



SHALOM



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Can-do spirit prevails at Hanukkah event

Chabad Lubavitch of Berks County, Boscov's Department Store and the Jewish Federation of Reading got the Hanukkah celebration off to an early start Dec. 15 at the Berkshire Mall. The community was invited to bring canned food and help construct a menorah out of cans. All the cans were donated to the Jewish Family Service Food Pantry, part of the Greater Berks Food Bank.

The event featured a performance by the bluegrass-tinged duet White Shabbos, a performance by children from the Lakin Preschool at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom, and plenty of dancing. Latkes and traditional sufganiyot doughnuts were served to participants and passers-by alike.



Community Shabbat scheduled for Feb. 10

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Seniors, students enjoy fascinating trip to Philadelphia

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Ordinary Israelis taking steps to help Syrians

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Trying something new can bring great results for gardeners

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Once-struggling teen thriving thanks to Meir Panim

When meeting 15-year-old Natan, one would never assume that just a few short years ago he was a failing student filled with anger and suffering. Natan has been raised by a single mother with a debilitating heart condition. Four years ago, Meir Panim's Or Akiva location branch manager Ilanit Hafuta became aware of the family's situation and has been helping them ever since.

"Meir Panim not only feeds hungry Israelis on a daily basis but also provides a holistic approach to help people get out of the vicious cycle of poverty and have a hopeful future," said Goldie Sternbuch, Director of Overseas Relations for Meir Panim. "With the beginning of the Jewish New Year when everyone is looking forward to a sweet year, the story of Natan is one that warm hearts." Natan's parents divorced when he was a baby. His father

not only deserted the family but provides no financial support. Natan's mother, Esther, was a factory worker until several years ago, when she collapsed on the factory floor from a heart attack. She receives disability pay from the Israeli government and continues to have severe health challenges.

Esther receives \$794 a month in government aid. From this amount she pays \$564 for her mortgage. This leaves just \$230 a month for food, electricity and all other expenses.

"Natan arrived a few years ago to the Meir Panim-sponsored youth club," Sternbuch said. "Ilanit is one of the most caring and sensitive people I know. When she heard his story, she took charge and turned Natan and Esther's lives around."

At the time of Esther's collapse, Natan was suffering in school. He was aggressive, unable to concentrate on his studies and being bullied

because he was overweight. Hafuta's first action was ensuring that the family had nutritious food to eat for every meal. She advocated to get Natan into a special school with the resources he needed to cope with his issues.

"These interventions were the start of a truly new and successful life for Esther and Natan," Sternbuch said. "Natan's grades improved, and today he is a straight-A student. Through Ilanit's connections with the police force, Natan even received a badge of honor from the police for his volunteer service and exemplary behavior."

Meir Panim provided the family with a refurbished computer, which aided Natan's studies and saved his mother's life. One day, Esther had another heart attack at home. Natan used this computer to get emergency help.

Two years ago, Natan turned

13. "Ilanit arranged for a full and festive Bar Mitzvah celebration that was held at Meir Panim," Sternbuch said. "We supplied everything including food, new clothing for the mother and son, the tallit and tefillin, and lots of joy, love, and support."

Meir Panim especially values the notion that everyone deserves the feeling of self-worth. Esther volunteers at Meir Panim serving food, writing letters, and helping in any way possible. Through this process of giving back, Esther feels like a normal and functioning citizen.

When Natan is asked how he sees his future, he excitedly answers that he is looking forward to serving in the Israeli army. After that, he thinks that he would like to be a dentist. Now, that's something to smile about.

Meir Panim is supported by local dollars through the Jewish Federation of Reading's Israel Now campaign.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE: Grants from LIHEAP can be a big help with energy bills

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2016 totals as of Dec. 16

Jewish Community Campaign \$526,395

*Includes transfers from Donor Advised Funds

Jewish initiative remarkably strong in our community

By Richard Nassau
Development Director



I was recently asked, "Why do Jews have so much initiative?" I didn't have a ready response.

I hadn't really given it much thought. Yes it is there, but it isn't just a "Jewish" thing. So I asked for clarification. The reply was simple, "You know, how you are always responding to disasters or problems or things."

I thought about how this is a characteristic in many families, but Jewish initiative itself isn't something I often think about.

Yes we do take care of things. So I took the initiative to do further research and turned to the internet which provided

plenty of answers. Most focused on the many new Jewish program opportunities communities are undertaking. There are Jewish program initiatives addressing issues on teens, youth education, animals, families, Hebrew, single adults, and the list goes on.

These Jewish initiatives are all program-focused. Each one, just like our many new programs, was established to address an overlooked community issue or to solve an ongoing problem or to assist people in need of help. They were not developed in a vacuum. They were a response from within each community.

When I speak with people outside of Berks County they are amazed at how strong and vibrant we are as a Jewish community. People want to know how our community can accomplish as much as we do. How we are able to provide the

array of programming and services for our community.

I think Jewish initiative is part of the answer. It is action and leadership and taking personal responsibility. It is being responsive and getting things done.

We are engaged and active as a community. We listen, we speak with each other, and we support each other. Each is important and each of these characteristics defines this community.

The start of 2017 is a nice time to think back on the initiatives, new programs and services we as a community and as a Jewish Federation undertook last year. How, through your support, we provided opportunities to expand Jewish education, opportunities for seniors and students to learn from each other, for preteens to receive Jewish themed books, for multiple families to come together for Shabbat, and

for people to connect reconnect with each other. We welcomed newcomers into our community, helped people in need, and when necessary, responded quickly to emergencies in Israel and elsewhere.

We accomplished a lot last year and yes, there are new initiatives under discussion for this coming year. We are looking at ways to engage more people and provide increased services to meet community needs.

If you know of an issue that needs to be addressed or a problem that needs to be solved or people that need to be helped, I invite you to take the initiative and contact us.

We will listen and we will respond. It is why we are a successful community and a successful Federation. Thank you for your support. I wish you the best in 2017.

Yemin Orde Eco-Farm a sustainable, educational environment

The environmentally responsible Eco-Farm at Yemin Orde incorporates two critical important components of Yemin Orde's renowned Village Way educational methodology: Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) and Tikkun HaLev (repairing the heart). As a result, the children, through their activities at the Eco-Farm, gain a sense of self-esteem, pride in their work, and a feeling of belonging to the land of Israel.

Caring for the herd of goats is a popular and therapeutic activity. Twice a day, small groups of children take turns to shepherd the goats to graze in a nearby pasture. This task helps develop leadership, patience and perseverance, as well as provides a therapeutic introspective time for the child.

Along with caring for the animals (donkeys and chickens, too), the children participate in learning programs and hands-on opportunities at the center's

blacksmith shop, its ceramics studio and gardens.

The infrastructure utilizes modern electrical and lighting systems, as well as a comprehensive water system for fire prevention. There are also two organic greenhouses with upgraded irrigation systems. In addition, approximately 50 trees and an outdoor organic vegetable garden have been recently planted.

Our youth take great pride in harvesting the vegetables grown at the farm, as well as collecting eggs from the hens, honey from the beehives and milk from the goats. The Village now sells pasteurized goat milk, cheese and yogurt to households in the Village, and sells leafy green vegetables to customers both in the Village and nearby towns. The Eco-Farm has received kashrut (kosher) certification so that the vegetables



grown there can be used in Yemin Orde's kitchen, which feeds about 600 people (children and staff) a day

Yemin Orde is supported by local dollars through the Jewish Federation of Reading's Israel Now campaign.

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WELLNESS-FOCUSED LIVING
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Our next concert:

David Kim and Friends
A concert in memory of Jake Krumholz

Artists:
David Kim, violin
Ricardo Morales, clarinet
Priscilla Lee, cello
Jeffrey DeVault, piano

Sunday afternoon, January 15, 2017, 3:00 PM
The WCR Center for the Arts, 140 N. Fifth St., Reading

Program:
Ridout: Ferdinand the Bull, for speaker and violin
Prokofiev: Violin Sonata in D Major, Op. 94a
Brahms: Clarinet Trio in A Minor, Op. 114

Concertmaster David Kim of the Philadelphia Orchestra returns for his third appearance on our series. The program includes the whimsical tale of Ferdinand the Bull (with cellist Priscilla Lee taking on the role of narrator!), the second Violin Sonata of Prokofiev, and Brahms' sublime Clarinet Trio. This afternoon of music is guaranteed to ward off any winter doldrums!

This concert is sponsored in part by a grant from the William Davidson Foundation.

*Parking is available on the street or at the Abe Lincoln parking lot but not the Trinity Church lot.

From the President's Desk

The importance of extending our walls

By William D. Franklin
President

"It is a joy to live in one's own house." — Talmud tractate Moed Katan



On Sunday, Dec. 11, Rabbi Lerner and Carole Robinson led a group of 25 teens and seniors from our 'Better Together' program to the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia. After touring the museum, study groups discussed choices and challenges facing Jewish immigrants to the U.S., centering on the above Talmudic verse. A common theme was the work of their families and community to create joy in their new houses. Mariette Jacobson shared her story of her parents being part of the French resistance and leaving her and her brother in a Catholic convent while they hid in the forest. After being reunited with her parents and moving

to the U.S., family togetherness in their new home was tremendously meaningful and never taken for granted. Several of our seniors reflected on the warmth and support they received from the Reading Jewish community upon their arrival. While learning the history of the Jewish Diaspora, our teens were hearing firsthand accounts of immigration. The value of caring for our fellow Jews was reinforced, and the inter-generational discussions were wonderful to experience.

Later we enjoyed an authentic Sephardic luncheon at the nearby historic Congregation Mikveh Israel, where Rabbi Gabbai gave us a tour of the sanctuary. He displayed the beautiful Torah scrolls and related the 265-year history of Mikveh Israel, the "Synagogue of the Revolution." One of the Better Together participants enthused, "Sunday was a great day of learning and enjoyment!"

Later that week, the Jewish Federation of Reading partnered with Rabbi Lipsker

and Chabad to celebrate the coming holiday of Hanukkah at the Berkshire Mall. Hanukkah is normally celebrated by families in their homes, but our celebration extended the 'walls of our homes' to include not only a large portion of our Jewish community but also our non-Jewish neighbors. Three generations were well-represented in the crowd of approximately 100 participants. We all kvelled watching our Lakin Preschool children singing, dancing, and playing with dreidels while enjoying the music played by 'White Shabbos.' A menorah was made up of cans of food brought by our community that will be distributed at our food pantry. The candles were lit by passing the shamash from generation to generation, and everyone enjoyed schmoozing and eating latkes and doughnuts together.

But our work to extend our walls goes further. In January, we will be showing the film "Rosenwald." Once again we are partnering with the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum. The film is

the story of Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, who joined forces with African American communities in the early 1900s to build more than 5,300 schools to counter racial inequality. We are aware of walls existing between Jews and Afro-Americans, and a discussion will be held focusing on the history of Jewish-African American relations and how we can work to improve them today and join forces against bigotry.

The words of the Talmud and those of L. Untermyer in his "Prayer for This House" guide our actions as we move forward:

*"It is a joy to live in one's own house"
"And though these shattering walls are thin,
May they be strong to keep hate out,
And hold love in."*

May our homes be full of light and joy as we celebrate Hanukkah. Be part of our extended home for our Community Shabbat, on Friday, Feb. 10 at Chabad.

Hag Hanukkah Sameach!

Learning from that other time Jews were hated in America

By Jonathan D. Sarna
Forward.com

"America First!" "Absolute control of the United States by the United States!" "Return to Normalcy!" These may sound like slogans emanating from the campaign of Donald Trump, but in fact they date back to 1920, when Warren G. Harding was elected president.

The Harding election, like that of Trump, represented a sharp and shocking break from the policies of the previous Democratic administration, the liberal presidency of Woodrow Wilson. The ugliness that accompanied the administration of the conservative-minded Harding, and responses to it, offer lessons and perhaps even some solace for our own troubled times.

Harding's election spelled the death-knell to the last Jewish hopes that America's gates might be kept open, at least for victims of persecution.

The Emergency Immigration Act of 1921 limited, for the first time, the total number of immigrants who could be admitted into the United States and also introduced a country by country quota that made it particularly difficult for Jews from Russia and Poland to obtain immigration certificates.

Meanwhile, more immigrants

than ever before were deported for their political views, and entry requirements at Ellis Island were tightened.

"Chauvinistic nationalism is rampant," Louis Marshall, the foremost American Jewish leader of his day and a strong proponent of liberal immigration privately complained. "The hatred of everything foreign has become an obsession."

Nor was hatred confined only to foreigners. Domestically, hatred of blacks, Catholics, Jews and others surged across the United States in the wake of the Harding election, so much so that historian John Higham famously dubbed the era "The Tribal Twenties."

The Ku Klux Klan, reborn as a small Georgia operation in 1915, flourished under the new administration; at its peak in the 1920s it claimed a membership of at least 4 million white males. Numerous municipalities and at least one state, Oregon, enacted laws effectively banning Catholic parochial schools.

Discrimination against Jews likewise magnified. Harvard, Yale, Princeton and numerous other universities, private and public, limited Jewish student enrollments, as did innumerable private academies and preparatory

schools. Fraternities, clubs, hotels and resorts, in many cases, shut Jews out completely.

What alarmed Jews more than all of this during the 1920s was the anti-Semitic campaign of one of President Harding's premier supporters, the famous automaker Henry Ford. For 91 straight issues Ford's widely-distributed weekly newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, portrayed a purported "international Jewish conspiracy" based on the notorious anti-Semitic forgery known as "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

Four volumes titled "The International Jew," drawn from the newspaper series, reprinted these scurrilous charges and disseminated them in hundreds of thousands of copies. Chapters, parallel to vituperative headlines of the "alt-right" today, screamed, "Does Jewish Power Control the World Press?" and "How Jewish International Finance Functions."

Bad as things were during the Harding era and the years that followed, it is important to underscore that nothing in 1920s America paralleled what happened in Germany with the rise of Adolf Hitler — nor, in my view, does the election of Trump auger any such cataclysm today.

With the advent of the Hitler regime, Jews in Germany not only faced hatred and discrimination, they also lost their livelihoods and savings and were physically endangered.

In the United States, by contrast, Jews faced hatred and discrimination under Harding, but their economic and physical well-being remained largely secure.

Confronting hatred, back in the 1920s, involved three strategies that remain relevant for Jews facing parallel challenges in 2016.

First, Jews assisted and supported one another. Victims of intolerance knew that Jewish friends and neighbors, as well as Jewish organizations, would stand behind them. No Jew had to battle anti-Semitism alone.

Second, Jews fought back. They mounted publicity campaigns and

sponsored a torrent of books and articles designed to expose and rebut anti-Semitic charges.

They also went to court on Jews' behalf. Marshall filed lawsuits aimed at assisting those seeking to immigrate, and led the American Jewish Committee into countless legal battles against anti-Semites.

Lawyer-activist Aaron Sapiro courageously sued Ford, causing the automaker in 1927 to issue a humiliating apology (drafted by Marshall) "for resurrecting exploded fictions, for giving currency...to gross forgeries, and for contending that the Jews have been engaged in a conspiracy."

Third, Jews allied with other groups in the battle against hatred.

They cooperated with non-Jewish supporters of liberal immigration laws. They assisted the NAACP in its legal battles on behalf of African Americans. They wrote a strong supporting brief in a successful bid to overturn Oregon's ban on Catholic parochial schools.

Long before the theory of "intersectionality" was even invented, Jews in the 1920s understood that if they aimed to change the temper of their times they needed minority-group allies to work with them.

Looking back, what is remarkable about the 1920s is that in spite of the tribalism and ugliness that characterized the era, Jews nevertheless managed to thrive economically.

As the stock market rose and personal fortunes grew, Jews invested in their communities, building opulent synagogues as well as educational institutions such as Yeshiva College.

Deborah Dash Moore argues, in her book on this period, that Jews during the 1920s actually became "at home in America."

The paradox, then, is that the hatred unleashed against Jews following the election of Harding worked in the end to make the American Jewish community stronger. One wonders, will the result of Trump's election ultimately prove to be the same?

SHALOM

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Next deadline, Jan. 5

A thrilling day for students, seniors at Jewish museum

By Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner

Reading JCHS Director

Dec. 11 is a day that will be long remembered as a win-win-win for the Reading Jewish Community High School.

Students of the JCHS, members of the Better Together Seniors and family members of Better Together participants boarded an early bus from the Reading JCC to arrive at the National Museum of American Jewish History (NMAJH) in Philadelphia.

The National Museum of American Jewish History is a Smithsonian-affiliated museum at 101 South Independence Mall East at Market Street in Center City Philadelphia. It was founded in 1976 and originally housed in a nearby partner in American Jewish History, Mikveh Israel Synagogue.

Congregation Mikveh Israel, officially called Kahal Kadosh Mikveh Israel, translates as "Holy Community of the Hope of Israel." The synagogue was founded in the 1740s and has operated from then to the present in a series of facilities in Philadelphia.

Carole Robinson and Amanda Hornberger of the Jewish Federation of Reading handled the registration for the event, and Carole led the bus passengers into the museum, where they were met by JCHS director Rabbi Dov Lerner and JCHS instructor Shira Simon.

At NMAJH, members of the visitation department guided the group through security and Ronit and staff of the NMAJH Education department took over for an orientation program.

Rabbi Dov and Ronit Lusky had planned the museum program, and NMAJH followed through with flying colors. First, the group was helped to understand that a museum like NMAJH tells stories about immigration using objects rather than written text and books. This introduced the participants to the magic of the museum's objects and their power to raise important, sometimes personal questions. Participants learned how to analyze an image by looking at its details and only later begun interpreting it. They discussed what they see and what's missing from the image. The overarching question focused on the process of Americanization: How did immigrants (and participants) become American? How did they feel as newcomers (to America or in general to any new place/team/ neighborhood), Should they have had to Americanize in order to win acceptance? We "read" the object, listened to its voice, and tried to imagine the person who designed it, used it, received it, and kept it.

Most important, we discussed personal connections. One participant shared his experience of coming to the U.S. from Canada as a young boy, another focused more on how "the faces of the family in the picture, their sadness, fear and anxiety" really resonated with her.

We divided into groups to visit much of the exhibits telling the story of immigration into the U.S., led by docents and Education staff. The group then came together for a snack, some discussion and prepared for the second portion of the program.

Better Together participants had the opportunity to study a "Talmudic page" likeness that had a central text focus on an aspect of American history, with multiple "commentaries" surrounding it like that of a typical printed Talmudic format. With a guide for questions and the opportunity to record their own opinions, after this moment of "hevruta," "study with a partner" of a teen JCHS student and a senior, we considered the consensus and summary of the study groups. The teens and seniors were engaged in fascinating conversations.

Two options were offered for further exploration of the museum: (1) the opportunity to visit the exhibit titled "Bill Graham and the Rock and Roll Revolution" with a guide. (2) the Education staff prepared a scavenger hunt with the objects/facts/names filling out a crossword puzzle asking the "hunters"

to find the phrase in a column within the puzzle; a color code guided each team to the appropriate floor to search for their clue. Fun, engagement, and learning!

As soon as the group gathered and recovered their coats, we walked around the corner to Mikveh Israel Synagogue.

Our interaction with the students continued on our walk to the synagogue. We concluded with a discussion about diversity and differences vs. the comfort of being with people like you and how diversity actually strengthens rather than weakens our sense of unity.

We were served a Sephardic buffet luncheon at the synagogue. A variety of possible food choices reflecting the Sephardic tradition and the final menu of sides and main dishes was selected by the students. The chef at Mikveh Israel also made himself available to provide some background on the foods and his own history in this culinary tradition.

After concluding the meal, we were invited into the sanctuary to meet with Rabbi Albert Gabbai. He spent his time with the group, helping them to understand the synagogue's unusual architecture and the role of Mikveh Israel and its members in American and Philadelphia Jewish history.

Mikveh Israel has counted among its members prominent revolutionary patriots such as Jonas Phillips, the Gratz family, and Haym Solomon, who financed the war. Congregant Rebecca Gratz founded and managed philanthropic and educational institutions devoted to the needs of women and children, Jewish and gentile; she is reputed to be the model for Rebecca of York, heroine of "Ivanhoe" by Sir Walter Scott.

Rabbi Gabbai engaged everyone, asking his own questions, answering questions from the group with a delightful sense of humor and depth of knowledge about Judaism and history.

As Rabbi Gabbai said, "when we think about Mikveh Israel, two things come to mind: Tradition and family. Tradition is expressed in the Minhag, which we have maintained since our founding over 270 years ago. It calls for excellency in all that we do: the Hebrew pronunciation, the orderliness of the service, the formality, the precision, the decorum; in one word, the Gravidad of our service to G-d. The Spanish-Portuguese tradition insists that we continue this tradition. It is a tradition that has been refined for so many years and has now reached the optimum level that we currently follow. It does not contain anything superfluous or lack any of the obligations required by Jewish law."

He added, "The other aspect of Mikveh Israel is our family. We are a family. As a family, we share in many events to reach out to all members of the congregation. Also, when an unfortunate event occurs such as sickness or death, many of our members will go out of their way to make a phone call, visit the sick or console the mourners. This same tradition applies to happy occasions such as weddings, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, birth, etc. As a family, many participate in morning services to make sure that if someone has to say the Kaddish, there will be a minyan. These things are mutually beneficial. We share together in supporting each other during happy occasions as well as sad ones. KKMI is really unique. I can personally say that I love this uniqueness. This heritage could not exist without the support of our membership. It can only be kept alive with the active participation of every member of the Mikveh Israel family."

Rabbi Gabbai shared his own story of being born in Egypt, raised in Paris and then coming to the U.S., settling in Philadelphia as a rabbi in 1988. He concluded the visit by inviting our group to view the synagogue's many, varied Torah scrolls as he explained their history. He invited everyone to visit Mikveh Israel to more fully appreciate the congregation's warm hospitality and unique but magnificent Sephardic services.

The day concluded with many positive



comments and thanks to the professional staff of the JCC, Federation and JCHS for the planning of such a program.

NMAJH, Luncheon and Mikveh Israel. Win-win-win. A wonderful memory and encouragement for us to

We will plan additional such programs for our JCHS students and our seniors.

The Better Together Program is a two-year program designed to encourage meaningful interaction between young and old. The program is generously supported by a prominent national foundation.

New course at JCHS

Rabbi Abelson will teach "The Origins of Zionism" in the next mini-mester. It will explore what Zionism is and why it arose in the late 19th century. We will examine the strands that form Zionism and the arguments that were essential to its development in the early 20th century. We will ask how the circumstances that enabled Zionism to arise may or may not apply in our contemporary world.

School resumes Jan. 8 at 5:30 p.m. at the JCC.

Strong Roots: Join us for the 2017 Community Shabbat

By Amanda J. Hornberger

On Feb. 10 our community will gather for its annual community Shabbat service and dinner. This year our community Shabbat will be held on Erev Tu B'Shevat and trees, and strong roots will be our theme.

Chabad Lubavitch of Berks County will serve as the host for this year's

Community Shabbat. A kosher meal of vegetarian matzo ball soup, apricot chicken, and a mushroom ravioli vegetarian option and chicken fingers for the kids will be served. The cost is \$20 per person. Children 18 and under are free.

All are welcome, and if you need financial assistance to attend, please

contact Sari Incledon at 610-921-0624.

We are hoping for another great crowd at Community Shabbat on Feb. 10! RSVP with payment is required by Feb. 1 to Brenda at Brendas@jfreeding.org or 610-921-0624.

Last year more than 200 community members attended our community Shabbat, and our wish is that we will

have another large group joins us in February for this special experience. Coming together as a community for this annual event is a special experience for community members of all ages! For questions or additional information please contact Amanda at amandah@jfreeding.org or 610-921-0624.

Teens invited to Laser Quest Night

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Teens in grades 8-12 are invited for a fun night out of Laser Quest! Due to popular request for a fun event, we invite any teen to participate in a night

out on Saturday, Jan. 7!

Our group will meet at Laser Quest (1035 Bern Road, Wyomissing) at 7:40 p.m and play two games followed by an hour of hang-out time and pizza.

The cost is \$15 per teen, and all are welcome. If you need financial assistance please contact Sari at 610-921-0624.

We will be accepting cash payment

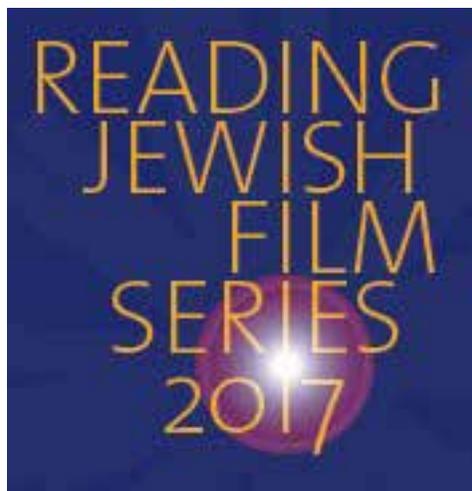
(exact change only!) at the door, but RSVP is required by Jan. 4. There are only 20 spots so register early! RSVP to Amanda at amandah@jfreeding.org or 610-921-0624.

Federation, African-American museum to co-host film screening

By Amanda J. Hornberger

In January, the Reading Jewish Film Series continues with "Rosenwald," a documentary about the incredible story of businessman and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald. Rosenwald's greatest accomplishment was building more than 5,500 schools for poor, rural African-American children in the South at a time when few received any public education. From 1915 to 1932 in the rural South, 660,000 African-American students benefited from an initiative that truly speaks to the American Dream.

In honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we will partner with the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum (CPAAM) for the screening of "Rosenwald." A joint discussion



led by Gary Miller, CPAAM Secretary, and Robert Jefferson, a community activist, will follow the screening. All

proceeds from that night's screening will be donated to CPAAM for the expansion of its museum in Reading.

"Rosenwald" will be shown on Wednesday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. at FOX EAST, 4350 Perkiomen Avenue, Reading (next to Boscov's East).

The 2017 Reading Jewish Film Series is co-sponsored by the Rubin Educational Fund of the Jewish Federation of Reading and Fox Theatres. Admission is \$5 per film or \$30 for the series of eight films. All films will be shown on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. at FOX EAST. Tickets can be purchased at the theater beginning at 6:30 p.m. the day of the screening, and series tickets can be bought at the JCC.

Cash and checks are accepted.

Come enjoy this fascinating documentary and post-film discussion with our friends in the African American community!

The 2017 Reading Jewish Film Series continues through the spring:

Jan. 18 — "Rosenwald" with the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum*

March 1 — "The Sturgeon Queens"

April 5 — "Women in Sink" and "In Search of Israeli Cuisine" (Two Films) with the Islamic Center*

May 17 — "Apples from the Desert"

*Facilitated discussion to follow the film.

RCOS students serve meals at Opportunity House



Students at the Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom Religious School along with volunteers from the congregation prepared and served meals to more than 60 residents at Opportunity House Nov. 13 and Dec. 11. Participants included sixth-graders Sam Brown, Ben Primack, Talia Rotenberg, and Max Wartluft; seventh-graders Will Levin, Will Stein and Jackson Lafferty; and high school student Matthew Driben.



Good News Israel: Spotlight



Ordinary Israelis take extraordinary action to help Syrians

Israel21c.com

Private initiatives by ordinary Israelis continue to gather much needed clothing and medical aid for the Syrian people. A crowdfunding campaign to bring emergency supplies to embattled Syrians is also ongoing and raised more than \$190,000 in its first four days.

The recent charity drives by Israelis for their Syrian neighbors come in the wake of the tragic outcome of the fall of Aleppo to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces and further atrocities suffered by citizens.

One WhatsApp message that quickly circulated around Israel called for warm clothing, shoes and toys for Syrian children. The message said that all donations would be given to Ziv Medical Center in Safed and that they would help transfer the collected apparel to Syrian refugees.

"For over three years, Ziv Medical Center has been treating Syrian

casualties," a hospital spokesperson said. "It was only natural that when Israeli citizens asked if they could send warm clothes and toys, especially for the Syrian children, that we would join forces with these amazing people."

The initiative began as an idea by one or two private people. Social media helped spread the message, and there are dropoff points for donations across the country.

"So many people have turned to us, it's overwhelming. It shows that people care. And they should care," the spokesperson said. "There's so much interest, and I think it's great that people want to help. It's the right thing to do."

A crowdfunding campaign called "Just Beyond Our Border – Israelis for the Syrian Children," which aims to raise money for food, medicines, and equipment for the winter to help displaced Syrian children, went live in mid-December and was an instant

success.

"We strongly feel that we can stand aside no more. This is a group of civilians that gather voluntarily with no organization behind it. We cooperate with the Israeli Flying Aid in order to transport the goods that will be purchased to the hands of the needy in Syria. We invite everyone to join us," reads a statement on the MIMOONA crowdfunding site.

"The long war has unraveled the lives of millions of people now living as displaced persons; homeless, without security or a future. In the complex Syrian reality, when aid to one side comes at the expense of the other, we say: Take the children out of this formula. Helping children is always a good thing. It's essential," reads the Just Beyond Our Border – Israelis for the Syrian Children mission statement.

Many comments by supporters of the campaign refer back to the Holocaust.

"We cannot remain apathetic," reads one message. "As a nation that has suffered through a Holocaust on our people, we must act and do something."

"To save one person is to save the world," reads another post on the Just Beyond Our Border page.

Meanwhile, doctors in the Israeli army reserves sent a letter on Saturday to IDF Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot demanding that they be called up for service to help treat Syrians wounded in their civil war.

"We know there are security considerations, and we know there are diplomatic considerations. But there is a principle, there is a truth, and there is morality: We must demand from ourselves to be there for them," Israeli news site 04040 quoted the doctors as writing.

Israeli doctors have treated some 2,600 Syrians since the start of the civil war in local hospitals and along the border in army field hospitals.

Israeli paramedic aids thousands of refugees at sea

Israel21c.com

Israel "Izzy" Papa decided to make helping others his vocation when he was in high school. The 22-year-old paramedic with Magen David Adom (MDA) started volunteering at Israel's national emergency medical service and disaster-relief organization as a teen "because it was cool."

"I saw some people in really awful situations, and I realized that someone needs to help," he said. "I felt like I need to do it. That's what I want to do; help people. It's also so satisfying. When you save someone and he gets to live another day, that is a crazy feeling. The best feeling I've ever had in my life."

Papa hit the headlines in Israel recently after becoming the first paramedic, and the first Israeli, to join the Red Cross and the Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS) vessel in the Mediterranean Sea.

His team included international humanitarians, security professionals, medical staff and experienced maritime officers.

"We saved close to 4,000 people from the water," Papa said of his five-week mission. MOAS provides aid and preliminary medical treatment to refugees – about 25,000 of them since 2014.

"When you save someone and he gets to live another day, that is a crazy feeling," Papa said.

The busiest crossings in the

Mediterranean are the western, central and eastern routes as people flee countries such as Eritrea, Somalia and Syria. Many refugees in southeast Asia who are lured out to sea by promises of a better life end up trapped, kidnapped, abused and forced to buy their freedom from smugglers.

Papa says the mission is to provide both physical and emotional support to refugees.

"They have been through so much," he says. "You know about civil wars in Syria and Africa. But when you actually hear their stories from the people who have experienced them, you get shocked."

Papa helped save people from Libya, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Syria. His school-taught Arabic helped him communicate.

During an interview with ISRAEL21c, Papa showed a photo of a Syrian man he had helped save. The refugee guessed that Papa was from Lebanon or Syria based on his Arabic accent.

"When I told him I was from Israel, he paused for a few minutes and then he said, 'I love you. You're my brother.' That was really exciting to hear. I almost started crying," Papa says. "My agenda is that we're all one heart. A person is a person. Whether they're white, black, Muslim, Christian or Jewish, it doesn't matter where they come from."

Over the past two years about 10,000 refugees have died in the



Mediterranean after being crammed inside rubber dinghies and suffering from dehydration and starvation before reaching their destination, says MDA.

The refugees come from several different conflict regions, all trying to reach safety in crowded boats.

Papa had served as a paramedic before, but still, he says, "I was afraid. I didn't know what to expect. It's saving lives on a different level. If every day you save five or six people as a [first responder] on an ambulance, out at sea you're seeing 1,000 people a day. It's like a mass crisis."

The young man says he felt his role was to give hope.

"If there was no hope, they wouldn't survive the rubber dinghies," he says. "I felt I could give hope. I can't promise

them anything. We're there as a team to make sure no one dies in the sea. No one deserves to be lost in the Mediterranean with their family trying to guess where they are."

He says he is still processing the powerful experience but it has already changed the way he sees things.

"When I was a kid, all I wanted was to skip school and get out of class, but there was a kid on the vessel who wrote a letter that completely changed my perspective on life. He wrote about how his biggest wish was to have a home again and go to school every day, just like other kids do. All I could think about at that moment was how unfortunate and incredibly unfair it is that some people are born into a tougher life than others."

World's first blood test to aid diagnosis of Parkinson's disease

Israel21c.com

Doctors diagnose as many as 60,000 new cases of Parkinson's disease every year in the United States. Yet diagnosing PD with certainty can take years — long after early signs and symptoms have appeared. The Israeli startup BioShai has a game-changing product on the horizon: PDx, the world's first simple blood test for the early diagnosis of PD. The test results can be combined with clinical data, providing a more accurate diagnosis to help physicians decide on the best course of treatment at a much earlier stage.

More than 10 million people worldwide are living with this chronic and progressive movement disorder caused

by the malfunction and death of neurons that produce dopamine, a chemical that coordinates the brain's control of movement and coordination.

"Having a diagnosis at an earlier stage can lead to a more precise treatment and a higher quality of life for the patient," says BioShai CEO Jennifer Yarden, who has a PhD in medical science and formerly was responsible for clinical and commercial development of diagnostic assays and kits at Glycominds.

"Offering a simple and inexpensive test for the diagnosis of Parkinson's is considered essential for the development of neuroprotective therapy," she explains, "because by the

time a patient has the many movement symptoms associated with Parkinson's, a majority of the dopamine-producing neurons are lost or become impaired by the disease."

The PDx blood test, which measures changes in particular molecules known to be associated with Parkinson's, will be available through an Israeli lab on a limited beta basis in early 2017. BioShai will soon apply for regulatory approval in Europe.

Yarden said BioShai is in the final stages of validating and standardizing the PDx assay in a multi-center clinical trial in Israel and Italy.

"BioShai's strategy is to first develop the test for differential diagnosis of PD

from patients with similar parkinsonian motor features and then to develop a modified version of the test for earlier diagnosis of patients with pre-motor symptoms such as decreased ability to smell (anosmia), constant constipation, depression and REM sleep disorders," Yarden said.

She noted that the cost of the PDx blood test, estimated to be several hundred dollars, is significantly less expensive than any available imaging test and "will definitely decrease the cost of diagnosis."

While other companies are working toward a blood test for PD, she adds, "Our assay is unique and we hope to be the first in market."

Congregational News

Thoughts inspired by the loss of a cellphone

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker

Chabad Center of Berks County

Recently, I attended a wedding. It was a joyous and happy event. The guests at the wedding were really into it. As the bride and groom entered the hall and were introduced "for the very first time as husband and wife," the band struck up lively music. People were clapping, stomping and twirling themselves around and around in the circles, as is typical during the elated atmosphere of a wedding.



I have known the family for more than two decades. Feeling the joy as I did, I was soon picking it up a notch, energetically dancing around the endless circles.

During this flying experience, my cellphone dislodged itself from the inside of my jacket pocket, and flew into the circle. It was only when I stomped on it that I realized my phone had decided to leave its confines, and the end result was not pretty. Any button I pressed was to no avail. Resuscitation was not going to

happen.

When I sat back down in my seat, I shared my loss with my rabbi colleague in the seat next to mine. He looked at me, and said: "Forget about it. Go home and get a good night's sleep!"

Going back home was not an option. I had an appointment following the wedding. I thought of calling the person from the rabbi's phone before leaving the wedding, but then realized that this person's number was in my phone — and that was inaccessible.

Well, I would simply head on home. Then I realized that I was counting on my GPS — hosted on my phone — for directions to get home.

Some of the books I study daily are on my phone. I study Torah with a dear friend each day via the phone. I wasn't wearing a watch, as the time of the day is on my phone. So many people reach out to me in their time of need at all hours of the day. When I finally prepared to go to sleep, I realized that my alarm clock, hosted on my phone, was also out of reach.

It began to dawn on me that, as ridiculous as this sounds, a part of me had died with my phone...

You may have noticed that I did not include the many phone apps one normally relies upon. Neither did I address the many other uses provided via the phone, such as paying bills, keeping up with the news, watching streaming live footage and many other potential uses or distractions. My real predicament included being unable to study Torah, to hold an important meeting, to find my way home, tell the time, be reachable for those in need and to set myself up to wake up the next morning!

By Monday evening, I had replaced my phone. Earlier that day, when not negotiating with the phone company regarding my new phone, I had time to contemplate my loss and why it affected me so profoundly.

For most human beings on this earth, the smartphone is where the world simply is. As important as a regular telephone was for all United States personal households in the 1960s, the cellphone is, today, an essential component for over 90 percent of adults in the United States (and likely 100 percent of millennials). The personal phone is a fact of life these days, just like running water, electricity,

or eyeglasses. No matter who the person may be, it is basically impossible for anyone to function without a personal phone.

Many suggest that people are too addicted to their phones. My rabbi friend even proposed that I get some more sleep, insinuating that my phone was keeping me distracted from sleeping. The phone, though, is a tool that, when harnessed correctly, can truly enhance one's life.

Life's vicissitudes pose a test to all people. Some get caught up in their cellphones, while others get caught up in their lack of cellphones. Some get lost in the ups, and others in the downs.

Everything that is neutral in this world must be used as a conduit to serve the Almighty. As we live in the 21st century we must look around and see how we can not isolate ourselves from important developments and technology, but rather embrace it and utilize it as a conduit to serve in our capacity of making a living, taking care of our family and for the service of G-d.

When the focus is the Almighty, then life, with all its variations, is equally balanced for good.

LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

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.
SERVICES HELD AT JCC, 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125, Wyomissing

REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034
Friday, Jan. 6: 6 p.m. Fridays, Jan. 13 and 20: 7:45 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 27: 7 p.m. service followed by Oneg Speaker Series event
Saturday, Jan. 21: Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.

CONGREGATION SHOMREI HABRITH

January ☆ Tevet - Shevat



Shabbat Candle Lightings



Torah Portions

January 6
4:35 p.m.

January 13
4:42 p.m.

January 20
4:50 p.m.

January 27
4:58 p.m.

January 7/Tevet 9
Vayigash (Genesis 44:18 – 47:27)

January 14/Tevet 16
Vayechi (Genesis 47:28 – 50:26)

January 21/Tevet 23
Shemot (Exodus 1:1 – 6:1)

January 28/Shevat 1
Va'eira (Exodus 6:2 – 9:35)



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The Windows of Kesher Zion

Orders of individual prints for individual windows are available online at:

<http://davezerbestudioofphotography1.shootproof.com/kesher>

We are selling individual prints for each window:

- unmounted 11" x 14" are \$18.00 each _____



We are selling accordion books as well as accordion cards:

- 4" x 5" accordion cards (printed on pearl paper) are \$9.00 _____

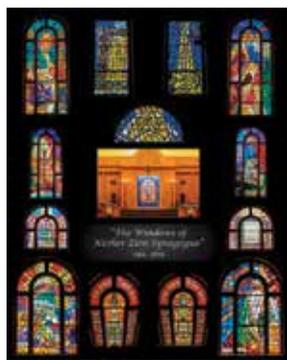
- 2.5" x 3.5" accordion books (printed on glossy paper) are \$21.00 _____



Accordion book sample: will be printed with one window on each page.

A set of 12 5x7 flat note cards each of a different window with cream-colored envelopes:

- Each set \$36.00 _____



16" x 20" Print

Unmounted \$24.00 _____

Mounted \$36.00 _____

Framed \$72.00 _____

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

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City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Cash, Check, Money Order, and all Major CC

*Profits benefit Kesher Zion Synagogue

Introduce your child to the joy of Shabbat!

Tot Shabbat

is a musical, story-filled, interactive hour for children through grade 2. Bring your family & friends to celebrate with Rabbi Michelson and stay for a pint-sized oneg of juice, challah, fruit, and child-friendly treats.

Join us next time!
Jan. 21st at 10 am

Members and non-members are invited. No registration is required. Tot Shabbat services are held Saturday mornings at 10:00 am at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing unless noted. Please call the Temple office with any questions, 610.375.6034.



UPCOMING DATES:

February 11

March 25 at 10:00 am - Intergenerational Tot Shabbat at The Highlands

April 22 & May 13

Fun with falafel



Chana Lipsker's November cooking class at Chabad featured falafel. Participant Mary Engelson said: "Each of Chana's classes is a learning experience. It is always interesting to learn about the origins of the recipes we make. We learn both the history of the foods and the way it is traditionally made. Chana shows us variations on each dish we make so we can try the recipe different ways. Falafel was new to me because I had not only never made it, but I had never eaten it either. I enjoyed this new experience, especially with the delicious Israeli salad. Class is always educational and a lot of fun."



Latkes: Thinking outside the spud

By Nancy Russo

Chanukah was celebrated a little early by the ladies of the Kosher Cooking Class held at Chabad Lubavitch on Sunday, Dec. 11. Our organizer and instructor, Chana Lipsker, promised us modern variations on the traditional potato latke — and she sure delivered!

Chana presented us with six kinds of latkes. In addition to the traditional potato version, she made zucchini (my favorite), potato-parsnip blend, butternut squash, carrot and sweet potato. On the side, she served applesauce, sour cream and even ketchup and mustard for those who enjoy their potatoes with those condiments.

Latkes are a delicious reminder of the Hanukkah story. When the Jews entered the Temple that was desecrated by the Greeks, they found that there was only enough pure olive oil to keep the menorah lit for one day. But the flame miraculously burned for eight days allowing one of the warriors to travel and return with extra oil. This miracle, which is now the center of the celebration of Hanukkah, is commemorated by eating foods fried in oil and lighting the Menorah.

In addition to a selection of latkes,



Chana set a beautiful table to show off her delicacies. The centerpiece was a floral menorah of calla lilies in vases. A larger vase and flower in the center served as the shamash, with four smaller vases with flowers branching out on each side. What an innovative menorah design which would definitely be pinned frequently on Pinterest!

So, for those of you who just can't bear to grate another knuckle or potato next Chanukah why don't you try one of Chana's variations?

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Questions??? Contact us!

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Susan Wilson – WEXLER718@HOTMAIL.COM – 610.301.2082



WHEN? SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 26TH, 2017

WHERE? JCC – 1100 BERKSHIRE BLVD – WYOMISSING

TIME? 1:00PM – 3:30pm

WHAT? BAP (BRING A PRIZE) WINE & CHEESE BINGO

WANTED: ANYONE WHO WANTS TO HAVE SOME WINTER BLUES FUN. HAVE SOME WINE & CHEESE WHILE PLAYING BINGO WITH YOUR FRIENDS. ALL WE ASK IS THAT YOU BRING A GIFT WORTH APPROXIMATELY \$10.00. THESE ITEMS WILL BE GIVEN OUT AS GAME WINNING PRIZES SO PLEASE MAKE SURE THIS ITEM IS NEW – SOMETHING YOU MIGHT ENJOY WINNING.

THE ONLY OTHER REQUIREMENT IS A DESIRE TO HAVE FUN AND LAUGH! WE WILL SUPPLY THE REST. MEN ARE WELCOME AND NO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY.

THINK YOU QUALIFY? HAVE QUESTIONS? WANT TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE? DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT ANY ONE OF US.

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Growing new bone from corals raised in the Israeli desert

Israel21c.com

An Israeli bone-graft product made of enhanced coral has received CE approval to start sales in Europe for dental and orthopedic procedures.

This unique product is made from corals grown in a closed system using patented technology to provide bioactivity and eliminate biological contamination.

Many practitioners and medical device companies have already contacted CoreBone to learn more about its advantages over currently available products for bone grafting, says CEO Ohad Schwartz.

"Bone grafts ideally should have four features," he explains. "They must be bioactive, not just a passive scaffold, in order to attract new bone cells; they must be strong enough to support the site, especially for implants; they must allow for being replaced as new bone grows; and they must be porous to enable vascularity," meaning that blood vessels can grow through them naturally and produce growth of bone from the inside out.

"If you have all those features, you have a very good bone graft," Schwartz continues. "We have all of those."

Some organic grafts from animals or

humans also have those features, but they pose a serious risk of rejection and transmitting disease. Synthetic grafts avoid these risks but are much weaker than natural bone.

Alternatives are in high demand as the global markets for orthopedic and dental bone-graft substitutes are expected to reach \$3.4 billion and \$1 billion, respectively, in 2017.

"Our product offers the best of both worlds, and therefore it is an optimal solution," Schwartz said, adding that a European study found CoreBone to be four times stronger than human bone.

Studies have demonstrated that CoreBone's material has a high rate of bio-integration and connectivity with the host bone compared with leading products in the market, as well as almost complete bone healing within months.

CoreBone is made from the mineral exoskeleton of corals cultured in monitored aquarium systems and enriched with silica and strontium to add bioactive and osteoconductive (bone-cell-attracting) properties. The process is patented in the United States and Israel.

The corals are bred from selected species in a closed farm in the Arava

desert, so they aren't susceptible to marine pollution, contamination and endangerment. They also grow 10 times faster than in nature.

"All our products come from natural corals, but we engineer different ones for different indications because they differ in shape, strength and porosity," Schwartz explains.

One of the most common dental procedures today is socket preservation after tooth extraction, accounting for 20 million cases in the U.S. alone.

"If you don't fill the cavity you will have major loss of bone," he says. "The usual practice is to fill it with different bone graft granules. We found that one of the corals we grow has the exact shape and dimensions of tooth roots. So we're using the natural design of the coral to find a solution for a major indication."

CoreBone was founded in December 2011 as a portfolio company of The Trendlines Group in Misgav, northern Israel.

The company has six employees and has raised about \$2 million from public sources and private investors in Singapore, Israel and the United States. A new funding round is starting as the company goes into marketing mode.

Schwartz, the former CEO of two med-tech companies, Vaica Medical and Aspect AI, is co-founder along with Prof. Itzhak Binderman, an internationally recognized researcher in bone biology and dentistry who formerly headed the dental department and hard tissue lab at Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center and taught in Tel Aviv University's School of Dental Medicine and department of bioengineering.

Schwartz says CoreBone's products are undergoing ongoing clinical trials at Baruch Padeh Medical Center in Poriya, near the Galilee city of Tiberias.

These studies enable the company to launch its products in Europe and Israel; application to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is expected by mid 2017.

"We are planning to introduce CoreBone at major trade shows in Israel and abroad," Schwartz says.

As for cost, the coral-based bone grafts will be priced comparably with average bovine-based bone grafts, which sell for about \$100 per 1cc in the United States and are being used less frequently because of safety concerns.

"We can offer a very competitive price because nature does the work for us," says Schwartz.

Israeli Muslims donate wood to rebuild Haifa synagogue

The Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel put out an international call for donations to help the Moriah synagogue rebuild from the ashes after the recent week-long wildfires that raged across Israel.

But it was two small, local initiatives that put the damaged synagogue into the headlines.

On Nov. 30, a group of worshippers from all faiths attended a special prayer service for the new Hebrew month of Kislev and to show support for the rebuilding of the community.

A local member posted Facebook photos of the service. One of the photos showed 20 saplings donated by a man from Baqa al-Gharbiyye, an Arab city in the Haifa district, as a gift to replace the trees in the courtyard that had been burned in the fires.

He wasn't the only one bearing gifts.

Two Muslim tradesmen from Umm al-Fahm, another Arab town in the Haifa district, also came to the service and were greeted with great applause for their

contribution of wood panels.

The Moriah synagogue – the oldest Conservative synagogue in Israel — suffered extensive damage in the fires. The whole second floor and roof of the building were destroyed, including their beit midrash, all of their books, their education wing and their youth club.

At first, the Moriah community turned to a Jewish carpenter for help. He agreed to work pro-bono but asked that the synagogue pay for the wood. He went to get a price quote from wood suppliers Walid abu-Ahmed and Ziad Yunis. When they heard that the previous tables were destroyed in the fires that devastated 13 neighborhoods in Haifa, they chose to donate enough wood for 10 tables.

"I had tears in my eyes when I heard what was happening," Rabbi Dov Hiyon, who heads the Moriah community, told Ynet news. "It was so emotional to hear that Muslims were asking to donate to a Jewish synagogue. I've invited them to evening prayers to personally thank them."



The damaged entrance to the Moriah synagogue

"I decided to help and not receive any payment," abu-Ahmed told the Hebrew daily news site. "Jews and

Arabs live together in Haifa, and there is no discrimination. We must continue with this coexistence and promote peace."

REFORM CONGREGATION
OHEB SHOLOM PRESENTS
a NEW program



ONEG SPEAKER SERIES



FRI., JANUARY 27, 2017
We Finally Have A New President...Now What?

featuring Bernard Whitman. Bernard is a brand & political strategist with over 25 years experience advising some of the world's most powerful leaders, companies, and organizations. He is a frequent television commentator with more than 500 media appearances on networks including CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, ABC, CNBC, and Fox Business. Bernard is the brother of student Cantor Harriet Dunkerley.

SHABBAT SERVICE AT 7:00 PM
SPEAKER/ONEG AT 8:00 PM

Mr. Whitman will present in the Social Hall during the oneg for about 45 minutes. The Speaker Series is for adults only. Babysitting is available for free for children ages 2-8 and tweens ages 9-13 with a reservation by calling the office by Friday, January 20th, 610 375-6034.

Appreciation is extended to Sisterhood for supporting the Speaker Series onegs.



04.01.17

THIS YEAR'S
RUTH & IRVIN BALIS AWARD
WILL BE PRESENTED TO

LYNN & JEFF DRIBEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2017
COCKTAILS AT 6:00 PM
DINNER AT 7:00 PM

SAVE THE DATE

IsraAid to open first U.S. office in San Francisco

Jewish News Weekly of Northern California

The 80 to 90 people gathered in a California community center on Oct. 30 were not the typical audience for an Israeli group's meet-and-greet.

They were Muslims, and about half the women were wearing hijabs. Well-heeled, mostly in their 30s and early 40s, many worked in high-tech and knew the hosts, Zohreen and Mir Aamir, who had invited them to hear about the work being done with Muslim refugees in Europe by IsraAid, a Tel Aviv-based aid organization.

Mir, a Pakistani American, works in marketing for a Silicon Valley company. Last summer he and his wife grew increasingly alarmed by the millions of Muslim refugees fleeing war-torn Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, cramming onto overloaded, leaky lifeboats and washing up on the shores of Greek islands.

"We wanted to go, and see, and feel it up close," Mir told the audience. They wrote to a number of international aid organizations. None responded. Then a friend told them about IsraAid, an Israeli nongovernmental organization that sends rescue and relief teams to disaster zones all over the globe and is planning to open its first U.S. office in San Francisco.

Last summer, the Aamirs and their three children spent three days at a refugee center in Berlin, where IsraAid was providing much-needed trauma care to homeless and bereft refugees, those from Syria in particular.

"It was remarkable to see their work," Mir said as his 13-year-old daughter showed the audience a video she had made to show her schoolmates. "It was the center's one-year anniversary, and many of the refugees had been there since the beginning. They thought they'd be there for a month. These are educated people, like us in this room. They've been

through such a long journey of hardship and suffering."

Also addressing the crowd was Yotam Polizer, IsraAid's global partnership director, who speaks widely about the organization's work and tries to drum up volunteers and financial support.

"Whenever there's a disaster, we try to go within the first 24 hours, to assess the needs," he said. "We have teams now in Haiti, helping after Hurricane Matthew. But the refugee crisis is so different. Every day, thousands of them arrive [on the Greek island of Lesbos.] They are greeted by the last people they expect to see — Israeli volunteers. Doctors and nurses, Jewish and Arab."

Opening his arms to the crowd, he emphasized, "There are a lot of people here today from the Muslim community. We need your help."

Polizer has been spending a lot of time in the Bay Area recently to lay the groundwork for IsraAid's new San Francisco office, where a staff of three will recruit and coordinate volunteers to join its relief efforts around the world.

One of the most visible nongovernmental organizations in the fast-growing field of international disaster relief, IsraAid, founded in 2001, has sent more than 1,000 doctors, nurses, social workers and other trauma experts to crisis zones in 35 countries, by its own estimates touching the lives of some 1 million people in need, both in the hours after disaster strikes and continuing on for months or years as the stricken communities rebuild.

When an earthquake and tsunami hit Japan in 2011, IsraAid was on the ground within four days and is still there helping rebuild in 10 cities. During the 2014 Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, IsraAid partnered with government efforts to provide post-traumatic stress disorder training to West

African medical personnel dealing with the victims. From flooding in the Philippines to Syrian refugee camps in Greece and Germany, IsraAid has sent hundreds of its own professional staff and helped coordinate volunteer efforts, bringing much-needed succor to those who need it most.

The choice of San Francisco as the group's first North American outpost was no accident, Polizer said.

There's a lot of interest among young Bay Area Jews in social justice work, he points out. More than 65 local volunteers have joined IsraAid relief teams working with Syrian refugees in Greek island camps just this past year, he noted.

"Last November I gave a talk at Stanford, and two students came up to me afterwards saying they wanted to volunteer with us in Greece," he said. "Usually we take professionals — nurses, doctors, engineers — but in the refugee camps we need people to pull refugees off the boats."

And it wasn't just those two students, but their mothers as well, who joined IsraAid teams in Greece. They shared their experiences on Facebook, and interest snowballed, The Koret Foundation stepped in as a major funder four months ago.

"They realized this is a great way to get to young unaffiliated Jews," Polizer explained. "Humanitarian work speaks to them. It's a way to reconnect them to their Jewish identity and to Israel. They want to join, and it makes them proud of Israel."

"Israel is more than just a conversation about borders, the occupied territories and the haredim," agreed Jeff Farber, CEO of the Koret Foundation. "The Jewish people are there [offering aid and support] in all

these countries when these terrible things happen, and how many people hear about it? This is helping the most vulnerable at the most critical time in their existence, whether it be a hurricane or a terrorist attack."

The San Francisco office will enable IsraAid staff to reach out more effectively to recruit Bay Area volunteers, Polizer said, and will also give the group access to Silicon Valley companies, many of which want to get more involved in social justice work but don't always know how.

"Many of them have social action departments, but not the actual capability to bring technological solutions to humanitarian problems," he said.

IsraAid has tripled its staff since 2013. Nearly 40 percent of the organization's funding comes from UNICEF, Polizer said, giving the lie to the long-standing (and ill-founded, he noted) reputation that UNICEF has for being anti-Israel (Israel rejoined the agency's executive board in 2013 after a 40-year hiatus).

Because their cause is non-partisan, Polizer said IsraAid can reach out to groups that don't often have the opportunity to get involved in Jewish or Israeli organizations — like the Muslim crowd in that Danville community center. "It's a great opportunity for building bridges," he says.

Still, Polizer was quick to emphasize the pride he feels in the organization's roots as a Jewish and an Israel-based humanitarian organization.

"We are very proud of our Israeli identity," he said. "People on the left and the right ask me why aren't we more involved in Israeli problems. I say, we are supporting Israel by building these partnerships with non-typical allies, like the United Nations."

All Around the Town

Mazel tov to **Luba and Michael Karchevsky** on the birth of their son Avi.

We love good news about

members of our community! Please share it by emailing Marknem@aol.com.

Until next time: Shalom!

Mini Chefs

Hey kids! Roll up your sleeves and get busy! Come experience the joy of Kosher cooking, baking, craft making, and game playing.

We will be making cupcake flower bouquets. Games, crafts & refreshments.

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Cost: \$8

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Sunday, January 15
5:30pm

At Chabad Lubavitch
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Reading, PA 19604

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Next cooking class will be on Feb 5th

Gardening with Vicky

Trying something new

By Vicky Sokoloff

Over a summer I typically attend at least six plant exchanges, some organized by the Berks County Horticulture Club and others hosted by friends. Being a creature of habit I usually stick with things I know. But exchanges are a good opportunity to try something new. And sometimes I am pleasantly surprised by the result.

That's exactly what happened at a late September swap at a friend's house. I noticed a plant with a single coral pink flower. The tag said Mandevilla. It's a plant I had never grown. I knew only that it's a tropical vine. I thought about it and decided that late September was hardly the time for something tropical. But when it was time to leave and the plant was still there ...well, why not.

I brought it home and put it on the deck. It stayed pretty much the same size for the next month. When the danger of first frost arrived I decided at the last minute to repot it and bring it in. In the two months since it came inside it has tripled in size, bloomed almost constantly, and now has close to a dozen flowers and lots more buds. The coral blossoms evolved to include some blotches of white, which makes it even more interesting.

Another plant I almost passed by was a gaura. This is a plant I tried a few years ago, but it died over the winter. So when I saw one on close-out at a local nursery I walked right by it. But it was so pretty that I turned around and gave it a second look. The variety is Siskiyou Pink. I bought it in early July and planted it in a protected spot in front of the house. It bloomed nonstop until the Dec. 17 ice storm. Only time will tell if it will survive the winter and bloom again next year.

There is a house about a mile down the road that has lovely pink fall flowers. I never had the nerve to stop, ring the bell and ask what they are. So I was very surprised two years ago when some bulbs I got at a Hort Club exchange turned out to be that very plant: naked lady lily, also called surprise lily (*Amaryllis belladonna*).

There is a certain amount of ease and comfort in sticking with the familiar. But there can also be a lot of joy from trying something new and being rewarded with lots of beautiful flowers.



Mandevilla vine



Gaura lindheimeri or "Siskiyou Pink"



Amaryllis belladonna

The Board of Directors and staff of the Jewish Federation offer our deepest condolences to the Seltzer family on the untimely passing of Anne Seltzer. Her monthly columns in the Shalom were an inspiration to us all. She will be greatly missed.

Her final column, so typical of her warm and giving spirit, is presented here

Privilege to serve

By Anne Seltzer



As some of you know, I am privileged to serve as the president of the board of trustees at Easy Does It. If you haven't heard of it, EDI is a transitional housing facility for recovering addicts; which includes drugs, alcohol and gambling. We are the next step after rehab to help people get back on their feet and learn how to live independently again. EDI teaches a skill set needed to survive outside of its doors, such as balancing money, cooking, computer, yoga, taking care of oneself, looking for a job and building a resume. We offer our residents rides to meetings, work, and doctors' appointments.

Last week we had our annual holiday dinner with the staff and board. On the tables were notes written by some of our residents. They were very moving to me. I would like to share a few excerpts from the notes with you: "I am truly grateful... Thank you for all the help the structure and tools staff has given me to live my life again." "...thank you for the exceptional respect and genuine, loving care I have received from the staff...being able to gain back my independence and have a second chance at life."

But the reality is they have given me so much more than I could ever give them. They are so much braver than I am. These are people who have hit the bottom and have the courage to turn their lives around and go on with their lives. Some of our residents come from families where abuse is the norm; perhaps their parents were/are both addicts. Some have never celebrated holidays, birthdays, or eaten in a sit-down restaurant. Others come from middle class or upper class backgrounds

and are well-educated. Everyone has a unique story of how they got there, but the thread is universal in that they are broken when they come to us. Our goal is to get clients back on their feet and into their new lives. When at EDI, I feel like I can be myself; there are no pretenses. It is raw and real. You are accepted for who you are, and it is a peaceful, welcoming feeling.

This year for the holidays I tried baking several new cookies besides the old standbys, and I shared them with some very deserving residents. These are one of my new cookies, World Peace Cookies (Dorie Greenspan).

World Peace Cookies

World Peace Cookies

- 1 ¼ c. all-purpose flour ¼ c. sugar
- 1/3 c. unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ tsp. fine sea salt ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. vanilla

1 stick + 3 T. unsalted butter, room temp
5 oz. bittersweet chocolate chips
2/3 c. packed light brown sugar
Sift cocoa, baking soda and flour together. Beat butter and both sugars together on medium until creamy, about 3 minutes. Beat in salt and vanilla. Slowly add the dry ingredients. Beat until the mixture forms big, moist curds. Mix in chips. Turn out onto work surface. Knead until it comes together. Form into two logs 1 1/2 "in diameter. Wrap in plastic and chill for at least 3 hrs. Using a long, sharp knife, slice the dough into 1/2" thick slices. They may crumble, but just squish them back together. Place on parchment-lined sheets at least 2" apart. Bake at 325° for 12 min. Don't open oven! Let them bake. They won't look done, nor be firm, but take them out anyway. Let cool until warm. Enjoy!!

Have a safe, joyous, loving and healthy 2017, from Alan, Buttons and me to all of you!

Poem earns honorable mention in contest

Here is a poem by Marjorie "Tootie" Moyer. It received honorable mention in this year's Encore Senior Poetry Contest.

"Beautiful Winter"

The snow is falling, pearly white,
the world looks beautiful; so very bright.
We made snow angels and snowmen,
God made us happy, and I'll say amen.

Tomorrow the sun will shine and melt,
sad and happy, that's how I felt.
The white snow is now water and dirt,
the winter is long, but I'm not hurt.

I can laugh and play at will,
and I don't even have to take a pill.
Here's to winter, I love it a lot,
but I still can't wait till the weather is hot.

Obituaries

Gerald Tarnosky, 71, of Womelsdorf. For most of his life he worked as a computer engineer for Xerox, Honeywell and OCLC. He was a car enthusiast and a New York Giants fan. Gerald is survived by his wife Susan, two sons in New Jersey, and a granddaughter.

Aaron Messing, 76, of Morgantown, worked in the computer field. He enjoyed woodworking, playing competitive chess and was an avid collector of Japanese porcelain. He is survived by his wife, Virginia, two sons and two grandchildren.

Meyer Lewis, 94, formerly of Reading. Meyer was a veteran of World War II, serving with the Navy. He was the owner of Lewis Waste Oil Service and a member of Keshet Zion Synagogue. Meyer is survived by daughter Andrea and her husband, Jon Bronson, and son Neal Lewis and his wife, Claudia. Other survivors include his five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Eva Bartos, 103, of Wyomissing. Eva was an elementary school teacher for 16 years in the Reading School District and an avid bridge player. She was a member of Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom and its Sisterhood, a member of the JCC and a supporter of the Jewish Federation. Eva is survived by her daughter Judith and her husband, Dr. Sheldon Wagman of Arizona, Dr. David Bartos and his wife, Adrienne, of Florida, and Dr. Michael Bartos and his wife, Jody, of California. Other survivors include her five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Kenneth Goodman, 58, of Exeter Township. Ken received his law degree from Widener University and was a partner at Rabenold, Koestel, Goodman & Denaro in Wyomissing, where he primarily focused on personal injury law. He is survived by his wife, Debra, and his children Matthew, David and Kyle. Other survivors include his brothers Bob and Mark and their families.

Jewish Family Service

LIHEAP grants help with energy bills

**United
Way**



By Sari Incledon, M.Ed.

As I gather this information in December, much of our country is experiencing frigid temperatures, and more of the same is sure to follow in the coming months. It is a good time for natural gas and electric customers to see if they are eligible for help with their heating bills



through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

The LIHEAP program provides grants for customers with limited incomes to help pay heating bills, repair or replace a heater, avoid a shut-off and assist in restoring a terminated service.

LIHEAP grants do not need to be repaid. Customers interested in applying for LIHEAP should contact UGI, the natural gas utility that serves most of Berks County. Electric customers of PPL and Met-Ed are also eligible to apply.

The program will accept applications

through March 31. Eligibility is determined by income. A household of one person can earn up to \$17,820, a household of two can earn up to \$24,030 and for each additional person add \$6,240. LIHEAP funds are limited and available on a first-come first-served basis to qualifying customers. For more information call the LIHEAP hotline at 1-866-857-7095 or call Sari at 610-921-0624.

Jewish Family Service Food Pantry Update

We had our first pantry distribution

in November and served more than 90 households. We are looking forward to our next distribution and expect an even larger turnout. The new Olivet clubhouse is a great place for this program, and we are hoping for continuing success.

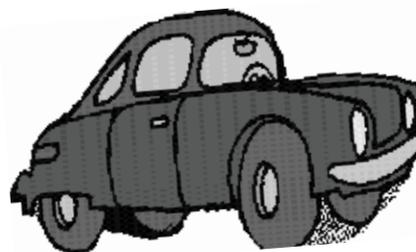
Thanks to all donors of bags and groceries and to volunteers who unload the truck and set up, assist clients and clean up.

Thanks also to Sue and Herb Wachs for donating children's books from "Cops and Kids" that are greatly appreciated by our clients.

ENCORE - A Senior Discussion Group

Meets Monday Jan. 23, at 3 p.m.
at the JCC.

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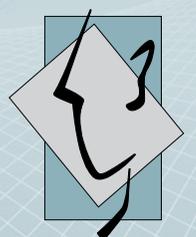
James G. Barrer, DMD

Douglas W. White, DMD

Did You Know Jewish Family Service:

- offers discounted taxi transportation to seniors and the disabled?
- has a monthly need-based food pantry?
- offers counseling and information and referral services?

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Contributions as of Dec. 16

Jewish Family Service

In honor of:
Al Diamond's special birthday – Marcia and George Eligman
Michele Abramson's engagement – Sid and Esther Bratt
Bar Mitzvah of Bill and Andi Franklin's grandson – Al and Betsy Katz
Birth of Judy and Jim Schwank's granddaughter – Gordon and Carol Perlmutter

In memory of:
Miriam Linker (Debbie Frank's mother) – Sid and Esther Bratt
Meyer Lewis – Edith Mendelsohn

Federation Jewish Community Campaign

In honor of:
Al Diamond's special birthday – Brett Diamond, Charles and Brenda Diamond, Mary Jane Doaty

In memory of:
Eva Bartos – Anzie and Edward Golden

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	\$25
Holocaust Library & Resource Center	\$18
Doris Levin Fund	\$10
PJ Library Fund	\$10
Harry & Rose Sack Fund	\$10
Evelyn Thompson Fund	\$10

PJ Library

In honor of:
Bar Mitzvah of Henry and Helene Singer's twin grandsons Eli and Zach Singer – Sue and Herb Wachs

In memory of:
Sue Viener – Kalman & Beryl Katz , Bert and Beth Schlabach

Friendship Circle Fund

In honor of:
Miriam Linker (Debbie Frank's mother) – Gaye and Glenn Corbin
Harry David Silverstein (Lila Shapiro's brother) – Gaye and Glenn Corbin

Israeli engineering students switching on lights for Tanzania

A solar electricity generator and storage batteries are providing constant electricity for the first time ever to Nkaiti Medical Center in Minjingu, a Tanzanian village of about 7,000 Masai subsistence farmers and cattle ranchers — thanks to the Tel Aviv University chapter of Engineers without Borders (EwB TAU).

Since Minjingu is not connected to the national grid, the medical center struggled to provide basic services, lacking the ability to store vaccinations, sanitize equipment, use electrical appliances and operate at night.

Hoping to bring an immediate and long-term improvement to the community's quality of life, EwB TAU students planned the project, and 10 of them flew out to install the generator and batteries in cooperation with local companies and volunteers.

Jonathan Haran, head of EwB Israel, says the solar project is made possible by donations to an ongoing crowdfunding campaign, a grant from Kirsch Foundation in California, and contributed supplies and know-how from Ormath Solar Technology in Ein Vered and the Israeli office of the global company Schneider Electric.

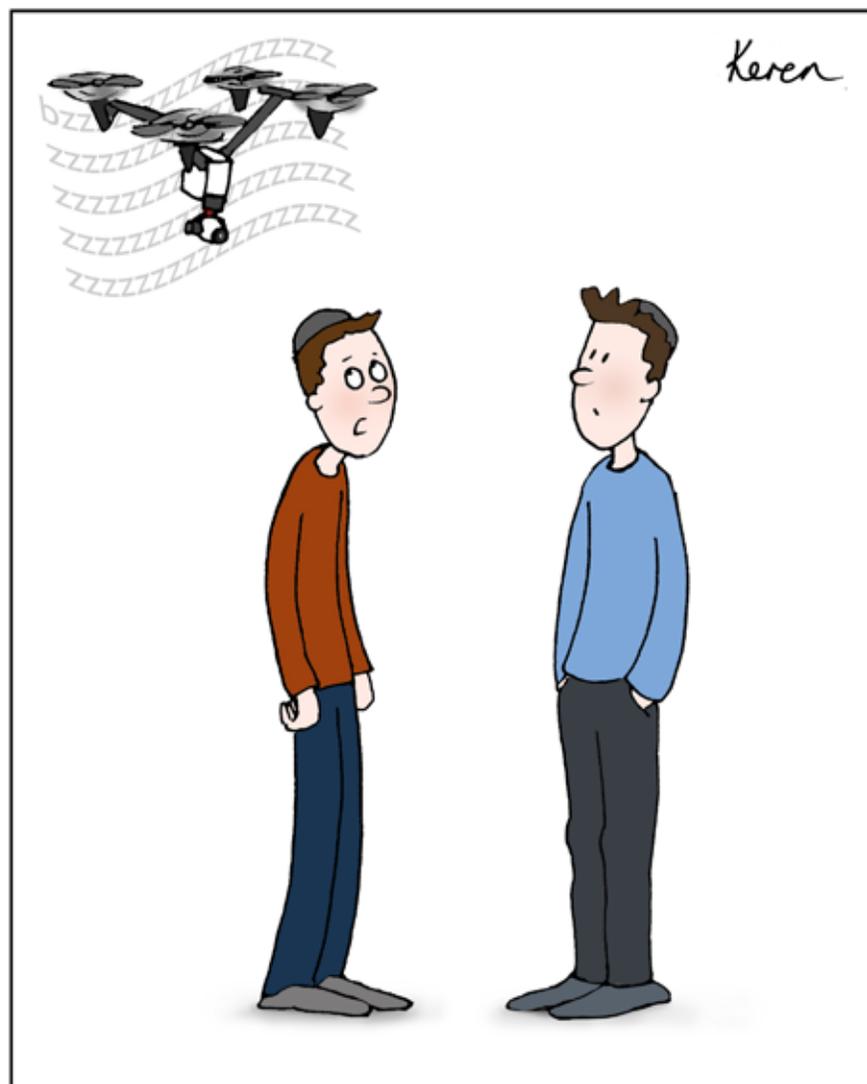
This is the group's second project in Minjingu. In 2014, they designed

and installed a rain-collection and purification system. Because the drinking water from an underground spring is exceptionally high in fluoride, many local children were born with severe developmental conditions such as skeletal deformities and cleft lip.

The Israeli students built the rainwater system in collaboration with locals and trained them in performing maintenance. The villagers have added more tanks on their own, and during the October trip the Israeli students performed tests in preparation for the final expansion of the system.

EwB Israel is part of a worldwide nonprofit organization operating in about 40 countries. Students and professionals in engineering, economics, environment, health, education and society work in close cooperation with local communities and organizations to improve quality of life in Israel and in developing countries through education and simple, inexpensive solutions.

EwB Israel includes chapters also at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology; Hebrew University Faculty of Agriculture, Food and the Environment in Rehovot; Hebrew University in Jerusalem; and Afeka College of Engineering in Tel Aviv.



“Oh that. It's my mom's.”

EVERYTHING'S RELATIVE

by Jordan B. Gorfinkel • www.jewishcartoon.com



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