

# SHALOM

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## Purim fun around the community

This year's Purim celebration March 23 and 24 featured lots of entertainment for the whole family.

The activities culminated with a Megillah Reading and Purim at the Stadium event at the Chabad Center, sponsored

by Chabad and the Jewish Federation of Reading.

In keeping with the sports theme, popular ballpark treats were served and local mascots Slapshot of the Reading Royals and Screwball of the Reading Fightin Phils made

appearances. There were plenty of activities including games, arts and crafts and a photo booth.

On Purim eve Keshet Zion Synagogue held a Megillah reading and Reform Congregation Oheb

Sholom presented its first Purim Spiel, featuring writer and co-star Mike Pardo's humorous take on the Book of Esther. It included a long list of song parodies based on hits from stage, TV and popular song.



Purim partying is plentiful at the Chabad Center.



RCOS Purim Spiel stars, from left, Jessica Bennett, Jake Azrael, Marj Shearer, Ron Berman, Dr. Neil Hoffman and Evan Cardinal



Mike Pardo



Ready for the show!



Purim Spiel accompanists Eliana Alweis and Dan Pardo

## Yemin Orde science program nurtures curiosity

The Gelfand Science Enrichment Program provides the vision and support to create science opportunities for youth in Yemin Orde Educational Initiatives (YOEI) partner communities who would otherwise never have such experiences.

Yemin Orde provides education and other services to children from around the world who are new to the country along with other at-risk populations. Yemin Orde is supported by Jewish Federation of Reading's Israel Now fund.

The Gelfand program brings interactive science workshops from some of Israel's leading institutes to at-risk youth around the country and is providing opportunities for these youth to visit museums, laboratories, greenhouses, and

other similar sites. These science activities are fun and, interesting, piquing the student's interest in science and curiosity about the world.

Additionally, the Gelfand Science Enrichment Program offers opportunities for academic success in which youth discover untapped capabilities and new interests. Youth can "dream" about their future: both in terms of higher education and in terms of future careers.

Topics discussed in many of the science workshops include engineering, energy, electricity, insulation and conduction, matter and materials, astronomy, physics, magnetism, metal and robots. Students discover a love of learning when they are able to explore new concepts with a



hands-on approach.

"First of all I loved the topic and the activity. I finally understand the subject for the first time, and learning through trial and error, experimentation and implementation is much more interesting and challenging than the regular way of

learning in class," said a student. "... Everything I discovered during this activity changed my thinking and knowledge in the field of space and it's really great ..."

In addition to providing science programming in partner educational communities, the Gelfand Enrichment Program offers similar opportunities for YOEI's young men's and young women's gap-year leadership programs for immigrant youth, or Mechina, in Hebrew. Activities take a hands-on approach to learning and field trips are provided to see experimentation in action.

Participants in the young women's program, known as IsraElite, recently spent two intensive days at the renowned Weizmann Institute of Science.



**Jewish Community High School going strong as year nears its end**

Page 11

**Young leaders offer great promise for community**

Page 2

**Join us for final screening in this year's film series**

Page 4

**PJ Our Way offers material for older group of children**

Page 5

**JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE: Senior LIFE offers new services in Exeter Township**

Page 16



**2016 totals as of March 18**

**Jewish Community Campaign \$161,828**

**\*Includes transfers from Donor Advised Funds**

## A question worth answering

By Richard Nassau  
Development Director



Someone once asked me if I tired of people asking, "Why Federation?" It is a question I hear often. I told them no, though I have been tempted to answer it with the reply to the old joke, "Why do Jews ask so many questions?" Why not? The real answer for me is about family and community. This is especially true as we approach Passover.

Passover is a holiday filled with questions. Why not? What would a Seder be without the questions we know so well? I can recall as a young child practicing the four questions under my breath as we

sat in my grandmother's formal dining room. A dining room reserved for special occasions like Passover; an occasion when the whole family gathered together and asked questions in unison. It was a room that filled with anticipation as it became time to ask the four questions. My grandmother even came in from the kitchen to listen. Perhaps it was pride or maybe just the hope she felt for a different generation.

I wonder what my grandparents would think about my Seder. Questions are still being asked. We still use a "formal" dining room, though it is better described as a work-space, study area, and sometimes pet sanctuary. I know if my grandmother was still with us I'd find her busy in the kitchen waiting to peek around the corner as a new generation of children recited

the four questions. And that is why Federation.

The work we do because of your support builds community, develops Jewish identity, provides for the next generation through legacies, and helps families. Those are just a few of the answers to why Federation. I wonder which one was meaningful for my grandparents. I'm not sure, because outside the Seder I didn't ask my grandparents a lot of "why" questions.

I already knew how important it was for my grandparents to be part of a Jewish community. Passover reminds me of this fact and also why it remains important for us to be part of a Jewish community. My Seder is different from my grandparents, at least on the surface. We also do things differently as a community

from previous generations, but our pride and hope for the next generation and anticipation before the four questions are the same.

Why Federation? is a question I like to answer. I like to think that if I asked my grandmother why Federation she'd also be able to answer it and not just with a simple, why not. Her answer would be about community, and legacy, and identity; except she wouldn't use those words. She'd simply say, "So we can celebrate Passover together as a family next year." That is why Federation.

Through your support, we work to ensure everyone can celebrate Passover together this year and next year. I wish you a Passover holiday filled with questions and anticipation.

## Young leaders helping to forge vibrant identity for community

By Haia Mazuz

The Hebrew word Chevrah, הרבה, means society when pronounced with the accent on the second syllable. But when pronounced with the accent on the first syllable it means "the gang", a social network.

What a privilege it was to be invited to the home of Luba Karchevsky to meet the young and future leaders of Jewish Federation of Reading, the women of Chebra.

This gathering on a recent Sunday morning was the idea of Federation board members Tracy Rossi, Michele Leisawitz, and Luba Karchevsky.

Their goal is to spread the word about the amazing work of our Jewish Federation of Reading and recruit more members.

Also there were Linda Bloom, Anna Bluestone, Tatyana Erlikh, Amanda Feigenheimer, Jessica Leisawitz, Michele Leisawitz and Jennifer Weissman Woodward.

After Luba's sumptuous brunch Tracy, Luba, and Michele spoke about their reasons for the get together.

Tracy told the group that when her husband initially mentioned that he was interviewing for a job in Reading, (Tracy grew up in a Jewish suburb of Philadelphia) she told him to cancel the interview because "there is no Jewish life in Reading" and she wouldn't consider moving there. Nick told her he could not refuse an interview, so she decided to investigate the community.

Nick Rossi joined my husband's medical practice. Tracy is now not only an enthusiastic board member but recruiter extraordinaire, bringing new young members to the board. She attended the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly in Washington, D.C., last November and convinced me to attend the event as well.

Michele grew up in Allentown, has family in Reading and married a Reading native. Many offspring of our community leave the area after college. However, Michele and her husband, Ben, chose to stay close to family and are now part of the renaissance of young Jews making

Berks County their home.

Luba has been in the area for six years, but only after Tracy convinced her to join the board of Federation this year did she realize the incredible breadth of programs "we" provide for Jews of all ages. She singled out the Better Together program, pairing students of our Jewish Community High School with senior citizens. Luba lost her grandparents at an early age and found it touching that this connection is being pursued.

We have a group of young Jewish Families (some who moved here after researching) who appreciate the vibrant Jewish Community in Reading, an important social network for them and their families. I now better understand this.

Among the concerns of our young families :

- Jewish preschool — Lakin fits the bill
- Sports programs — Body Zone, consider additional activities
- Kosher meat — put together a list of places to buy

An interesting observation by a newcomer is that she found Reading intriguing and more sophisticated than she had expected. We should all see ourselves in the eyes of the newcomer.

In response I am asking:

1. How do we learn more about needs in the community?
2. What mechanisms can we put in place to have better communication with everyone?
3. Do we need to develop a marketing package explaining why Reading is a good match for a Jewish family? If so, with whom should we share it?

I propose we banish the hand-wringing associated with the admission that we are facing the challenge of smaller populations and less involvement similar to Jewish communities all over the U.S.

Chebra shows us that by being positive and proactive, our community will thrive.

### Maimonides Society of the Jewish Federation of Reading presents

Rabbi Jonathan Crane, PhD  
past-president Society of Jewish Ethics

## Jewish Attitudes Towards Intervening at the End-of-Life

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# Recent events show power of our community

By William D. Franklin  
President

We had big events on consecutive weekends early in March. First we had more than 200 community members attend our Community Shabbat at RCOS, and then more than



120 came to honor the installation of Rabbi Matthew Abelson at Keshet Zion. Coincidentally, the Parsha for the Community Shabbat, Vayak-hel or "assembled" is related to the term "kehilla" which means community.

A wonderful aspect of the Community Shabbat was that people of all ages from all three religious institutions — RCOS, Keshet Zion and Chabad — joined together for a beautiful service with wonderful music provided by Gabriella Michelson and a delicious dinner. Many stayed long after dinner, table-hopping and kibitzing with each other. Similarly, the following weekend Rabbi Brian and Holly Michelson and many others from RCOS joined the KZ congregants to welcome our newest community rabbi.

Vayak-hel teaches us that a Kehilla

is not merely a group of individuals; it is a communal entity that far surpasses the sum of its parts. It is a community of actions that cares for its members and everyone around it. Bound together by our history, our faith and our purpose, we will continue to build our Reading Jewish community — one that protects us and those in need, where we can pray, sing and learn together as we maintain our Jewish 'oneness' across space and time.

The next two months will give us more opportunities to come together. On March 30, we have the Yashek Lecture at Albright College exploring the

architecture of the Holocaust. Our 92Y series continues with a live screening of World Politics: Israel and its Neighbors on Sunday, April 10 at 5 p.m. here at the JCC. The final film of this year's *Reading Jewish Film Series* will be "Run Boy Run" at 7 p.m. on April 20 at the Fox Berkshire.

We will commemorate Yom Hashoah here at the JCC on May 4 with a documentary and candle lightings. We will also commemorate Yom Hazikaron and celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut here at the JCC on May 11. On May 22 we wrap up the year with a short annual meeting, a picnic lunch, games and Israeli dancing. Join us!!

## Meet the Rossis

By Larry Rotenberg  
Chairman

I recently spent a delightful hour interviewing the Rossi family. This consisted of Tracy, the Mom; Nick, the Dad, and children Luca age 4, and Samantha, 3.



Tracy's father was not Jewish, but her mother, who died young, of breast cancer, was. And her mother's dying wish was to have her children brought up as Jews.

Her father lived up to this task heroically. Tracy and her siblings attended Har Zion and its religious school in the Philadelphia suburbs. Har Zion is one of the premier Conservative congregations on the Main Line.

The importance of this piece is of history. It represents the fairly typical demographic of the Jewish community, and what this community will look like in the future.

And it needs to be viewed as a positive and as adding strength and

vitality to us.

And nowhere is this more true than in the case of the Rossis.

When they contemplated moving here, Tracy was greeted and welcomed by Michele Leisawitz, who introduced her into all the local Jewish activities, including the Lakin Preschool, where both their children attend. And Tracy is a member of the Federation Board, and a very active one at that.

Nick, a cardiologist with Berks Cardiology, and Tracy, a pharmacist at Ephrata Community Hospital, take turns driving the kids and picking them up at Lakin. And they take full advantage of the extended services that this preschool program offers, both to children and to

working parents..

But I have saved the best for the last. Luca, the son, was active and interested, and he continued with his own activities while checking in on the status of the interview, from time to time.

Samantha, though younger, is typical of girls that age, so she was much more verbal and interested in the social interaction that was going on.

Both gave brief but powerful performances of Jewish songs they had learned at Lakin. Both were happy and well-adjusted children.

This remarkable family, and its embrace of and by the Jewish Community, continues to give us much optimism for the future.

## Challah baking at Chabad a warm family event

By Amanda J. Hornberger

In late February a community of women gathered at Chabad to learn how to make challah and to share loaves with others in need. Geared as an event for mothers and daughters, I gathered my mother-in-law, stepmother, sister and sister-in-law for a fun afternoon of laughter, baking and learning. I'm pleased to say that my family and I got so much more out of this event than just delicious bread!

Chana Lipsker was a great hostess and teacher, thoroughly explaining each step in the baking process and checking in on us as we went. The room was set up with all the supplies needed and the bright pink table cloths and aprons added to the fun atmosphere in the room. Admittedly it was fun to be at an event that I did not have to set up or tear down, but could simply enjoy. Plus it was a special treat for me to introduce my family to so many community members who have welcomed me over the past year.

Despite some initial ingredient miscalculations, the day and challah was

saved by Rabbi Lipsker, who brought the group more flour. In the end the challah was delicious, even if our braids did not look like Chana's. What Chana made look simple, the braiding of the challah, was in fact, not quite as easy as it looked. No matter, my family and I laughed as we tried to make challah rings and the three- and four-braid challah variations. We happily donated quite a few challahs to the Greater Reading Food Bank and took the rest home to share with our families, all of whom enjoyed the challah immensely.

Extremely dear to me was Chana's explanation of the significance of the challah and how it connects to her role as a wife and mother. She explained that the little bit of salt as well as the sugar, represented the many variations of life experiences. The idea of praying for her family as she makes the challah seemed so important to me. As a new mom myself, I could relate to what Chana was saying in a way I would not have been able to this time last year, and that made the afternoon even sweeter for me.

My family is still discussing that



afternoon that we spent together away from our husbands, kids and other obligations. It was a great chance for us to unwind and spend some quality women time together. We're all discussing how we want to make challah together again, especially since Chana's recipe makes so much that we can all share in the fun of making it together and then enjoy it in our own homes.

I want to thank Chana for making me and my family, as well as the other women at the class, feel so welcome and for sharing your baking talents with us. I also want to say thank you to all the community members and programming committee members who encouraged me to make the time to attend this event. I'm so very glad I did and I look forward to attending more!

### 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.**

**WE CANNOT GUARANTEE PUBLICATION OF ITEMS SUBMITTED AFTER DEADLINE**

## SHALOM

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*Next deadline, April 5*

# Story of survival concludes Jewish Film Series

By Amanda J. Hornberger

An inspiring true tale of survival during World War II, "Run Boy Run" concludes the 2016 Reading Jewish Film Series on April 20. This French and German dramatic narrative tells the story of a Polish boy who seeks the kindness of others in his solitary

struggle to outlast the Nazi occupation and keep alive his Jewish faith. Srulik, 9, escaped the Warsaw ghetto and passes himself off as Jurek, a Christian war orphan, to survive the war in the Polish countryside. Just when it seems his childhood memories and identity could be lost forever, Jurek's harrowing

journey culminates in a powerhouse conclusion and postscript.

The Reading Jewish Film Series 2016 is sponsored by the Rubin Educational Fund and Fox Theatres. "Run Boy Run" will be shown on Wednesday, April 20, at 7 p.m. at Fox Berkshire, 800 Berkshire Boulevard in Wyomissing.

Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the theater beginning at 6:30 p.m. the day of the screening. Cash and checks are accepted. Following the film will be a dessert reception compliments of Sweet Street Desserts.

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2016 Reading Jewish Film Series!

## Join us at Chatty Monks for a post-Passover beer tasting

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Itching to get out and enjoy yourself after Passover this year? The Chevra Committee of the JCC invites you to a post-Passover private beer tasting event at Chatty Monks Brewing Co. in West Reading! Open to all community members 21 or older, join us on Sunday,

May 1, from 4 to 8 pm for a night out at this local brewery. Sample beers from Chatty Monks and meet the brewer!

We'll learn about the brewing process, how Chatty Monks was started and its plans for expansion. Attendees will also be entered into a raffle for a FREE growler from Chatty

Monks!

The cost is \$10 for JCC members and \$15 for non-members. Pricing includes a dinner buffet, one beer sample and one pint of beer. You are also welcome to purchase any additional beers. Seating is limited to 40 people so please sign up early!

RSVPs are requested by April 28 to Brenda at [brendas@jreading.org](mailto:brendas@jreading.org) or 610-921-0624. Babysitting with pizza dinner will be available with additional details including cost and location to follow.

Come out and join us for what is sure to be a fun evening!

## Large crowd celebrates Community Shabbat

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Two hundred people gathered on March 4 to celebrate Shabbat together at RCOS for our annual Community Shabbat. Rabbi Michelson and Rabbi Abelson worked together on the service, and we were treated to the beautiful voice of Gabriella Michelson

as she led us in singing. Rabbi Lipsker offered the blessings prior to dinner, and then the community enjoyed a meal together.

Due to the large crowd there were no assigned seats. But it was just as well as new friends were introduced as the community

shared the evening together. After the meal was finished people lingered talking to friends, enjoying coffee and desserts and watching the children run around the room and play together.

It really was a community gathering for all ages, and we enjoyed seeing

so many people attend and enjoy themselves.

Our community will have another opportunity to gather together at our annual meeting and picnic on Sunday, May 22 at Wyomissing Hills Playground. Hope to see you there!



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## 'Three Queens and a Joker' art exhibit to open in April

By Amanda J. Hornberger

The JCC is pleased to host four artists from Schuylkill County in a new art exhibit titled "Three Queens and a Joker." This exhibit runs April 11 through June 10 with an opening reception on April 14 from 5-7 p.m.

Below is information on each of the artists:

Kris Miller-Siple is a former art teacher and will feature oil paintings in the show. Common and whimsical objects from sentimental experiences are her primary focus. Playing with light, color and shadow as a metaphor for looking back in time, Kris' shadow play paintings are meant to inspire and reawaken pleasant memories for the viewer.

A former banker, Molly Kantner Reed began painting again only four years ago. Her paintings' subject matter reflects imagery very personal to her, including geometrically precise Sudoku-inspired paintings and loosely painted expressionist landscapes. Molly loves to see a painting with thick use of paint and much texture, derived by stroke of either brush or palette knife to create a sense of energy in her work.

Audrey Bordonaro is a former art teacher and guidance counselor who resumed her love of creating art after her retirement. The creation of her art is influenced by her life experiences through nature, music, words/poetry, feelings and emotions. The mediums she presently uses are oil paint, acrylic paint, mixed media, or cold wax and oil paint. Her work consists of representational art as well as abstract work. However, she feels most creative when producing abstractly.

The joker of the group, Mike McCord has spent his career working in advertising, computer graphics, graphic design and printing. While some people keep a journal, Mike keeps a sketch book and has recently begun showing his work in public.

For Mike, the transition from the commercial realm to a much more personal and purely creative world of fine art is a major step outside his comfort zone to a place where an artist should live. To him the materials are secondary, art is a way of life, and the work is simply a by-product of the struggle to come to terms with that persistent urge.

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# 'Fiddler on the Roof': JCC trip to New York City

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Community members are invited to join us for a JCC bus trip to New York City on Wednesday, June 29, to see the new Broadway revival of "Fiddler on the Roof"! A wonderful cast and lavish orchestra tell this heartwarming story of fathers and daughters, husbands and wives, and the

timeless traditions that define faith and family. The new production stars Tony nominees Danny Burstein and Jessica Hecht with stunning choreography from acclaimed Israeli choreographer Hofesh Shechter, based on the original staging by Jerome Robbins.

In addition to seeing "Fiddler", our

trip will include three hours of free time to explore the city and grab lunch, as well as a boxed deli dinner for the ride home.

Pricing includes round-trip Bieber Bus transportation, bus driver gratuity and your ticket to "Fiddler." The price is \$110 for JCC members and \$140 for non-JCC

members.

We hope you can join us for this fun day in New York and the opportunity to see this beloved theatrical masterpiece.

Please RSVP today to Brenda Seidel at 610-921-0624 or [brendas@jfreading.org](mailto:brendas@jfreading.org) by April 27. Seating is limited to the first 50 people.

# PJ Our Way coming to Reading

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Tween readers in our area are invited to join PJ Our Way as this new program kicks off this spring! An expansion of PJ Library, this Jewish literacy program is available to children ages 9-11. PJ Library currently sends free Jewish books or CDs each month to children ages 6 months to 8 years old. Once a child ages out of the PJ Library program when they turn 9, they register separately for PJ Our Way.

In the PJ Our Way program, children ages 9-11 get to select one of four books every month. Additionally, participants can create book trailers, videos, quizzes, author interviews and use other media to communicate with their peers about the

books on the website [pjourway.org](http://pjourway.org).

PJ Our Way was introduced in 10 communities nationwide in 2014 and will launch in 24 new cities this year, including Reading. We were selected as a pilot community last fall after submitting a successful grant application to The Harold Grinspoon Foundation, which administers PJ Our Way nationally.

Children in the Greater Reading area ages 9-11 can open an account at [pjourway.org](http://pjourway.org) with the help of their parents. After filling out an online enrollment form, parents must confirm their account in a verification email that will be sent to them. In addition to their first book selection, children will receive the book "Jordan and the Dreadful Golem" to

welcome them and will get their first selected book about four to six weeks after that.

Each month following that, the subscribers have until the 10th of each month to select one of four books for the upcoming month. Additionally, PJ Our Way subscribers across the country can apply in October each year to be part of a national design team that has early access to the books to create videos and reviews, interview authors and participate in workshops to lead conversations among their peers. There is also a parents' blog on the site, which includes summaries, discussion points and content warnings for the books.

PJ Library is an award-winning Jewish

family engagement program designed to strengthen the identities of Jewish families and their relationship to their local Jewish community. Created by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, PJ Library started in 2005 by providing free, high-quality Jewish books and music each month to 200 families.

Now more than 140,000 children between the ages of 6 months and 8 years receive the books in 200 communities in the United States and Canada. In addition, more than 220,000 schoolchildren in Israel receive Hebrew language, Jewish values-based books through PJ Library's sister program, Sifriyat Pijama.

# Local Holocaust survivors speak to students

By Amanda J. Hornberger

This spring the Lakin Holocaust Resource Center at Albright College has been proud to help coordinate Holocaust survivor and second generation survivor family member visits to local high schools throughout our area.

In March more than 250 students were fortunate enough to hear firsthand stories of survival during the Holocaust.

Over 120 Eastern Lebanon County High School (ELCO) students were able to meet Mariette Jacobson on March 15 and learn about her family's experiences in France during World War II. The ELCO students were extremely attentive and asked some great questions during the Q&A following Mariette's talk. This visit was

extra special as the technology teacher from ELCO was able to record Mariette speaking and create a DVD copy for the Lakin HRC. Now Mariette's testimony will be added to the permanent collection of more than two dozen other Holocaust survivors' testimony currently housed at the Lakin HRC, a joint effort of Albright College and the Jewish Federation of Reading.

On March 29 and 30 Kim Yashek Lockhart, the daughter of the late Holocaust survivor Richard Yashek, spoke at Schuylkill Valley High School and Conrad Weiser High School respectively. Using a presentation enhanced by her father's own words as written in his memoirs as well as with family pictures, Kim was able to tell her father's story of survival to more



More than 120 ELCO students listen attentively to Mariette Jacobson speak on March 15.

than 130 students. As firsthand accounts of the Holocaust become more difficult to hear due to the age of the survivors, we are grateful to rely on the capable second generation survivors who ensure that their parents' stories are told.

This April students from Fleetwood Area Middle School will also hear Holocaust survivors speak during their

visit to the Lakin HRC. I'm extremely grateful to all our local survivors and survivor family members who continue to ensure that local students are able to hear real stories of survival during the Holocaust. If you are interested in having a Holocaust survivor speak at your child's school, please contact the Lakin HRC at [hrc@albright.edu](mailto:hrc@albright.edu).

# Students benefit from Federation grant programs

Several local students are recipients of Student Camp and Education Awards, a Federation program that provides monetary awards to support their participation in programs that nurture Jewish identity:

JoJo Ure, daughter of Janine and Bruce Ure; and Alexa Chronister, daughter of Cindy and Brett Chronister, received funding toward her participation in the Religious Action Center L'Taken

social justice seminars.

The following will attend Camp Harlam in Kunkletown, Pa.

**Ari and Talia Spillerman**, children of David and Ruth Spillerman

Ari Spillerman also received a grant toward his participation in the National Federation of Temple Youth Veida



JoJo Ure



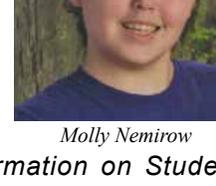
Alexa Chronister



Talia Spillerman



Ari Spillerman



Molly Nemirow

leadership program.

**Molly Nemirow**, a daughter of Mark and Geri Nemirow.

For more information on Student Camp and Education Awards, visit [www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org) or contact Bill Franklin at 610-921-0624.

# Meir Panim brings Purim joy to underprivileged in Israel

Purim is observed by delivering food packages (mishloach manot) to friends and family. It is also a commandment to donate money to the needy and partake in a festive holiday meal.

The Purim story describes the withdrawal of a tragic decree made by Haman, an evil leader in ancient Persia. He ordered the first "Final Solution" to destroy the Jewish people. Following his failed mission, Purim became a time of salvation and joy. But for the 1.7 million Israeli citizens who live in poverty, there is little festivity. Meir Panim has plans to bring Purim cheer to those who need it most.

"Every year, Meir Panim distributes special food packages to our patrons and those who receive help through our Meals-on-Wheels program," said Goldie Sternbuch, Director of Overseas Relations for Meir Panim.

Meir Panim expanded the program by distributing two mishloach manot baskets to every one of their patrons. One is for the patron to keep and the other is for the patron to give to a needy person of his choosing.

"Meir Panim strives to normalize the lives of the impoverished," Sternbuch said. "In order to do that, people need to not only receive but also to give. Therefore, patrons can indulge their grandchildren or a neighbor. Others are alone and lonely – they can give their mishloach manot to a neighbor and build a

relationship."

About 3,000 baskets were distributed. Prior to Purim, students from 20 schools across Israel went door to door to collect nonperishable food for the packages. About 6,000 students participated.

The six Meir Panim branch managers created a Purim atmosphere in their restaurant-style soup kitchens. The restaurants were decorated, staff wore costumes, music was played, and special food was served. "We are hopeful that patrons walk away with big smiles on their faces and an extra warm and happy feeling in their hearts," Sternbuch said.

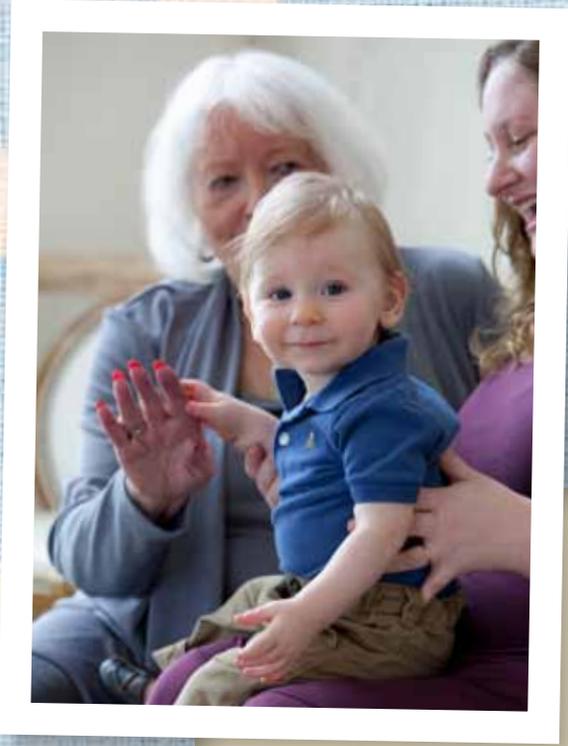
In Meir Panim's Dimona branch, a unique Purim carnival was planned. The entire development town was invited to join in the festivities. Several hundred people were expected to attend the event, which included balloons, face painting, animal rides, music, clowns and treats. Dimona policemen volunteered their time to man the booths.

"Because of the many challenges impoverished people face in their lives, many poor families have negative views of policemen," Sternbuch explained, noting that having police in uniform in the booths is a great way to build positive relationships.

Through these Purim activities, the organization aimed to bring joy to as many people as possible. "Providing a positive and uplifting atmosphere for the



downtrodden and developing social responsibility is what Meir Panim is all about," noted Sternbuch. "And, let's face it. The surprising sight of a policeman behind a cotton candy machine is enough to brighten the faces of everyone with the joy of the Purim holiday."



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Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Good News Israel: Spotlight



## Yemeni Jews brought to Israel in secret mission

Some of the last remaining Jews in war-torn Yemen have been brought to Israel in a secret mission. According to BBC reports, the Jewish Agency, which is responsible for Jewish immigration to Israel, said 19 people had arrived in mid-March, among them a rabbi carrying a 500-year-old Torah scroll.

The nonprofit organization said some 50 Jews had chosen to stay in Yemen.

Since 1948, 51,000 Jews have emigrated to Israel from Yemen, which has one of the world's oldest Jewish communities. Almost all of them were

brought to Israel as part of Operation Magic Carpet in 1949 and 1950.

In recent years, some 200 Jews have left as attacks against the Jewish community have increased and the country has descended into war.

The BBC reported that the group landed in Israel March 20 following a complex covert operation.

The Jewish Agency said attacks against Jews in Yemen had risen sharply since 2008, when Jewish teacher Moshe Yaish Nahari was murdered in Raydah. In 2012, Aharon Zindani — whose son and

four other relatives were on board the recent flight to Israel — was murdered in Sanaa and a young Jewish woman was abducted, forced to convert to Islam, and forcibly wed to a Muslim man, it added.

After the conflict between the Yemeni government and the rebel Houthi movement escalated a year ago, the Jewish community found itself increasingly imperilled, and covert operations to spirit Jews out of Yemen were stepped up, according to the BBC.

The Jewish Agency said some 50 Jews remain in Yemen, including about

40 in Sanaa, where they live in a closed compound and enjoy the protection of Yemeni authorities.

The Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, Natan Sharansky, said the arrival of the final group of Jewish immigrants from Yemen was “a highly significant moment in the history of Israel”.

“From Operation Magic Carpet in 1949 until the present day, the Jewish Agency has helped bring Yemenite Jewry home to Israel. Today we bring that historic mission to a close.”

## Israeli breakthrough could aid Alzheimer's patients

Israel21c.com

The progressive dementia of Alzheimer's disease affects some 35 million people worldwide and is expected to affect 115 million by 2050, yet it is not possible to detect the disease before it has caused loss of memory and function.

The quest to develop a simple blood test for Alzheimer's is therefore top priority. As ISRAEL21c reported in December, the Israeli company

NeuroQuest is working with the University of California-San Diego on clinical validation trials of its blood test for very early diagnosis of Alzheimer's, based on award-winning research led by Professor Michal Schwartz of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot.

Now, researchers from three Israeli institutions — Tel Aviv University, Technion and Rambam Medical Center in Haifa — and from Harvard University have published

a study in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease that proposes testing ADNP, a novel biomarker in the blood for cognitive aging and Alzheimer's disease.

“This study has provided the basis to detect this biomarker in routine, non-invasive blood tests, and it is known that early intervention is invaluable to Alzheimer's patients,” said Professor Illana Gozes, lead researcher. “We are now planning to take these preliminary

findings forward into clinical trials — to create a pre-Alzheimer's test that will help to tailor potential preventative treatments.”

ADNP was discovered in Gozes' lab 15 years ago. “Our study is the first to assess ADNP in elderly individuals at risk for Alzheimer's disease, and its results open the door for further validation in larger, more informative studies,” she says.

## How do you say Startup Nation in Arabic?

Israel21c.com

A new Arab-Israeli innovation hub has joined the local high-tech landscape, and leading experts in the field have high hopes for the project's success.

The TRI/O Tech advanced high-tech entrepreneurial hub in the hilltop Israeli Arab city of Kafr Kassem, near Tel Aviv, includes the first Arab-Israeli school of entrepreneurship and a startup accelerator.

TRI/O Tech is a joint venture of Tsofen, an Arab-Israeli integration nonprofit, and MIT Enterprise Forum of Israel, the Israeli chapter of the global nonprofit organization dedicated to

promoting the growth and success of high-tech entrepreneurial ventures.

The initiative — expected to cost \$23 million over three years — is primarily supported by the US-Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) of the US State Department.

“The whole operation in this hub is focused on integrating Israeli Arabs into Israeli high-tech, making the entrepreneurial world more accessible to the Arab community, creating jobs for Arabs in their towns so they do not need to travel to Tel Aviv or Haifa for work, and at the same time fostering and encouraging entrepreneurship

through the school and accelerator,” Hans Shakur, consultant for Tsofen and project manager, tells ISRAEL21c.

New accelerators, incubators, high-tech hubs and shared working spaces are popping up all the time. However, TRI/O Tech stands out because of its niche in the Arab-Israeli sector.

Taking a cue from Nazareth's flourishing high-tech center, Kafr Kassem hopes to lure more high-tech companies to its Lev Haaretz Industrial Zone that would then employ more local talent from the Triangle area of Israeli Arab towns in the eastern Sharon plain.

“TRI/O Tech will encourage young

entrepreneurs, bring businesses and create badly needed jobs for the area and create an entrepreneurial ecosystem for the Triangle,” Ambassador of the United States Dan Shapiro said at the opening ceremony on February 10, 2016.

“Once we have successful models of Nazareth and Kafr Kassem, within a few months we'll see other cities or towns wanting to duplicate this experience of building high-tech in their towns. And this will accelerate by itself. The Arab mayors know of the economic miracle of the startup and high-tech nation and all of them want to be part of it,” Shakur tells ISRAEL21c.

## IsraAID helps ‘forgotten refugees in northern France

Israeli humanitarian aid volunteers have arrived in the “forgotten refugee camps” of Calais and Dunkirk, in northern France, in response to international calls to help thousands of migrants living in squalid conditions.

IsraAID sent a professional team that includes psychosocial and trauma specialists to meet with local and international organizations and community leaders to support the needs of both the refugees and the long-term staff at the hard hit camps.

Winter weather and torrential rain has turned Calais and Dunkirk into muddy settlements, and international aid

workers are warning of a sanitation crisis.

“Here in Northern France after failing to reach England, the refugees, 80 percent of whom are Kurdish Iraqis, 20% Syrian, Iranian and Afghans, are stranded in a series of improvised muddy camps, with dwindling resources and increasingly desperate conditions,” says IsraAID Director Shachar Zahavi. “Thousands of families here struggle to satisfy even their most basic needs, and uncertainty and ambiguity of their current situation only adds to the mental anguish of the horrors they escaped back home.”

Despite their notorious conditions, migrants continue to make their way to

the camps in Calais and Dunkirk, located near the Channel Tunnel, in an attempt to cross into the UK.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees' representative in France, Philippe Leclerc, has said in the past that most of the migrants in Calais were fleeing violence in Syria, Eritrea, Somalia and Afghanistan.

IsraAID's director says volunteers from his organization — a nonprofit, non-governmental organization founded in Israel in 2001 to bring lifesaving disaster relief and long-term support wherever needed — have been answering the call for aid in Europe's migration crisis for the

past three years.

“In 2016, IsraAID remains committed to this humanitarian crisis, and the efforts in Northern France are part of a larger response plan that includes operations in Jordan, Northern Iraq, the shores of Lesbos and camps in the north of Greece and Serbia-Croatia,” says Zahavi. “IsraAID is also supporting the efforts of the government and civil society with the crucial task of trying to absorb and integrate the refugees in Germany, and the physical and mental scars that comes with them from civil conflict and their arduous journey.”

## Syrian refugee creates website to thank Israelis

Israel21c.com

About Dandachi, a Sunni Muslim from the city of Homs now living in Istanbul, has created a website dedicated to the Israeli and Jewish organizations and people helping Syrian refugees.

The website, Thank You Am Israel, highlights the humanitarian aid being given to displaced Syrians and also refutes any reasons why Israelis and Syrians should be enemies.

“As a Syrian, I am morally obligated to ensure that the goodwill that Israelis and Jews have displayed towards my people will not be overlooked nor forgotten. The day will come when the conflict in Syria will come to an end, as all things come to an

end. On that day, it is imperative that Syrians reciprocate the enormous goodwill shown towards us by Israelis and the Jewish people. Whatever supposed reasons we may have had to be adversaries is dwarfed by the compassion shown to us during our darkest days, a time when we have nothing to give back except our gratitude,” Dandachi wrote in an opinion article on his site.

Dandachi, a 39-year-old high-tech project manager, says he never imagined the civil war in Syria would last five years. Dandachi left his hometown of Homs in September 2013 for Lebanon and then made his way to Turkey.

“I grew up with statements like ‘These

people are your enemies. The Jews are evil.’ And then I saw that the Jews are the most humane and generous people of this era.”

In December 2015, he created a blog, Twitter account and Facebook page in appreciation of the assistance given to Syrian refugees by Israeli and Jewish organizations and individuals.

The site includes news stories and opinion pieces on the global humanitarian aid being offered by Israeli and Jewish people to the Syrian people. (*Am Yisrael* is Hebrew for “Nation of Israel.”)

“There are new stories of Israelis helping Syrians every day. As far as I'm concerned, because we as Syrians cannot

give back to Jews what they give to us, we should at least thank them,” Dandachi told Ynet news.

He says this “one-man operation” is a personal mission and that he had no idea what feedback he'd get, if any.

“I've been getting tremendous feedback and messages of support,” Dandachi tells ISRAEL21c.

“What surprised me is the feedback from Arabs. I was expecting hostility from Arabs and instead a surprising number have told me that I'm saying what they can't say and that I should keep saying what I'm saying. It surprised me the number of Arabs and refugees like me who say that.”

# Congregational News

## Counting the Omer

By Rabbi Brian Michelson

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Starting on the second night of Passover, we as Jews enter a period of counting known as Sefirat HaOmer, the counting of the Omer. This practice is based on the verse in the Torah "And from the



day on which you bring the sheaf of wave offering — the day after the Sabbath (in this context the Sabbath refers to the first day of Passover), you

shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete." (Lev. 23:15)

The wave offering was the first sheaf of barley, the first of the winter grains to ripen, was cut in the field and brought to the ancient Temple in thanksgiving. From that day, a measure — an Omer — of barley was brought to count the 49 days between the second night of Passover and the festival of Shavuot. Shavuot, the wheat harvest and the time of the giving of the Torah, falls on day 50, having completed the counting of the seven weeks.

The period of the Omer links the Exodus of the people from Egyptian slavery with the giving of the Torah. We

count from the day we were freed to the day we fully entered into the covenant with God. As some rabbinic authorities portray it; these are the days of our "engagement" to God and for preparing for our "wedding" as represented by the giving of the Ten Commandments.

Lately, however, I have been thinking more about the idea of not only counting the days, but making the days count. All too often, we spend our time just trying to get through the days as we work towards the end of a project or a goal. How often do we let time slip away without stopping to think about it or enjoy the moments we are experiencing.

In Psalm 90 it says, "Teach us to number our days; that we may obtain a wise heart." (Ps. 90:12) Words for time figure prominently in this Psalm. A contrast is drawn between God's eternity and human mortality and fragility. The Psalmist hopes that, with God's help, life will be satisfying and joyful. It is a notion that is worthy of our attention and thought.

This year, as we celebrate Passover and begin to count the days of the Omer, may we, also, remember to make each and every one of those days count. If we can, we will as the Psalm says. "gain a wise heart."

## Keeping up with the details pays spiritual dividends

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker

Chabad Center of Berks County

In today's modern world, the computer plays an integral part. Everything is run by these little machines, even if you do not actually own one. The computer is like the human brain, in that it



processes information and reacts accordingly. It is able to calculate any potential scenario and find an instant solution. Obviously, because the computer is not human, the solution may not always be the desired one!

The beauty of the modern computer is that they are so easy to run (our children invariably comprehended the basic operation of one before they had reached their second birthday) that one is totally unaware and oblivious to its inner mechanism and operation. In reality, the computer operates by a series of digits and letters which are intricately assembled into complex codes and patterns. These patterns allow the computer (at incredible speeds) to work its way through the maze of information that is stored on it.

But the life of a computer is short, and it can expire suddenly without warning. Because of this, all information is also stored elsewhere. Today there are ways of filing huge quantities of information. But this information can be lost or even stolen. In the hands of others, information can be mishandled and abused.

The solution to this is to encrypt the information, which is very simple. Throughout history, people have designed codes as a means of hiding information. These codes are generally coordinated between two parties who scramble and unscramble the code using a prearranged formula. The simplest formula is to give each letter a number. So the letter A would be 1. Obviously, that won't fool anyone, but it's an illustration of how it's done. In computer terminology, it is accomplished through a series of digits and letters that make it impossible to unscramble without the "key," which is only known to the owner of the file and anyone else he shares it with.

A typed message, such as what you are currently reading, is legible and clear. However, with just a few letters out of place, it would become gibberish and confusing. That is all it takes — a few letters out of place. But this gibberish

suddenly takes on a new identity, that of a code. If one can place those letters back in their correct context the message will become clear.

The dividing line between clarity and confusion is wafer thin. The margin between inspiration and bewilderment is tiny.

The day before Passover, leavened products are permitted for consumption. Bread, cakes and cookies can all be enjoyed. The day after Passover, once again everything is permitted and life goes back to normal. But for the duration of the festival (Friday evening, April 22 – Saturday, April 30) Chametz (any leavened product) is contraband of the worst type.

The reasons for disposing of Chametz over Pesach are many and valid, but the seeming extremity of the rules is perplexing. We can appreciate that Chametz consumption is forbidden, but why the requirement to get rid of every tiny crumb from the home?

Judaism is all about detail. Every aspect, every instruction — however insignificant — is deliberately designed to create the setting through which our lives are enriched and enhanced. We might be mystified, but the Mitzvah would

not be the same without total application. Any diversion moves the "letter" out of place, in the process creating confusion and error. Does it matter? As long as the basics are followed, surely that is the aim and ideal? Why should a few 'minor' details derail the whole project?

The answer is in the code. Most people have no idea how a computer does its work and, frankly, they do not need to. As long as it does its job they are happy and content. But they still respect the fact that a tiny departure from normal procedures renders the computer inoperable — with catastrophic results. The same with transferring data. Without encrypting the information (a very simple task) it becomes compromised.

It is the same with Judaism. Even without knowing the exact reasons why, it is obvious that a tiny departure from our tradition, or guidelines, creates chaos and disorder. Following them promotes harmony and focus. Our "computer" must be maintained and kept in good condition, it is the key to our survival and success.

I conclude by wishing each and every one of you a happy and Kosher Passover, and may it be one of calm, peace, and joy.

### April ✨ Adar II-Nisan



#### Shabbat Candle Lightings



#### Torah Portions

April 1  
7:11 p.m.

April 2/Adar II 23  
Shemini (Leviticus 9:1 – 11:47)

April 8  
7:18 p.m.

April 9/Nisan 1  
Tazria (Leviticus 12:1 – 13:59)

April 15  
7:25 p.m.

April 16/Nisan 8  
Metzora (Leviticus 14:1 – 15:33)

April 22  
7:32 p.m.

April 23/Nisan 15  
Passover

### LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

**REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034**  
Friday, April 1: 6 p.m. Grades 2/3 Shabbat followed by dinner  
Friday, April 8: Sisterhood Shabbat, 7:45 p.m.  
Saturday, April 9: Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.  
Fridays, April 15 and 29, 7:45 p.m.  
**NO FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICE ON APRIL 22**

**CHABAD CENTER OF BERKS COUNTY (610) 921-0881**  
Saturday mornings: 9:30 a.m.; Friday evenings: 6:30 p.m.

**KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE (610) 374-1763**  
Weekly services Saturdays: 9:30 a.m.; Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.  
Friday Evening Service – Please call for service information

**CONGREGATION SHOMREI HABRITH**

Join Chabad of Berks County for an enchanting

## Passover Seder



Relive the exodus, discover the eternal meaning of the Haggadah, and enjoy a community Seder complete with hand-baked Matzah, wine, and a wonderful dinner spiced with unique and traditional customs.

Explore the Kabbalistic insight of the number four: Four cups of wine, four sons, four questions and four types of freedom. Discover the Seder's relevance to today's modern Jew.

For more info and reservations:  
**610-334-3218**  
chabadofberks@gmail.com  
www.l-chaim.org/seder

**First Seder Night:**  
Friday, April 22,  
7:30 p.m.

**Suggested donation:**  
Adult, \$36; Child: \$18

Please RSVP  
by April 20

By Rabbi Matthew Abelson  
Keshar Zion Synagogue

Depending on who is at our seder table, the conversation will vary. With young kids — children or grandchildren — the Haggadah reading provides enough material. Mastering the narrative of the exodus of the Jewish people from slavery, explaining why certain items are on the seder plate, and singing songs such as



dayenu are essential elements of a child-friendly Passover seder. After the kids find the afikomen and head to bed, another type of discussion ensues, one that is more aligned with adult sensibilities. That discussion revolves around freedom. Freedom is at once thoroughly familiar and abstract, unrealized. If you ask someone to explain what freedom is, they will likely stumble or offer platitudes, yet that shouldn't lead us to think that they do not know what freedom is. As citizens of the United States of America, we have heard of and spoken about freedom since the earliest moments of our youth.

In the patriotic anthem "America" written by Samuel Francis Smith in 1831, we declare "Let freedom ring!" Most of us sing that song for the first time as early as preschool, introducing us to the concept of freedom at a young age. The rest of our lives, one could suggest, is an exploration of freedom. We engage with freedom, particularly its lack of full realization, but we do not often reflect on the basic question of what freedom is. The seder is that opportunity. We do not explore the nature and parameters of freedom in a strictly philosophical sense; we explore it against the background of our ancestors' liberation from slavery in Egypt under Pharaoh through the leadership of Moses. That narrative contains within it the complexity of the topic of freedom. A host of questions rush to mind when we think critically about the Haggadah.

To connect philosophical reflection on the concept of freedom to the narrative of the Jewish people's liberation from Egyptian slavery, what may be useful is to employ writings from general culture. Two literary works that I will bring to my seder table are Jonathan Franzen's 2010 novel "Freedom" and Isaiah Berlin's 1958 essay "Two Concepts of Liberty." These two works bring a distinct flavor to the topic of freedom.

One, a novel, follows a Minnesota family, the Berglunds, and details the rash of mistakes that each of the members in the family makes — most significantly adultery. The title is not ironic, but it does expose a

dimension of freedom that is as real as any other. Choice is the essence of freedom, and choice necessarily means the capacity to make mistakes. The novel raises the question, How are mistakes and choice intrinsic to the nature of freedom? Perhaps choice and its potential consequence, mistakes, is the essence of freedom.

Berlin's essay examines freedom in a completely different vein. The difference in genre — essay as opposed to novel — reflects a distinct focus. Rather than a narrative that painfully, and at times humorously, exposes that being free and being flawed are linked, Berlin interrogates one of freedom's essential components — liberty — and draws a distinction between negative and positive liberty. Negative liberty is the releasing of fetters; positive liberty is about the exercise of personal autonomy. To frame these two competing concepts in colloquial terms, one can ask, Am I free because no one is telling me what to do, or is freedom about the ability to determine one's destiny?

In "Two Concepts of Liberty," Berlin does not cite the haggadah, but the narrative of the Jewish people's liberation from slavery is consonant with negative liberty, and their journey to the eretz Israel is consonant with positive liberty.

My hope is to whet your appetite on the holiday on which we cannot eat chametz for a fierce and unblinking conversation about the nature of freedom.

Chag Sameach.

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR  
KESHER ZION'S  
2016 PASSOVER CELEBRATION**

**Friday, April 22:** Fast of the First Born  
Siyyum service at 8:00 a.m. in the KZ Chapel followed by light breakfast  
**Passover First Seder at KZ**  
Please RSVP to KZ office before April 11, 2016

**Saturday, April 23:** KZ Passover Festival Services at 9:30 a.m.

**Sunday, April 24:** Passover Festival Services at KZ 9:30 a.m.

**Friday, April 29:** Passover Festival Services at KZ 9:30 a.m.  
Shabbat Evening Services at KZ 6:00 p.m.  
**KZ Shabbat Passover Dinner at 7:00 p.m.**  
Reservations to KZ office before April 18, 2016

**Saturday, April 30:** Shabbat Passover Services at KZ 9:30 a.m. including Yizkor



**More fun at Tot Shabbat**

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom's Tot Shabbat draws a crowd. Next edition is Saturday, April 9, at 10 a.m.

**COME EXPERIENCE THE EXODUS!  
KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE INVITES YOU TO A  
FIRST NIGHT COMMUNITY PASSOVER SEDER**

Friday, April 22, 2016  
Journey guided by Rabbi Matthew Abelson



Catered by Boscov's Ala Carte Caterers

Cost: Adults — \$30.00/Children (6-13) - \$20.00/Children 5 & under free  
Menu: Matzah Ball soup, gefilte fish, turkey, potato kugel, vegetables, wine, matzah, and dessert.  
Vegetarian entrée available upon request with reservation only (Same pricing as above)

**Reservations and payment (Check payable to Keshar Zion Synagogue)  
Must be sent to the Keshar Zion Office by April 11, 2016.**

If you are in need of transportation to the Seder, please contact the KZ Office (610) 374-1763.  
If financial assistance is necessary, please contact Sari Inclendon at Jewish Family Service (610) 921-2766.

I/We will be attending the Friday, April 22nd Passover Seder Meal at Keshar Zion Synagogue, 1245 Perkiomen Avenue, Reading, PA 19602. We are returning our reservation form and check (made out to Keshar Zion Synagogue). Deadline for reservations: Monday, April 11, 2016.

\$30.00 each adult x \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$20.00 each child x \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Children 5 & under are free)  
Request for vegetarian entrée x \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

**Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom invites you to Second Night Community Seder**  
Saturday, April 23, 2016, 6:00 pm



Food Provided by:  
**Boscov's Ala Carte Catering**  
Adults: \$ 30.00  
Children (6-13 yrs): \$ 20.00  
Children 5 & under: FREE



Hoping to see all of you as we gather together as a community to share our Seder Meal  
MENU: Matzah Ball Soup, Gefilte Fish, Horseradish, Matzah, Harosset, Hard Boiled Eggs, Wine, Juice, Seder Plate, Turkey with Matzah Stuffing on the side, Baked Salmon w/ Mango Salsa, Roasted Red Potatoes, Green Beans Almandine, Passover Desserts, Decaf, Coffee, Tea

If financial assistance is necessary, please contact Sari Inclendon at Jewish Family Service 610-921-2766.

**NO RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER FRIDAY, APRIL 15.**

I/We will be attending the Saturday, April 23, 2016 Seder Meal at RCOS, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing, PA 19610

We are returning our reservation form and check made payable to RCOS.

Deadline for Reservations to the RCOS Office is April 15, 2016.

# of Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$30.00 ea. = \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Children (6-13) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20.00 ea. = \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Children (0-5) \_\_\_\_\_ (need high chair?) yes \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ = \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SEATING PREFERENCE w/ FRIENDS yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_



PLEASE MARK NAMES OF ALL ATTENDING AND WHOM YOU PREFER TO SIT WITH ON BACK OF FORM.

## Obituaries

**Gene Friedman**, of Reading. Gene was a *Reading Times* staff writer and columnist/Reporter at Large from 1951 to 1977. He won second place in the Keystone Awards for a column. He was a staff director for Inter-American Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee from 1977 to 1981. He remained in Washington for several years. Gene retired in 1992 and returned to Reading and wrote the antique column "The Collector" for the *Reading Eagle* from 1992 to 2010. He was a past vice president of Temple Oheb Sholom.

Gene is survived by his wife Shirley, his two daughters; Ellen Friedman of Delaware and Carol Friedman-Cooper of Maryland. There are also twin grandsons Benjamin and Aaron Cooper.

---  
**Martin Rudolph**, 98, Reading. Martin worked for Reading Company Railroad as a welder/freight car repairman for 35 years. He is survived by his children; Harold Rudolph, Joyce DuGuay, Barbara Oxenreider, Carolyn Faust, and Robert Schoelkopf. Other survivors include eleven grandchildren and numerous great-and great-great-grandchildren.

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GRADE 2. BRING YOUR FAMILY  
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WITH RABBI MICHELSON, AND  
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Members & non-members are invited! No registration is required. Please call the Temple office 610.375.6034, with any questions.



## Group filled in on Hamantaschen

By Betsy Katz

On March 13 Chana Lipsker hosted a hamantaschen baking class at the Chabad Center. It was attended by about 50 women who left with an amazing assortment of delicious and colorful hamantaschen.

There were chocolate as well as traditional cookies and a myriad of fillings, including chocolate sauce, cheesecake, peanut butter fluff, caramel, and fruit jams. Some of the women combined the two

types of dough to make the hamantaschen marble and some used rainbow sprinkles to make confetti cookies.

Chana and Janine Ure demonstrated methods of shaping the treats into the traditional triangle shape, signifying Haman's hat. Chana explained the holiday of Purim and Queen Esther's role in foiling the plans of Haman to kill all of the Jews.

This was another in the series of wonderful cooking and baking experiences provided by Chana and her able assistants.



# NEW MEMBER SHABBAT



Please join RCOS for a Shabbat service to honor **new members**, including a "Covenant of Welcome" ceremony. Special oneg to follow offering wine and catered hors d'oeuvres.

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**7:00pm**

**Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom  
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# Seniors project pays big dividends for Jewish Community High School

By Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner

Reading JCHS Director

We have relished a project in which a cohort of our Jewish Community High School teens have agreed to spend extra time in their studies with a period once monthly in "hevruta" — learning partnership. Teens and senior citizens examine and then discuss traditional Jewish and modern texts, with a focus on Jewish values and contemporary events perceived from two rather different generational perspectives.

We also had a spectacular percent of our cohort agree to participate in "Better 2 Write / Tov L'chtov," an essay writing competition in which individuals and our program become eligible for significant prize awards to be directed toward subsidizing Jewish camping programs and/or Israel experiences. Awards will be announced by April 27.

## Purim welcomed

Our students were able to prepare for Purim in a very "creative" kitchen in the JCC — making hamentaschen with help from a counter-top convection oven and a very dedicated teacher, Shira Simon. Thanks to the JCC and Federation staff, we are assembling the tools, utensils and equipment for simple cooking and baking. Using dough from Rollings Bakery in Elkins Park and a variety of fillings — including a very interesting "halvah" filling — in addition to the more traditional poppy seed, cherry and prune.

## Class with Rabbi Lipsker

There will not be another Rabbi's class until after Passover. Rabbi Lipsker shares the following course information for those who will elect to study with him 5:30-6:15. Please let us know if on that date you want to begin that trimester with him.

**Jewish Course of Why?:** Insights into Jewish life in a contemporary world.

Class to be held May 8, 22 and June 5.

All students (even those not able to attend this course) can email Rabbi Lipsker at Lipsker@aol.com with questions you've always wanted to ask about "Why Jews Do What We Do?"

## More on 'Better 2 Write'

Here is some more background on the prizes for the "Better 2 Write" program, part of the "Better Together" program:

"Better Together" is a national program with competition for grants to subsidize intergenerational education. The program created and submitted by Rabbi Lerner was successful in winning one of those two-year grants.

"Better 2 Write" is an opportunity for grant participating projects to receive significant prizes for both the individual teens and also the project.

Reading JCHS submitted nine essays, which is a spectacular and amazing percentage of "Better Together" students.

Essays must reflect student work, though faculty or parents may assist with editing.

Each organization that satisfies the requirements for participation in the contest will identify the best Writing Submission from among the participants in the Better Together program from that organization. The foundation will pay up to 50 percent of the cost of a satisfactory Jewish summer camp program, with a maximum award of \$5,000 or satisfactory semester/gap year program in Israel, with a maximum award of \$8,000. The award will be provided to the organization operating the program for the benefit of the winning author. Donations also will be made to the scholarship funds of the organizations whose students finished in the top three among middle or high school student writers.



Making hamantaschen at Jewish Community High School.



"Better Together" is a learning experience for teens and older adults.



There's always time for fun at Jewish Community High School.



# Studying with elders an eye-opening, thrilling experience for teen

We will share with the Reading Jewish community in each issue some of the essays which were submitted by our JCHS teens on our Better Together program.

By Evan Cardinal

When we met during the Hebrew month of Shevat, naturally, our Hebrew High School director Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner presented a Tu B'Shevat tale for us to read and discuss with the senior community members. Together with senior citizen Anne Greenstein, we read the story as follows:

One day, Honi the Circle Maker was walking on the road and saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked the man, "How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?" The man replied, "Seventy years." Honi then asked the man, "And do you think you will live another seventy years and eat the fruit of this tree?"

As I read the last line of Honi's question, I zoned out and focused not about this random Circle Maker, but rather about the situation I found myself in. I wondered why exactly I was participating in this Better Together program and if all we would do with the seniors is discuss the subject material. If all we would be doing is the latter, I seriously would debate about dropping out of Better Together. I am a major proponent of studying Bible and discussing its ethical relevance to today's standards however, I never thought an elderly person would share this same focus. For instance, all my gentile grandmother does is watch Philadelphia Phillies games on the television. I love her to pieces but honestly, I would not be able to hold a serious religious discussion with her.

In spite of my doubts, I stuck through the lesson and gave the elders the proper

respect they deserved. After that Better Together meeting, I never questioned my place in the program ever again. It was this lesson complemented by the revelry and bonds made with the seniors, that made me realize how significant the Better Together program in fact is.

Upon glancing over the place in the Tu B'Shevat reading, my havruta partner Anne commented on the fact that the tree being planted was a carob tree. She told me that the carob plant is one of the most prevalent plants in Israel and that the fruit as well as the shade the carob tree provided were major aspects depicted in the Bible.

Immediately, my premonition of seniors not having keen interest in Bible study was debunked. From that moment, Anne and I continued dissecting the symbolism of the carob tree and the other metaphoric aspects of the passage involving Honi and man planting the carob. Engaging and conversing with Anne on this biblical topic made me not view our interaction as student-to-senior but instead profoundly shifted my mindset as if the intergenerational study session was peer-to-peer.

At the adjacent table from Anne and me, raucous laughter erupted. The culprits were a fellow friend of mine, Megan McIntosh, and her hevruta partner Alan Mann. This annoyed me at first because Anne and I were critically analyzing the Talmudic piece and these two were just hashing out jokes! I eventually figured out that laughter is as valuable as the learning aspect of Better Together. Without the constant wise-crack remarks from Alan and some of the other witty seniors and students, our time spent together would not be as enjoyable. That is why there is never a

dull moment in our monthly sessions. I liken the fun and merriment to the fourth stanza from William Blake's 1789 poem, "Ecchoing Green":

Sitting under the oak, Among the old folk, They laugh at our play, And soon they all say. 'Such, such were the joys. When we all girls & boys, In our youth-time were seen, On the Ecchoing Green.'

At the Ecchoing Green, joy and gaiety are contagious amongst old and young alike. This is exactly the case during our Better Together program; the laughter and hilarity is a defining facet of the intergenerational process, regardless of age. It is the guffawing and lively experience that knits the two varying generations even closer together.

Between the riveting discussions and humorous interjections, genuine companionships have formed between the adolescents and adults involved with the Reading Better Together program. In my case, it is with a gentleman by the name of Herb Schneider.

When everyone was just making their way in our local Jewish Federation on that Shevat night, I met eyes with Herb. Instantaneously, the 98 years-young man walked over to me and asked how my mother and my brother in the service were faring. You see, Herb has known my family for years. He and my grandfather Robert Backer would vacation together, attend Shabbat services and go on golfing excursions.

It is the golfing that Herb loves to tell me about. When golfing with my father and my grandfather, Herb recalls, "Your dad would crush the ball off the tee. Then I would take one stroke ... then another ... and another to get to the spot where he first hit off the tee!" Besides photographs and his tallit that I now

wear during any Jewish service, I hardly have anything to remind me of my Poppy Backer. Fortunately, through this Better Together process, I now have Herbie's incredibly sharp mind to reminisce about the grandfather I never met.

Clearly, I was wrong about the Better Together program. My initial hesitation proved to be futile through Anne's wisdom, Alan's comedy, and Herb's stories. In retrospect of that incredible first night, I have since connected Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner's lesson of Honi as an explanation of why I must participate in Better Together.

Honi's story continues as so: The man answered, "Perhaps not. However, when I was born into this world, I found many carob trees planted by my father and grandfather. Just as they planted trees for me, I am planting trees for my children and grandchildren so they will be able to eat the fruit of these trees."

In this tale, we see a man planting a tree that will not yield fruit until seventy years down the road. The man's response to Honi the Circle Maker's quizzical interrogation of why the man would do something so seemingly pointless, purely encapsulates the true meaning of the Better Together program.

Just like the man planting carob to feed his future lineage, the senior citizens present at the Jewish Federation of Reading, provide their insight and intelligence to ensure an enlightened future generation in us students. This notion by far transcends mere Bible study among students and seniors; it shows how the Jewish seniors in my Reading community are essential in planting the seeds of knowledge and maturity that will in turn advise my generation on how we can live our lives Better Together.

# Chicago students turn tables on BDS protesters with new tactic

Students at University of Illinois at Chicago have reframed the anti-Israel divestment debate so that a resolution passed by the student government no longer singles out Israel for criticism. Rather, it calls on UIC to divest from companies contributing to alleged human rights abuses in a wide spectrum of countries.

The modified resolution passed by the student government, which mentions the U.S., China, Syria, Brazil, India, the United Kingdom and others, still includes Israel, but only on a list with many other

countries — successfully watering down the impact. The tactic was an innovative strategy to try to redirect BDS resolutions instead of fighting all-out against them in universities where pro-Israel elements are outnumbered. The anti-BDS group known as Coalition for Peace did not endorse the final resolution but did not oppose it with the changes.

A statement issued by Jewish United Fund of Chicago stated that, “Coalition for Peace unmasked the anti-Semitic aspects of the anti-Israel divestment campaign, which was cloaked under the

guise of concern about human rights abuses generally.” It added that “the charge of anti-Semitism in relation to BDS arises from the movement’s singling out of Israel among all nations for criticism ... and false accusations that Israel commits crimes such as genocide and ethnic cleansing. The implicit objective of the global BDS initiative is to end Jewish sovereignty and self-determination by eliminating the state of Israel.”

The Coalition for Peace convinced student government leaders that the original resolution that singled out Israel

for condemnation was anti-Semitic and targeted Israel unfairly.

“Negotiations over the resolution were not easy but we tempered it so that it does not single out one nation, Israel, for condemnation,” said Moshe Rubin, a student involved with Coalition for Peace.

“Considering that Jewish students were held to very different standards than BDS activists, were subject to hostile questioning and were given no clear directives about how to participate in the process, they did a remarkable job,” said Rabbi Seth Winberg, executive director of Metro Chicago Hillel.

# Israeli water purifier on way to thirsty Papua New Guinea

Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs is donating a GalMobile water purification vehicle to drought-stricken Papua New Guinea, an independent island nation north of Australia, in which about 85 percent of the 6 million citizens lack access to electricity and tap water.

The Caesarea-based G.A.L. Water Technologies and the Foreign Ministry have teamed up to provide water-treatment products on a humanitarian basis to

African nations for more than 20 years. Last March, they sent a GalMobile to the Marshall Islands in the Pacific, where drinking water is in seriously short supply. The GalMobile is a mobile potable water-treatment, storage and distribution system that connects to any possible water source and produces drinking water at World Health Organization standards in less than 30 minutes, yielding about 8,000 cups of water per hour.

Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced its purchase of the vehicle at an event at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem led by Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely and Raphael Morav, director of the Pacific Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

G.A.L. Water Technologies Rami Aflalo demonstrated the GalMobile’s capabilities and explained how the system will aid the residents of Papua

New Guinea in overcoming the drought. Hundreds of children there die every year from diseases caused by drinking non-potable water, he told participants, who included officials from the World Bank, MASHAV-Israel’s Agency for International Development Cooperation, the Economy and Industry Ministry, Kawasaki Israel, Polaris Israel and the Water Industry Manufacturers Association of Israel (MAI).

# Pressure-sensing socks could help reduce foot ulcers in diabetics

**Israel21c.com**

Though regular checkups are helpful in monitoring pressure and ulceration in diabetics, the ideal scenario would be to stop ulcers from developing in the first place.

Members of the BioDesign: Medical Innovation program, created by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and its affiliated Hadassah Medical Center, recently introduced their answer to the problem: SenseGO, a machine-washable sock containing dozens of micro-fabricated pressure sensors.

When a person with diabetes wears SenseGO socks, changes in pressure

due to incorrect posture, anatomical deformation or ill-fitting shoes are registered as electrical signals that are relayed to a smartphone app, which in turn informs the wearer of developing risk.

“This is a significant medical problem that affects the lives of millions. We thought there must be a way to avoid these wounds altogether,” said Danny Bavli, the group’s lead engineer.

Bavli partnered with Sagi Frishman and Dr. David Morgenstern, a leading orthopedic surgeon at Hadassah Medical Center, to develop SenseGO. MBA students Inbal Boxerman and Yael Hadar also worked with the team.

“This is a classic mobile health approach,” said Prof. Yaakov Nahmias, BioDesign program director. “By giving patients and their families the tools they need to prevent the development of ulcers, we can dramatically reduce healthcare costs related to diabetes.”

Those costs are estimated at \$10 billion in the United States alone. The cost in human suffering is incalculable.

In general, medical devices take three or four years to reach the market, he adds.

BioDesign: Medical Innovation is a multidisciplinary, team-based approach to medical innovation. The program takes outstanding medical fellows, bioengineering

and business graduate students, and tutors them in the science and practice of bringing a medical innovation to the market.

The program is led by Nahmias, who also directs the Alexander Grass Center for Bioengineering at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; and Prof. Chaim Lotan, director of the Heart Institute at Hadassah Medical Center.

Innovations produced by BioDesign program participants are commercialized by Yissum, the technology transfer company of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Hadasit, the technology transfer company of Hadassah Medical Center.

# Israeli organization treats bodies and souls of refugees in Serbia

**Israel21c.com**

In the wake of the massive stream of refugees into Europe from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and other conflict areas, administrators from the Israeli nonprofit Natan assessed needs in Serbia — the last stop before refugees continue on to European Union countries — and decided to establish the clinic on Nov. 20 last year. Rotations of Israeli volunteers will continue at least until the next assessment in May, Natan COO Gal Yoffe tells ISRAEL21c.

“The number of patients varies, but there are always between 50 and 190 every day,” Yoffe said. “What they need also varies. At first it was mostly infections and viruses, then cold-related injuries such as hypothermia, frostbite, fractures and sprains from slipping on ice. We also provide treatment for chronic conditions such as diabetes, cardiac or kidney disease. The most frequent patients are children and pregnant women.”

Funded mainly by donations from the Jewish Disaster Response Corps and the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Natan runs the only international clinic inside the registration camp. “It’s the most approachable one,” Yoffe said tactfully. “There’s also a Serbian clinic in the camp but it’s hidden between buildings and people don’t know it’s there and the treatment quality is not as good.”

As of mid-February, a crew of four was quite busy receiving and sometimes seeking out patients who can’t get there on their own. They also provide training to members of partner NGOs on how to quickly lift the spirits of tired and traumatized people and give them a boost to continue their trip towards better life, according to Info Park.

Natan’s expertise comes from its local experience and from assisting displaced people in Nepal, Haiti, Philippines and India over the past 13 years. Two volunteers are

in Nepal right now training midwives and providing sex education to teenage girls.

“We know how to give guidance on other issues such as solutions for accommodation, children’s nutrition, equipment, etc.,” said Natan field coordinator Einav Levy, who has a master’s degree in public health and is studying for a doctorate in medicine.

“I think our added value is not necessarily a professional medical response, but the way we know how to adapt our abilities to the needs of the area with flexibility and proactiveness,” Levy told ISRAEL21c.

Yoffe has many medical-related stories to share — some tragic, such as the 2-year-old refugee child with a heart condition who arrived at the clinic with no pulse and could not be revived. Yet it’s the personal interactions that stay with him most.

“We had a case of a deaf man who arrived at the camp with no papers, so he was in limbo; he couldn’t go back and couldn’t continue forward. He was in such despair that he tried to kill himself several times.”

Yoffe devoted a whole day to figuring out what the deaf man was trying to say. “He came from a very rural area in Afghanistan. I managed to understand through his gestures and drawings that he was telling me about his family murdered by the Taliban. One child survived and flew to Austria, and he wanted to reunite with him. So we told the police and they managed to give him papers. Then we put his story in writing so he could show it to authorities. Hopefully he arrived in Austria and found his son,” says Yoffe.

Levy says that as the Natan teams strive to treat hordes of refugees with top-notch medical care and compassion, they’ve identified a common psychological phenomenon no less important than the physical: the loss of their sense of individuality and freedom of choice.

Recently Natan’s crew discovered that a woman used her food allowance to buy chocolates for herself and her children. “At first I started getting angry that she spent the money on chocolate, but then I just realized that this is her way of giving something to herself in this chaos — something that will give them spiritual strength to continue. The refugees know that in any case they will receive staple food items at various stations ... She will not die of starvation.”

Similarly, he witnessed a refugee asking relief workers giving out warm winter jackets if he could have one that looked different than the rest.

“Again I felt rising anger at this chutzpah, but then I realized it’s the same thing as the chocolate,” says Levy. “This was a person with no ability to differentiate himself, to express himself or choose anything but an unusual coat. And actually that is what we’re fighting for here.”

## KZ Chinese Auction Sunday, April 3, noon to 3 p.m.

Kesher Zion Synagogue,  
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# How Justice Scalia's death affects issues of concern to Jews

With the sudden passing of justice Antonin Scalia, the Supreme Court is now split between liberals and conservatives, throwing into doubt how the court will rule on a raft of cases — including some of particular interest to Jewish communities.

Officials at Jewish organizations spoke to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency about six cases that may turn out differently without Scalia on the court.

## Zubik v. Burwell

In 2013, the Obama administration allowed faith-based employers to work around the contraceptive coverage mandate in the Affordable Care Act. Under the system, religious nonprofits such as parochial schools, could refer employees to outside insurance agencies for such coverage. A number of religious organizations have since argued that the mere fact of filling in a government form that would allow employees to get contraceptive coverage elsewhere violates their rights.

A split decision would allow the seven lower court decisions to stand — which would be chaotic since they had a range of outcomes, some favoring and some opposing the Obama administration.

## Trinity Lutheran v. Pauley

This is the latest case to test the “Blaine Amendment” laws passed in 37 states banning their governments from funding religious institutions. Liberals tout the laws as necessary protections against religious encroachment on public

life; conservatives note that the laws were passed largely owing to anti-Catholic bigotry toward the end of the 19th century, as a means of keeping parochial schools from being funded.

In this case, a Missouri Blaine Amendment is keeping a church from benefitting from a state program that recycles tires into rubber used to repave playgrounds, making them safer.

On paper, this looks like a 4-4 split, which would keep the church from accessing the program, as lower courts have ruled for the state. But Marc Stern, the general counsel to the American Jewish Committee, which has backed the church in an amicus brief, suggested Justice Stephen Breyer, the Jewish judge who has at times broken with fellow liberals on the court and decried church-state separation overreach, could side with the conservatives in this case.

## Fisher v. University of Texas

The Supreme Court in 2013 sent this case back to the appellate court, saying that the lower court's decision did not adequately take into account the high bar for allowing affirmative action, set by earlier Supreme Court decisions. The appellate court reconsidered, and came up with the same ruling: The university's affirmative action program is legal.

In the program, the top 10 percent of any graduating high school class in Texas is automatically admitted to the university, making up 75 percent of a freshman class. The remaining 25 percent are

admitted through what the university calls a “holistic” system that takes race into account.

Jewish groups have filed amicus briefs with the university opposing race based quotas, but favoring broad-based programs which advance diversity.

Justice Elena Kagan recused herself in 2013 and is doing so again in this case. Without Kagan, when Scalia was alive, the university appeared headed for a 5-3 defeat. Steve Freeman, the director of legal affairs for the Anti-Defamation League, said a shrunken seven-judge court might be reluctant to rule sweepingly and could favor a narrower ruling that would not have national implications.

## Evenwel v. Abbott

The conservative activist plaintiffs in this case want Texas to apportion election district populations according to registered voters and not according to total population, which includes non-voters such as children, felons and non-citizen immigrants. The Reform movement, the AJC and ADL have all joined briefs favoring apportionment according to total population — a system that boosts the influence of urban areas, where non-voters are likelier to reside, and which favor Democrats.

Scalia's absence could mean a 4-4 vote — which would revert the decision to a lower court, which has ruled in favor of apportionment according to total population.

## U.S. v. Texas

Texas led 26 states last year in filing lawsuits challenging the Obama administration's plans in late 2014 to add parents to a 2012 program that indefinitely defers the deportation of illegal immigrants who arrived in the United States as children

Federal courts have put a hold on the program, which would apply to about 5 million undocumented immigrants. The Obama administration has asked the Supreme Court to consider whether the states have standing to bring the suit.

The Anti-Defamation League and the National Council of Jewish Women back the Obama administration's prerogative in this case. The AJC's Stern noted that because the lower courts have favored the states, this is one of the cases where Scalia's absence is less consequential.

## Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt

A federal appeals court has upheld a Texas law mandating regulations on abortion clinics that reproductive rights advocates say are onerous and aimed primarily at shutting down abortion access.

A broad array of Jewish groups have joined amicus briefs backing abortion providers. Reproductive rights advocacy groups, before Scalia's death, said the case could be as consequential as *Roe v. Wade*. Should the court split 4-4, the case would devolve back to Fifth Circuit Appeals Court ruling upholding the law only in the states in that district.

# Joint Distribution Committee's efforts to foster resilience in Nepal

Though nearly a year has passed since the first of the devastating twin earthquakes struck Nepal on April 25, 2015, the country is still reeling from the impact. Over 8,800 people perished and 22,300 suffered injuries. The destruction of nearly 600,000 homes and damage to another 280,000 has irrevocably altered the landscape of the country.

Hundreds of thousands of survivors, in addition to grieving over families members who perished, have lost their homes, their food stores, and sources of livelihood. Living in makeshift shelters, they faced additional danger during the summer monsoon season, as heavy rains caused landslides, flooding, and increased risks of water-borne disease. Now with winter in full swing, the many thousands of people lacking adequate shelter are suffering from the cold temperatures.

Further exacerbating the situation, an unofficial blockade on the border with India prevented the passage of many ground shipments into Nepal, creating severe shortages of fuel, gas, and medical supplies and obstructing program delivery. Through increasing collaboration with partners, and restructuring some programs to meet this new reality, JDC adapted its response to the growing needs. At the same time, JDC continued to target women and marginalized groups, who were vulnerable prior to the catastrophe and who are now especially at risk for long-term economic and social distress. JDC has assisted about 50,000 of the most vulnerable people in Nepal.

During the weeks immediately following the disasters, JDC's response focused on the provision of emergency relief. The supplies and assistance

provided included:

- Hygiene
  - 4,282 Water filters and purifiers producing over 800,000 gallons daily
  - 5,585 hygiene kits distributed
  - 5,888 hand and dish soap bars distributed
- Medical
  - Emergency medical kits for three months of health care serving 10,000 people
  - 3,824 pounds medical supplies to local hospitals
  - Emergency treatment of 700 patients
- Food distributed
  - Three meals a day for one week; 142,560 meals for 6,788 people
  - 39,000 kilograms of food for school meals
  - Over 25,600 kilograms of rice seeds and pulses

- 2 metric tons of other emergency food aid
  - Shelter Supplies distributed
  - 2,096 tents and tarpaulins
  - 1,484 blankets and flashlight distributed
  - 7 Temporary Spaces and 6 child friendly spaces constructed

JDC's key priorities in Nepal include the provision of community-based disaster risk reduction programs, livelihood support — especially for women, reconstruction of critical health facilities and public health education programs. Responding to the massive scale of damage in the area, JDC has undertaken multiple projects to re-establish a semblance of normalcy in daily life.

As of December, JDC had allocated \$1.7 million of the \$2.4 million raised for JDC's Nepal emergency and recovery efforts.

# Abbas rejected new U.S. peace initiative presented by Biden

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas turned down a U.S. peace initiative presented to him during a West Bank meeting with Vice President Joe Biden, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported, citing a Palestinian newspaper.

The report in the Jerusalem-based *Al-Quds* cited a source familiar with the details.

The new American initiative to restart

peace talks included designating East Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian state, halting settlement construction in the West Bank and eastern Jerusalem, Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish nation-state and giving up the demand for a Palestinian right of return.

Palestinian political analysts played down the significance of Biden's visit to Ramallah and his proposal, according to

*Al-Quds*.

Meanwhile, Abbas reportedly praised as a “martyr” a Palestinian woman who tried to kill an Israeli soldier in a car-ramping attack at the Gush Etzion junction in the West Bank. The letter was sent to the parents of Amani Husni Sabatin, 34, from the Palestinian Embassy in Jordan, whose ambassador is reportedly related to the attacker, according to the Times of Israel.

“We see in her a martyr who watered the pure earth of Palestine with her blood,” Abbas wrote, and signed it “Your brother, Mahmoud Abbas, president of the State of Palestine.”

Following a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, Secretary of State John Kerry criticized the failure of Palestinian and international leaders to condemn terror attacks in Israel.

# What you need to know: Trade facilitation and trade enforcement act

President Obama recently signed the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, legislation which includes important provisions against calls to for boycotts, divestments and sanctions (BDS) against Israel. The bill was adopted with broad bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The anti-BDS language within the bill prioritizes opposing BDS for U.S. trade negotiations, protects American companies operating in Israel, and requires the Administration to report on global BDS activities. The president included with this bill a signing statement which makes clear his

concerns regarding enforcement of the BDS provisions related to the West Bank and the president's prerogative regarding foreign policy.

The Israel Action Network offers these thoughts on the measure:

The president and Congress have shown strong opposition to boycotts, divestment campaigns, and sanctions targeting the state of Israel. It is clear that Americans believe economic sanctions against Israel are not only an impediment to peace, but are also inconsistent with America's national interests.

Differences of opinion regarding the

application of the anti-BDS provisions should be discussed in a civil and thoughtful manner, recognizing that ultimately they touch on issues that must be negotiated by the parties themselves.

A peaceful, two-state future requires increased economic interaction and opportunities for Israelis and Palestinians. Economic sanctions against either party undermine these efforts.

BDS tactics are divisive and regressive. If we truly want to help both parties reach a peaceful solution, we should instead be encouraging constructive engagement, investment,

and a negotiated solution.

The peace plan proposed by the United States, European Union, Russia, and the United Nations specifically calls for the normalization of relations between the Arab states and Israel. BDS works as an impediment to reaching this objective.

Arab countries have imposed a boycott against Israel since it was established in 1948. Progress toward peace in the region has come from rejecting this approach, as evidenced by the signing of peace treaties between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Jordan that has resulted in trade and engagement.

# Remembering when, again, with Tootie Moyer

By Tootie Moyer

Do you remember me? I remember you — you're the person that enjoyed my columns so much. So here I am again.

Weren't your past days great? We didn't have much money, a smartphone or computers or television sets, but we had fun, playing Parcheesi, Monopoly or cards in the evening with our kids. We didn't even hear a "ring" that came from a cellphone.

I remember going to the movies to see Robert Taylor (I had pictures of him

all over my bedroom walls) or Clark Gable or Marilyn Monroe with our kids. We never heard of a movie rating, the whole family could go to every movie. Do you remember when Clark Gable said, "I don't give a damn," and there was such an outcry about this. Now that is one of the mildest quotes.

Sitting outside on our steps in the summer was delightful. NO fear of anyone getting hurt, no fumes for SUV's, no swearing. It was just a relaxed few hours with our neighbors. I think those

days are gone, don't you?

After graduation most of our kids stayed in this area. There were lots of jobs here and in other parts of Berks County. Now many of your kids have left to live and work in other states, even overseas.

As I am writing this the weather is "lousy." It is damp and cold. I was just thinking of the nice, warm weather when we were young and could go to Carsonia Park — "wow," what fun we had there. Remember the whiz bang, tunnel of love,

merry-go-round and The Thunderbolt? Then we would take a trolley back to Penn Street and walk home. Like the old saying goes "those were the good old days".

They were good but still not as good as today. Today we are wiser, more tolerant and better human beings, and best of all we have grandkids, and great-grandkids. Don't you agree?

Thank you for taking this journey back in time with me. You "youngsters" are the heart and soul of this country.



## Berks memories strong in our Florida contingent

Discussing Berks County and more are, from left, Betty and Jack Hafetz, Joanie and Itz Friedman, Diane Schreiber, Sandy and Ron Miller, Joanne and Stu Zager, and Dana and Bill Salsburg. Missing: Howie Schreiber

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## Charoset 172 plus Charoset

Contributed by Irene Stern Friedman  
Can you find 172 words that come from Charoset?

To make it easier, list those beginning with the letter "a", then "c", "e", "h", "o", "r", "s" and "t"...etc]

Answer on Page 15

## A few laughs for Passover

Contributed by Dr. Ellis Friedman

Q: Why do we have a Haggadah at Passover?

A: So we can Seder right words.

Q: What do you call someone who derives pleasure from the bread of affliction?

A: A matzochist.

As Moses and the children of Israel were crossing the Red Sea, the children of Israel began to complain to Moses of how thirsty they were after walking so far. Unfortunately, they were not able to drink from the walls of water on either side of them, as they were made up of saltwater.

Then, a fish from that wall of water told Moses that he and his family heard the complaints of the people, but that they through their own gills could remove the salt from the water and force it out of their mouths like a fresh water fountain for the Israelites to drink from as they walked by.

Moses accepted this kindly fish's offer. But before the fish and his family began to help, they told Moses they had a demand. They and their descendants had to be always present at the seder meal that would be established to commemorate the Exodus, since they had a part in the story. When Moses agreed to this, he gave them their name which remains how they are known to this very day, for he said to them, "Go Filter Fish!"

Happy Passover!

Partnering with



A gift from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and P J Alliance Partners in partnership with P J Library in Reading.

Gardening with Vicky

# Spring flowering shrubs

By Vicky Sokoloff

One of the sure signs of spring is seeing shrubs and small trees begin to bloom. Forsythia is one of the earliest and most common. We usually see yellow, but there is a more rare white form *Abeliophyllum distichum*.

Another favorite is the lilac. The heirloom purple is a reliable bloomer. It has a long life and needs very little care. Again, there are cultivars including white and a bi-color variety called Sensation.

It is important to remember that shrubs that bloom in the spring need to be pruned shortly after they bloom. If you were to prune in early spring you would be cutting off the area where buds are preparing to develop.

The redbud tree produces lovely flowers in the spring. And since it is a native species, it is easy to grow. Nearly all of the spring flowering shrubs and trees flower before any foliage is produced.

Before pruning any small tree or shrub you should find out if it blooms on old or new wood. While lilacs bloom on old wood, butterfly bushes bloom on new growth. Lilacs are best pruned by removing old canes from the center of the plant. Many plants have specific pruning requirements.

One place many people turn to get this information is the county agricultural Extension office. That resource is in serious jeopardy. There is currently no funding for agricultural research and extension programs as a result of the governor's line item veto of the Land Script Fund.

If this fund is so important, why did this happen? Exactly because it is so important. Agriculture accounts for a significant portion of the state's economy. There is a real danger that all 67 county Extension offices could close just as the growing season reaches its peak.

Not only have we lost the \$50.5 million in state funding, but also nearly twice that amount in matching federal, USDA, county and other funds.

Even if you have never grown a plant in



White forsythia



Sensation lilac

your life, this will impact you. Without the information and research provided by this funding the quality, availability, and price of the food you buy could be negatively affected.

At this writing it appears that the long budget battle between state legislators and Gov. Tom Wolf may be over and that funding for these crucial programs will be reinstated.

For a while it looked as though Penn State could become the first university to ever lose Land Grant status. There are 145 active Master Gardeners in Berks County. Even though they are all volunteers, those services would be suspended if the extension office were forced to close.

I encourage readers to keep a close eye on these issues as budget talks begin for 2016-17 and demand that your tax dollars are used as they should be.

# All Around the Town

Mazel tov to parents **Andrea Fogelman and Jeff Gauby**, grandparents **Shelley and Larry Fogelman**, and great grandmother **Miriam Fogelman** on the birth of Olivia Jill.

\*\*\*

Mazel Tov to Molly Nemirow, daughter of Geri and Mark Nemirow, on her role as

the stepmother in "Disney's Cinderella Kids" at Genesis Theatre.

*We love good news about members of our community! Please share it by emailing Marknem@aol.com.*

*Until next time: Shalom!*

# Winter nesting to NCAA basketball

By Anne Seltzer

Even though this was among the better weather winters I can remember in recent history, for some reason my nesting instinct kicked in. Perhaps it was the six new cookbooks I "had to have". Or the fact I couldn't find things in the kitchen, or found things way out of date. Of a combination of the above.



Whatever it was, we now have lots of new favorite recipes. From Kimchi Pancakes, to Riced Cauliflower and Veggie Stir Fry, to Abbie's chocolate chip recipe, and apricot chocolate chip bars, they were all keepers. The unfortunate part is that many new Internet recipes were added to my collection, so now I have them, with the new cookbooks and five cooking magazines I get each month. You would think I'm a foodie or something! Yes, I read five of the six cookbooks and all of the magazines, plus all the food blogs I get every day, and still found some time to clean out the spice drawer(s) and baking drawers. Please do not think that I've gone through the pantries or gotten rid of doubles of all the little cooking implements I "had to have". That would be against my personal need for clutter around me. This is something I definitely need, my piles. Piles of magazines, Internet articles, and just general other stuff. And I can tell you which pile something is in and where it is, as long as you don't touch them! Good thing I don't clean or I never would have found time to watch college basketball. My other winter pastime.

When the NCAA Tournament started in March, I faithfully watched at least 75 percent of the games by frequenting a local establishment with a few of my besties (one of my besties, who will go unnamed, decided it was more important to travel to distant lands); and then upon returning home, turned the games on before taking off my coat and feeding Buttons. To me

the opening weekend of the tournament offers the best entertainment of the year. You can put a page of celebrities in front of me and I'll only be able to identify a few, but if you put a page of college basketball players and coaches in front of me, I'll get almost 100 percent correct. When I went to fill out my brackets (after all what fun is it if you don't have a little money in the pot?), Jonathan said, "Mom, go with your gut, you certainly watch enough basketball". Well, apparently that didn't work for me or anyone else according to ESPN, who reported that due to a series of upsets, by the third day of the tournament no one had a perfect bracket. That is what makes it March Madness!! And that is why we watch the games.

And thanks Alan for being such a good sport!!!

Because we were invited to a neighborhood party and I wanted to watch the games at unnamed local establishment starting at noon, I decided to pull this time-tested, easy recipe out of my recipe bag. However, it is a new version of my old favorite, and easy, easy easy to make!

### Texas Sheet Cake

- 1 c. margarine or butter 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 c. water 1 tsp. baking soda
- 4 T. cocoa 2 eggs
- 2 c. sugar 1/2 c. sour cream
- 2 c. flour 1 tsp. vanilla

Melt butter, water and cocoa and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and add rest of the ingredients. Mix until smooth. Pour into a greased 11x16x1.5" jelly roll pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes.

### Frosting

- 1/2 c. margarine or butter
- 1 lb. powdered sugar
- 4 T. cocoa
- 1 c. chopped walnuts (optional)
- 6 T. milk 1 tsp. vanilla

Bring butter, cocoa and milk to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in powdered sugar and nuts (if using). Add vanilla. Pour on cake as soon as it comes out of the oven. Enjoy!!!

## Passover Seder at Manor at Market Square

Thursday, April 28 at 10:45 a.m.  
Jewish Family Service and Manor at Market Square invite you to a Seder led by Sari and Carole.  
Reservations required by April 18.

### Charoset answers

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Pesach Nightmares

# Jewish Family Service

## United Way



## Senior LIFE

By Sari Inledon, M.Ed.

Carole Robinson and I recently visited Senior LIFE, a new health care provider located at 20 Shelbourne Road in Exeter Township. Ten other Senior LIFE centers are already in operation in Pennsylvania. In other states this program is called PACE. As many of you know, in Pennsylvania the word "PACE" is used for a prescription drug program for low-income seniors. So, this program is in other states with a different name.



The Senior LIFE's mission is to partner with members, family and community to enable members to remain at home while preserving dignity and autonomy. The approach is member-centered and accomplished by promoting open communication and advanced care planning through a shared decision making process with Senior LIFE's interdisciplinary team.

A wide range of support services designed to sustain independence are provided. Seniors who join will be able to access an array of services at the Shelbourne Road facility and at other providers including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, eye, dental and foot care, recreational therapy, socialization and transportation to the Senior LIFE center and to all medical appointments.

Members will also be provided with durable medical equipment, personal care (bathing, grooming, and dressing), social services, homecare and companion visits as well as an on-call nurse 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Each member of the Senior LIFE care team meets with the senior and the family to develop a customized care plan. The goal is to improve the quality of life and maximize independence in a home setting. The care is provided by a team in the senior's home and in the Senior LIFE Center. All transportation is provided to and from the center and

all medical appointments. The care team consists of physicians, nurses, therapists, social workers, home health aides, dietary specialists and others.

To be eligible for Senior LIFE participants must be 55 years of age or older, determined to be medically eligible and able to be safely served in the community. For those who qualify for Medicare and Medicaid there is no cost to join. More information is available from an Outreach Coordinator – 610-404-3200 or call Sari at 610-921-0624.

**JFS Discussion Groups**

**Encore** — a discussion group for seniors meets monthly at the JCC. We talk about what is in the news and what is on the minds of the participants. Our next meeting is Monday, April 11, at 3 p.m. All are welcome. Call Sari for information.

**Living with Loss** — a support group for people who have lost a loved one within the last year, we meet once a month. For more information call Sari at 610-921-0624. Our next meeting will be Monday, April 18 at 3 p.m.

### Jewish Family Service Food Pantry Collection



We are serving more families each month! Please bring donations of canned tuna, soup, fruits and vegetables to Keshar Zion or the JCC. Thank you!

We also need plastic and paper grocery bags!

## Women on Their Own a success

By Sheryl Weintraub

The group "Women on Their Own" has had a second meeting, and it was very well attended. We now have 19 members.

Our goal is to provide each other with moral support and the friendship of other women who like us, are on their own.

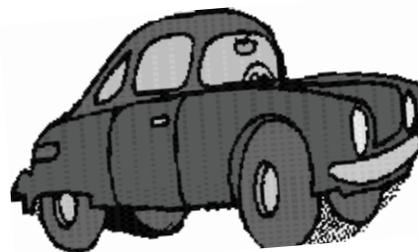
At our monthly meeting we learn a little bit about one another, and exchange ideas on how to navigate life without a partner.

We are gathering a directory of service people who are trustworthy and would be safe to invite into a home of a woman alone.

We are fulfilling the requirement of tzadakah by collecting and donating money to Berks Women In Crisis.

If you would like more information about our group, or if you have a service person or recipe for our list, contact Sari at sarii@jfreeding.org, or sheryl.woto@gmail.com.

### Enjoy Tax Benefits While Contributing to Jewish Family Service Vehicle Donation Program



Call Sari at 610-921-0624, e-mail [sarii@jfreeding.org](mailto:sarii@jfreeding.org) or go to [www.charitableautoresources.com](http://www.charitableautoresources.com)

Jewish Family Service thanks  
**Sarah and Sam Flamholz**

for their generous donation of a car.

The proceeds from the auction of the vehicle will benefit JFS programs. To learn more about this program go to [donatingiseasy.org](http://donatingiseasy.org) or call Sari at 610-921-0624

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**Federation Honorial - 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 Jewish Federation at 610-921-0624 for further information.

**Contributions as of March 18**

**Holocaust Library & Resource Center**

In memory of:

- Barbara Solowey – Rosalye Yashek
- Anita Lipson (Dena Hammel's mother) – Rosalye Yashek

**Jewish Family Service**

In honor of:

- Jack and Jeff Gernsheimer receiving the Ruth and Irvin Balis Volunteer Appreciation Award – Edith Mendelsohn
- Birth of Shari and Dave Seltzer's grandson – Andy and Corinne Wernick

In memory of:

- Anita Lipson (Dena Hammel's mother) – Michael Schein, Margie and Alan Leisawitz, Helene and Henry Singer, Hilde Gernsheimer
- Barbara Solowey – Ruth Isenberg, Barbara Nazimov, Corinne and Andy Wernick
- Gene Friedman – Edith Mendelsohn, Marcia and George Eligman
- Rhoda Dersh – Marcia and George Eligman

**JFS Taxi Transportation Program**

In memory of:

- Gene Friedman – Rosalye Yashek

**Federation Jewish Community Campaign**

Get well/speedy recovery:

- Harriet Baskin — Yvonne and Rob Oppenheimer

**Home for the holidays**

By Joanie G. Friedman

We spend our winters in wonderful, glorious Florida. Although we enjoy the warm weather and tennis, there is one disadvantage to being here. Our children live up north.

In the past five months we have spent both Thanksgiving and Chanukah with the children and grandchildren. There was also a third time when we had to fly back "home" and enjoyed our granddaughter's theatre performance. Although they asked, we decided to stay here for Passover. After all, with the expense, we felt we could miss one holiday.

Last week a package arrived. I opened it to find a large container of hamantashen. The note told us our daughter baked it with her two children. Next came the tears.

Memories of her baking hamantashen every year with my mother flooded my senses. I was there, watching and participating. Marcy was always an eager student, always enthusiastic about doing a project with her grandma. In later years it was something we enjoyed together.

When I opened the package and my husband fervently began reaching for one and then another, I knew we had no choice in the matter. About that time, Bob and Cindy called to say our tickets were ordered.

Tearfully I phoned Marcy to say we would arrive for Seder. When she asked what made me change my mind, I told her how touched we were when the hamantashen arrived.

"Is that all it took?" she asked. "Had I known, I would have baked them a week

**Honorials and Memorials**

Contributions may be made to the following Funds:

Federation Jewish Community Campaign	\$10
Jewish Family Service	\$10
Leo Camp Lecture Fund	\$10
JFS Food Bank	\$25
JFS Taxi Transportation Program	\$20
Holocaust Library & Resource Center	\$18
Doris Levin Fund	\$10

In memory of:

- Barbara Solowey – Elaine Safir
- Gene Friedman – Debbie Goodman and John Moyer
- Dr. Lawrence Harris' brother – Sue and Mel Blum

**Harry and Rose Sack Fund (Adult Programming)**

In memory of:

- Florence "Birdie" Schklowsky – Albert and Nancy Sack

**Friendship Circle Fund**

In honor of:

- Birth of Bernie and Carol Gerber's new grandson – Glenn and Gaye Corbin
- Birth of Burt and Fran Krieger's new granddaughter – Glenn and Gaye Corbin
- Engagement of Irv and Arlene Ehrlich's daughter Melissa – Glenn and Gaye Corbin

In memory of:

- Barbara Solowey – Irwin Goldstein
- Anita Lipson (Dena Hammel's mother) – Glenn and Gaye Corbin
- Peter and Helaine Schiffman's daughter Janet – Glenn and Gaye Corbin

**Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Fund**

In memory of:

- Gene Friedman – Sid and Esther Bratt
- Barbara Solowey – Sid and Esther Bratt

earlier. You are such an easy mark!" So we will spend the first Seder with Marcy, Jeff, Daniel and Le, and the second with Bob and Cindy.

I would have missed the conversations about the Exodus. I would have missed everyone discussing her wonderful matza balls and chicken soup. And we can't forget about the afikomen!

Before the Seder begins, it is traditionally Irwin's job to make the charoseth. He will chop the apples and walnuts. Next he will slowly add some wine. After he mixes it all, he will taste a small sample. As he chews it, he looks up to the ceiling and thinks about it.

No matter how long he thinks about it, he always – but always! – adds a tiny bit more wine. It is the same thing every year! It's true. I am a soft touch

for my children, and especially for my charoseth-maker\*!

Joanie G Friedman contributes newspaper articles in the US and Canada. Her novels, "The Lakes of Island Springs" and "Best Buds" are on Amazon.

**\* His charoseth recipe:**

- 1 large apple, peeled – cored – and chopped
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 drop of lemon juice and ½ tablespoon Splenda
- Add about 2 tablespoons Concord Grape Pesa-dicka wine (or just Grape Juice)
- Mix well.
- Taste a tiny bit, look up to the ceiling, then pause and add a drop more wine!

**SodaStream CEO slams government for letting work permits expire**

SodaStream CEO Daniel Birnbaum reacted with palpable frustration and anger to the Israeli government's decision to let work permits for 74 of his Palestinian employees lapse.

"I had dozens of discussions with nearly every ministry and minister and clerk that could possibly have a part in this saga," he told The Jerusalem Post, saying he made little headway with the Prime Minister's Office and Ministries of Economy, Finance, Homeland Security, Interior, Foreign Affairs, or the police

SodaStream built its Lehavim plant, which employs around 1,200 workers of all stripes, to replace its plant in the West Bank industrial zone of Mishor Adumim near Ma'aleh Adumim, which closed last autumn. 500 Palestinians lost their jobs to that closure, but 74 that had families were given permits to work in Israel.

Birnbaum said he has been working on the permit issue for a year and a half, and expressed outrage that the government would allow the permits to lapse, especially given the large numbers

of other legal and illegal Palestinian works in Israel. Each of his workers, he said, supported an average of 10 other people with their income, including children, but was unlikely to find equally good work at home.

"I cannot believe that a Jewish administration would ask me to send children to their hunger," he said. "This has been the most difficult and sad day of my life. I'm the son of a Holocaust survivor. I cannot watch this disregard for human dignity."

An official in the Prime Minister's Office refused to elaborate on their earlier position, which stated that the government favors Israeli workers over foreign workers, but would do its best to help support the factory. The government offers incentives for companies to open offices and plants in the South, in part because there are so few employers to create jobs in the area. SodaStream's employment of 400 Beduins makes it the largest employer of Beduins in Rahat, Birnbaum said.

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**\$1.99**



Weis Kosher Matzo Meatballs (2-pack)

**\$3**



Weis Kosher Matzo Fish Balls (2-pack)

**\$6**



Weis Kosher Matzo Soup (2-pack)

**\$1.79**



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**\$4**



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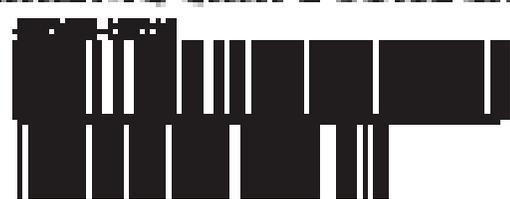
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