
In memory of:  
**Robert Erkes** - Sue and Mel Blum, Carol and Bernie Gerber  
**Helen K. Fox** - Deborah Goodman, Ann Golden, Carol and Bernie Gerber, Helene and Henry Singer, Louise Zeidman and family, Lisa and Larry Siebert, Sue Wachs

In honor of:  
**Carole Robinson and Sari Incledon and their continued help and support** - Dorie Karp

**Federation Jewish Community Campaign**  
In memory of:  
**Robert Erkes** - Zena and Harvey Hafetz  
**Helen K. Fox** - Susan and Michael Fromm, Vicki Graff, Sue and Mel Blum, Herbein, Eric Pallas, Zena and Harvey Hafetz, Sanford Siegel, Paul Kozloff, Stacy Weller, Lisa and Ellis Block, Allen Daniels and Sue Lawrence, Joseph Wolfson, Burkey Corporation (Rick Burkey and Family), John and Melissa Pagerly

**Honorariums and Memorials**  
Contributions may be made to the following Funds:  
Federation Jewish Community Campaign  
Jewish Family Service  
Leo Camp Lecture Fund  
JFS Food Bank  
JFS Taxi Transportation Program  
Holocaust Library & Resource Center  
Doris Levin Fund  
Sue B. Viener Memorial Fund for PJ Library  
Harry & Rose Sack Adult Education Fund  
Evelyn Thompson Fund

**Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Scholarship Fund**  
In honor of:  
The birth of Mary Anne and Jonathan Avins’ granddaughter - Beth and Bob Caster

**Harry & Rose Sack Adult Education Fund**  
In memory of:  
Helen K. Fox - Amy Hollowbush

**PJ Library**  
In memory of:  
-Helen K. Fox - Debra Greenblatt

**JFS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

This program provides transportation to members of the Jewish community, age 60 and over or those with disabilities, who have no other way of getting around. It allows participants to retain their independence and keeps them from becoming homebound and isolated. It can be used for medical appointments, synagogue attendance, shopping and other errands.

It is easy to participate. Purchase a book of 25 taxi tickets from the Federation at a cost of \$25. Each coupon is worth \$3. The phone number for Reading Metro Taxi is printed on the ticket book. Call the company and arrange your ride. At the end of the ride, sign your coupon(s) before giving them to the driver. Tipping is left to the passenger’s discretion. Coupon does not include cost of tipping.

***This program is subsidized by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks***

save the date



Friday May 9th at 7PM

Teacher Appreciation & New Member Shabbat

Friday, May 9th at 7PM

Celebrate our Religious School teachers and Welcome our New Members

Join us for an ice cream oneg immediately following the service.





THANK YOU



**HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

Jewish Family Service is grateful to our committed volunteers!

Here are some ways that you can help:

**Help Fight Hunger**  
Join us at a JFS Food Pantry to distribute food to our hungry neighbors.

**Share your Professional Expertise**  
Present a program on travel, photography, or your unique interests or hobbies to our seniors.

**Share your time**  
A small investment of your personal time can make a profound difference in someone’s life. Visit a shut-in, shop for a homebound senior, or take someone to a doctor’s appointment.

**Donate your vehicle to JFS or donate clothing to CommunityAid**  
Enjoy tax benefits of donating a car or help our clients through our partnership with CommunityAid.



**Contact Us**  
Carole Robinson at 610-921-0624

 **Jewish Federation**  
of Reading/Berks

**JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE NEEDS:**

**PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS FOR OUR FOOD PANTRIES!**



**DROP YOUR BAGS AT OUR OFFICE 1100 BERKSHIRE BLVD SUITE 125 MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9:00 AM TO 3:00PM.**

  **Jewish Federation**  
of Reading/Berks





 <p><b>U</b> Gunter's Honey 12 oz</p>	<p><b>2 for \$5</b></p>	 <p><b>U</b> Streit's Fruit Slices 8 oz</p>	<p><b>2<sup>99</sup></b></p>	 <p><b>U</b> Rokeach or Yehuda Gefilte Fish 24 oz</p>	<p><b>7<sup>59</sup></b></p>	 <p><b>U</b> Kedem Concord Grape Juice 64 oz</p>	<p><b>3<sup>99</sup></b></p>	 <p><b>U</b> Fox's U-bet syrup 22 oz</p>	<p><b>2 for \$6</b></p>
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