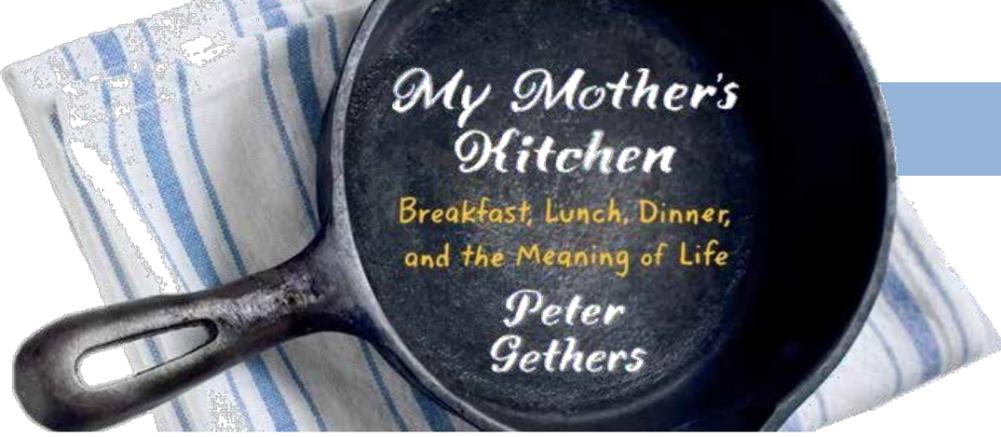


# Community Breakfast

Sunday, December 10, 2017  
10:00 A.M.

Join us for a delicious breakfast and wonderful stories about cooking, people and love.

Make your reservation now to [lenisack@jfedlcc.org](mailto:lenisack@jfedlcc.org) or 239.481.4449 x-3



# L'CHAYIM Jewish Federation Lee and Charlotte Counties

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

Vol. 40, No. 4 ■ December 2017 / 5778

## The MARCIA CAN HELP fund – an update

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

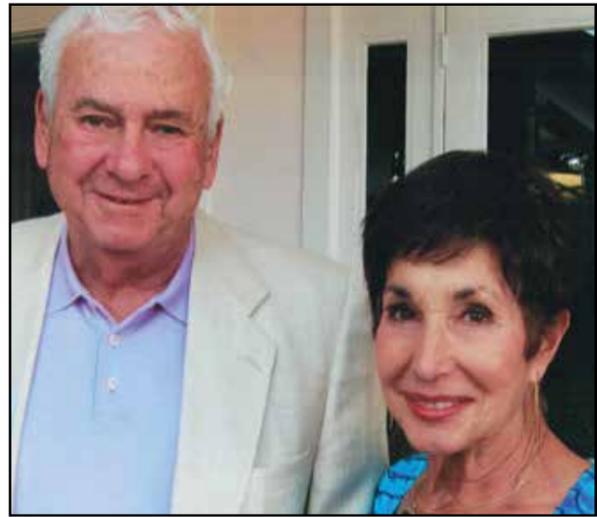
■ Alan Isaacs



In the September issue of *L'CHAYIM*, I recounted a phone call that I received that was the basis for a fund called MARCIA CAN HELP. Marcia Cohen of Omaha and Sanibel had passed away in 2015, and Jack, her husband, proposed that he honor Marcia with a challenge to our community to raise additional funds to support the indigent in Lee and Char-

lotte counties, beginning with his donation that was 50% of our \$28,000 goal. MARCIA CAN HELP allowed for our Jewish Family Services to have additional funds to help us better provide for emergency nutritional needs through our Food Pantry and gift card distribution, and assist the neediest in our community with crisis grants to prevent utility cut-offs, evictions, loss of transportation, and other essential services without which none of us can live. We thank those who have contributed to our Indigent Fund and Food

Pantry since the challenge was issued, and I am delighted to report that we are 75% toward our goal and that we hope to reach that goal, as planned, by the end of this year. Please contribute generously toward this essential cause in the spirit of Thanksgiving: There, but for the grace of God, go I. For further information or to make a contribution, please call me at 239.481.4449.▲



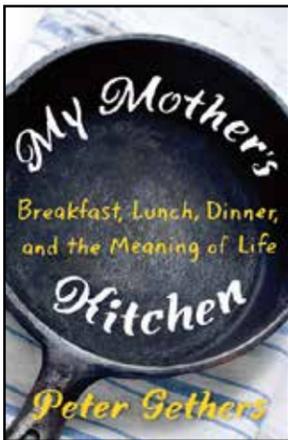
Jack and Marcia Cohen

## Jewish Federation Community Breakfast

**A must for anyone who's had a mother, was part of a family, or who ate breakfast in the morning!**

By Leni Sack

Peter Gethers wants to give his aging mother, celebrated cook and cookbook writer Judy Gethers, a final gift: a spectacular feast featuring all of her favorite dishes. The problem is, although he was raised to love food and wine, he doesn't really know how to cook. Since a stroke has robbed his mom of her own ability to cook, they embark on a series of conversations – often during meals that Peter attempts to prepare – about food, family, love and what is becoming all too clear, the fact that Judy's life is drawing to a close.



The result is *My Mother's Kitchen: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and the Meaning of Life*, in which Gethers embarks upon a culinary and personal journey – often hilarious, always touching, and remarkably inspiring – that will ultimately allow him to bring his mother's friends and loved ones to the table one last time.

Peter's mother, Judy, always understood the importance – and interconnectedness – of food and family.

Her father owned the legendary Jewish kosher dairy restaurant Ratner's on Manhattan's Lower East Side. She discovered a passion for gourmet cooking when she was in her 50s, taking her first job in the kitchen of the groundbreaking Los Angeles restaurant Ma Maison, when she was 53. She became a mentor and friend to some of the most famous chefs in America, including Wolfgang Puck, Nancy Silverton and Jonathan Waxman, and eventually ran the Ma Cuisine cooking school, teaching alongside Julia Child among many others. Learning to cook changed her life – and the lives of those around her – and she created her own legendary status in the food

world. As her health eventually began to fail, her taste remained, as did her sense of humor and determination to live life on her own terms. *My Mother's Kitchen* is generously seasoned with Peter's trademark wit and knowing eye. The book includes a selection of recipes ranging from Ratner's Matzo Brei to Tarte Tatin, and from a loaf of challah to salmon coulibiac, as well as family photos. Peter *continued on page 3*

Silicon Valley  
Thelma & Louise Glee  
Wild Hogs Mississippi Burning  
Groundhog Day Deadwood  
The Mindy Project  
Memento

Stephen Tobolowsky  
actor / writer / director

Next Appearance:  
Jewish Federation  
Lee & Charlotte Counties  
December 5, 2017  
[read more...](#)

THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES  
presents a special evening with  
**STEPHEN TOBOLOWSKY**  
Tuesday, December 5, 2017

**For our PACESETTERS & LIONS OF JUDAH**  
Cocktails, Buffet Dinner & Meet the Author ~ 6:00 P.M.  
Presentation ~ 7:30 P.M.  
Dessert & Book Signing  
Minimum gift of \$5,400 to the 2018 Federation Campaign

**For our MAJOR GIFTS**  
Presentation ~ 7:30 P.M.  
Dessert & Book Signing  
Minimum gift of \$1,800 to the 2018 Federation Campaign

Generously sponsored by  
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social service ► philanthropy ► education

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The mission of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties is to provide and support philanthropic, educational and social service programs that promote such Jewish values as *Tzedakah benevolence, Tikun Olam repairing the world and K'lal Yisrael taking responsibility for one another*, in order to strengthen and enrich the Jewish community locally, in Israel and throughout the world.

# L'CHAYIM

Jewish news published monthly by  
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Online at [www.JewishFederationLCC.org](http://www.JewishFederationLCC.org)

December 2017 • Volume 40, Number 4

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L'CHAYIM invites correspondence on subjects of interest to Jewish people. Partisan political opinions will not be published, but opinions on subjects affecting the Jewish community are welcome. All inquiries regarding copy for L'CHAYIM should be directed to the editor. All news material must be very clearly printed or typed (not in all-capital letters) and double-spaced. Electronic submissions encouraged. The editor reserves the right to edit for space and content.

Photographs should be clear, black-and-white or color prints. If you wish a photograph returned, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope of appropriate size.

The Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties disclaims responsibility or endorsement of the views expressed by the writers and claims by advertisers.

**JANUARY ISSUE  
EDITORIAL DEADLINE:  
Tuesday, December 5**

**Grow your business  
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Reach 5,000 local  
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through this paper.  
For more information  
or to place an ad, call Jim  
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[JamesLewin@jfedLCC.org](mailto:JamesLewin@jfedLCC.org).**

## Program notes

The Jewish Film Festival is right around the corner. The committee has done a great job choosing a variety of movies that mix drama and romance, the serious with the funny, and the past with the present. There's also something new this year – there will be two movies shown on one evening during the festival. One film is considered a “short,” that is, a movie shorter than 40 minutes; the other is a short movie that is only 50 minutes.



■ Leni Sack

The short is titled *Talia*, and was written, directed and produced by Jewish Federation co-president Rozzi Osterman. Rozzi will be on hand after the movie for a Q&A about her documentary. Rozzi is an experienced documentary filmmaker and we are thrilled to include her film in our festival. A brief description of *Talia* and the other movies in the film festival can be found in the center spread of this issue. You can also find information on our website at [www.jewishfederationlcc.org](http://www.jewishfederationlcc.org).

So while there are ten evenings of films, there are actually eleven films. You can buy the series of ten evenings of films for the price of nine, or tickets for individual evenings. Whichever you choose, I don't think you will be disappointed. This is your chance to travel the world and experience a variety of Jewish-themed stories from the comfort of your seats. The film festival begins Thursday evening, January 11 and runs every Tuesday and Thursday evening through Tuesday, February 13 at the Regal Belltower Stadium 20. Sponsorships opportunities are still available.

It's not too late to make a reservation for the Community Breakfast on Sunday, December 10 at 10:00 a.m. in the clubhouse at The Landings, 4425 S. Landings, Dr. Fort Myers. Not only is there a delicious breakfast planned, but you'll also hear a fabu-

lous speaker. Author Peter Gethers will delight and entertain us with his hilarious and emotional memoir about his relationship with his beloved mother, a gourmet cook who worked along Wolfgang Puck and taught with Julia Child. Be sure to read the article about Peter in this issue. *My Mother's Kitchen* will be available for sale before and after the event, and Peter will autograph them after the breakfast. Just call or email me to RSVP.

Major donors to the 2018 Federation campaign will be enjoying the company of actor and writer Stephen Tobolowsky on Tuesday, December 5 at Fine-Mark Bank. Stephen, a seasoned character actor, is currently performing in the hit series *Silicon Valley*. He will be at the Federation event to talk about his new book, *My Adventures With God*, the story of his evolving relationship with Judaism and God. Stephen is a funny and engaging speaker, and we are excited to welcome him to our community. He will also be autographing his book.

PJ Library is hosting a series of holiday events for families with children ages 2-8. They will be held from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. once a month from January through April. Stories, arts and crafts, music and a light supper are planned. There is no cost to attend and each event is open to the community.

The first of the PJ Library series, on Thursday, January 25 at Temple Beth El, is about planting for Tu B'Shevat; the second, on Wednesday, February 14 at The Community Free Synagogue, is about getting ready for Purim; the third, on Tuesday, March 6 at Shalom Life Center, celebrates Passover; and on Thursday, April 26 at Temple Judea, we'll have fun for Lag B'Omer. Zohar ben Hamu, Temple Judea's Shaliach, will be leading the PJ Library holiday programs, giving each a special “Israeli” flavor.

I look forward to greeting “old friends” and making “new friends” at our upcoming events. I wish everyone a very Happy Hanukkah. See you soon!▲

## Todah Rabah, thank you, to Temple Beth El

Temple Beth El members Doreen Kostel, Phyllis and Bernie Aronson, and Russ Bogen, along with Cantor Richard Bessman, presented Leni Sack with a check for \$769 for the Federation's Food Pantry and Indigent Fund. The money was donated as part of the food drive the temple held during the High Holidays. Along with monetary contributions, TBE members donated large amounts of canned and boxed goods for the pantry.

Since the High Holidays, the Federation's Food Pantry and Indigent Fund have benefited from the generosity of Temple Beth El members, as well as from many others in the Jewish community. With the community's help, the Federation will continue to be there for those who are hungry and those who are in need.▲



## Food Pantry Needs

JEWISH FEDERATION  
FOOD PANTRY



Following is a list of staples always in need at the food pantry:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Peanut butter and jelly</i> | <i>Pasta sauce (pasta, not needed)</i>      |
| <i>Rice and beans</i>          | <i>Canned vegetables and fruits</i>         |
| <i>Cereal</i>                  | <i>Canned meats</i>                         |
| <i>Condiments</i>              | <i>Toiletries for adults &amp; children</i> |

Gift cards to places like Publix, Walmart, Target, etc., as well as cash donations, are also appreciated. Jewish Family Services helps seniors, individuals and families with a variety of needs.

# Senior Lunch Bunch update

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach Coordinator

After our September lunch was canceled due to weather, we were back in the saddle with a fantastic October lunch hosted at The Community Free Synagogue. Rabbi Bruce Diamond led the group in a Jewish version of Jeopardy called “Jeopardy,” and a good time was had by all.

In November, our lunch was hosted at Temple Judea, where Rabbi Marc Sack shared stories about his path to becoming observant and talked about what’s happening in Conservative and Orthodox Judaism. A lively Q&A followed.

There have been some new faces, and since the lunches are all about building community, I try to make a *shidduch*, a match, between people attending for the first time with people who attend regularly. The group is

quite user-friendly and the feedback I received from one of the newbies was that everyone was so warm and welcoming. Woohoo! That’s what I like to hear!

The purpose of these monthly gatherings is to come together and connect, with food, fun and frolic. There is a short program after the lunch. If you have a hankering for a certain program or have other ideas, please feel free to share them with me, as I’m always on the lookout for creative programming.

Our next lunch will be on Tuesday, December 19 at noon at Temple Beth Shalom, 702 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Ave., Cape Coral.



If you would like to attend, RSVP by Friday, December 15 to 239.481.4449 x6 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org. Please let me know if you will need a ride to the lunch. Also, please let me know if this will be the first time you will be attending the Senior Lunch Bunch.

I look forward to seeing you. Come on down!▲

### Community Breakfast...continued from page 1

has written an unforgettable memoir about how food and family can do much more than feed us – they can nourish our souls.

Peter Gethers is an author, screenwriter, playwright, book editor, and film and television producer. His previous eleven books include *The Cat Who Went to Paris*, the first in a best-selling trilogy about his extraordinary cat, Norton. He is also the co-creator and co-producer of the hit off-Broadway play *Old Jews Telling Jokes*. He lives in New York City, Sag Harbor, New York, and, when possible, Gangi-

vecchio, Sicily.

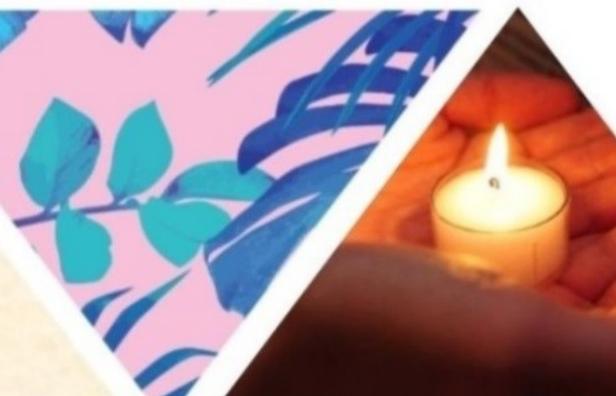
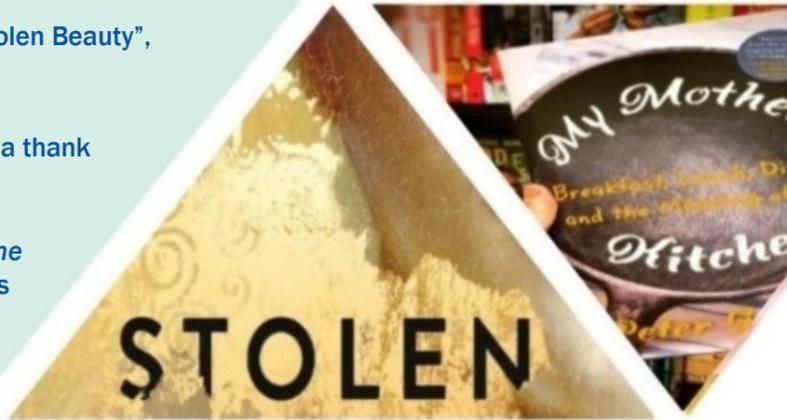
*My Mother’s Kitchen* will be on sale during the event, and Peter will be autographing books at the end of the breakfast.

Don’t miss our annual Community Breakfast on Sunday, December 10 at 10:00 a.m. at The Landings. It’s an opportunity to enjoy a delicious breakfast, “schmooze” with friends, meet new ones, and get to hear a beautiful and touching story of a son and his mother.

For more information, please see the ad on page 5.▲

## UPCOMING FEDERATION EVENTS 2017/18

- DEC. 05** Pacesetters/Author Event - Talented Jewish actor Stephen Tobolowsky who has appeared in over 100 movies and 200 television shows will talk about his new book “My Adventures with God”.
- DEC. 10** Community Breakfast - Author Peter Gethers will talk about his new book “My Mother’s Kitchen: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner and the Meaning of Life”.
- JAN. 11-** Jewish Film Festival - The Annual Jewish Film Festival of SW Florida is proud to present another premier lineup of outstanding and highly diverse films that will excite, delight, enlighten and provoke our audience.
- FEB. 13**
- FEB. 21** Author Event at Alliance for the Arts - Laurie Lico Albanese’s book, “Stolen Beauty”, combines European Jewish historical fiction with art.
- FEB. 24** Major Gifts Reception - A special evening cocktail and dinner event as a thank you to our most generous donors.
- MAR. 13** Women’s Philanthropy/Lion of Judah - One of the original writers on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, Susan Silver, will make us laugh and “kvell” as she talks about her search for a productive life, a re-connection to her Jewish roots and her deep involvement with Israel.
- APR. 08** Holocaust Memorial Service - This annual event is about honoring the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, as well as fulfilling the promise to “never forget”.
- APR. 15** Israel at 70 Fest - Hard to believe, but Israel is turning 70 years old! Join us as we celebrate a year of recognizing Israel’s innovative spirit with a big birthday bash!



STAY TUNED. MORE INFO TO FOLLOW!

**The Jewish Federation Annual Campaign provides the resources to strengthen and enrich our Jewish community locally, in Israel and around the world.**

### YOUR SUPPORT

Honor/  
Remember  
A LOVED ONE

Share your  
MITZVAH

Promote  
KINDNESS

Strengthen & enrich  
JEWISH COMMUNITY

This year please consider making an additional campaign contribution in honor or in memory of a loved one. Because kindness is contagious we would like to highlight your generosity in L'CHAYIM and notify personally those whom you honor. You may choose how your generosity is noted and how we share your mitzvah with our community.

## TRIBUTES

In memory of David B. Goldberg  
from Michael & Evelyn Perugini  
Daniel Hofstetter

In memory of Freida Axelrod  
from Rozzi & John Osterman  
Diane & Larry Seidenstein

In honor of Marsha Kistler's birthday  
from Grace Sheldrick  
Cosmo Sapienza  
Albertina Baser  
Linda & Paul Croteau  
Diane & Larry Seidenstein

**Each month, L'CHAYIM will list your Tributes.  
Please send them to Lori Ramos  
at the Federation at loriramos@jfedlcc.org.**

**Thanks to the following supporters of L'CHAYIM  
for their contribution to help underwrite the cost of  
bringing news of the local, national and international  
Jewish community to your mailbox every month!**

**REPORTERS:  
Norman Newman**

**Have an item you'd like to share?  
Need to reach the editor of L'CHAYIM?  
Send an email to LChayim36@gmail.com.**

## The Jewish Federation thanks our GENEROUS DONORS

### INDIGENT FUND

Israeli Dancers  
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Temple Beth El  
Daniel Hofstetter  
Cosmo Sapienza  
Albertina Baser  
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### FOOD PANTRY

Temple Beth El  
Temple Judea  
Shalom Life Center  
Howard Silverman  
Joe Goldberg

Judy & Marty Freling  
Phyllis Silver Henkel  
Rozzi Osterman  
Claire Goldhagen  
Leslie & Robert Locher

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**Together we CAN Make a Difference!**

### HOW THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES SERVES



#### Local Jewish Education and Culture

- ✧ Community-wide Jewish Education and Culture Programs for all ages including the Jewish Film Festival, Jewish Author Events, Israel Celebration, Jewish genealogy, Israeli folk dancing, social groups, etc.
- ✧ L'CHAYIM published monthly to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues.
- ✧ Community Relations activities include monitoring anti-Semitism and issues of separation of church and state in the community.
- ✧ Israel Advocacy and Initiatives to strengthen local Jewish community ties with Israel. Holocaust Education through the Holocaust Museum of Southwest Florida to middle and high school students in the community.



#### Overseas

- ✧ Funding to the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) for full spectrum social services to Israel and Jewish communities in 60+ countries around the world.
- ✧ Partnership 2Gether relationship with the Hadera-Eiron Region in Israel.



#### Local Seniors Services

- ✧ Holiday baskets and teen visits to seniors and senior facilities for Rosh Hashanah, Hanukah and Passover.
- ✧ Seniors & Volunteers Lunch Program.
- ✧ Emerging and pressing needs related to senior housing, health and socialization.



#### Local Case Management Services

- ✧ Non-sectarian, individual and family outreach, information and referral services.
- ✧ Individual life coaching and support services.

#### Local Emergency Services

- ✧ Food Pantry.
- ✧ Emergency financial assistance.
- ✧ Education and aid associated with natural disasters.



#### Local Community Services

- ✧ Support families of children with special needs.
- ✧ SAT preparatory classes for high school students.
- ✧ Volunteerism.
- ✧ Organizational Collaboration.
- ✧ Assessment and Planning.

#### Jewish Community Foundation

- ✧ An endowment that ensures the long-term financial base of charitable, social and educational programs in our community.
- ✧ Needs-based college scholarships and study scholarships in Israel.
- ✧ Projects and programs aimed at Jewish community enrichment.



## Joseph Horowitz Israel Travel Grants Available

The Joseph Horowitz Israel Travel Grant is available through the Community Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties. The grant may be used for travel to Israel to participate in programs that are volunteer or educational in nature. Our hope is that these programs will enhance Jewish knowledge and identity in preparation for participation in American Jewish life. This grant is for Jewish residents of either county who are 25 years old or younger and can demonstrate a financial need. Academic standing and community involvement may also be considered. For more information or an application, please visit our website at [www.JewishFederationLCC.org](http://www.JewishFederationLCC.org) or contact the Federation at 239-481-4449, ext. 4 or email [loriramos@jfedlcc.org](mailto:loriramos@jfedlcc.org).

# Holocaust Museum update

By Susan Suarez, Executive Director

As 2017 winds down, here are some of the things I am thankful for: a Museum full of energetic, curious 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Pine Ridge Middle School and their tireless teachers; dedicated Volunteer Docents who share their knowledge of history and passion for our mission with our visitors and students; determined Holocaust survivors, like Sabine van Dam, who share their stories so that the next generation will remember and take action in the face of hatred. All this and more is made possible by generous supporters like you.

Your support of our mission has touched the lives of thousands of students, their families and communities around the world. The positive impact is both immediate and far-reaching into the future as well, as students and the public will remember and share what they learned in Museum programs – that each of us has the capacity and power to make a positive difference to someone else. They now also more fully understand the importance of taking action whenever they encounter bigotry, hatred and violence.

Thank you for all the ways you support the Museum. Just as there are many different types of donors, there are many ways you can help support the Museum. You can become a Museum member, attend our events, donate your time as a volunteer, or shop on AmazonSmile and designate the Museum as your charity of choice. Or, you can make a donation of stock, include us

as a beneficiary in a will, and donate to our annual fund. You can also make “In Honor Of” and “In Memory Of” donations to celebrate and remember those special people and events in your lives. Event Sponsorships and underwriting of Education and Museum programming offer another option for charitable giving to the Museum.

Many people are finalizing their end-of-year charitable donations list. We hope you will add the Museum to yours. We cannot emphasize enough the far-reaching impact you will have locally, across the country and around the world. Our programs encourage each of us to recognize the value of each other and take positive action against bigotry, hatred and violence. For more information on donation options, or to suggest one that best suits your interests, please contact me at 239.263.9200 or susan@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org.

**The Luncheon is almost here!**

Please join us for the premier early winter season event in Naples on Friday, December 15 at The Ritz-Carlton Beach Resort, 280 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Naples. The event starts at 11:30 a.m. Sponsorships are available. For more information on tickets and sponsorships, please contact Tim Morrison at 239.263.9200 or tim@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org. Dress is business casual attire.

Be part of the first public audience to see the national debut performance of *In Flight!* The short inspirational play about the childhood of Holocaust survivor and Museum speaker Sabine van Dam was written by Hester Kamin and produced in partnership with Gulfshore Playhouse. *In Flight* is being presented in local schools this year, providing students the opportunity to see how our



■ Susan Suarez



Actresses Amelia Vaughan and Amanda Gonzalez Zuniga portray Sabine van Dam and her sister Hadassah (photo courtesy Gulfshore Playhouse)

choices and actions define us. One student who saw the play wrote to Sabine: “I will never forget the moment I shook your hand... it was an honor since I was in front of a woman who fought for her life... was fearless and had the courage to keep moving forward with her life. You are an example to follow.”

**Coming up this season**

We have an exciting lineup of programs and events scheduled. Call the Museum at 239.263.9200 or visit [www.HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org](http://www.HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org) for details. Here is a partial schedule:

- ◆ December 7 – Artist Bill Farnsworth presentation on his exhibit, “Painting the Irena Sendler Story”; at the Museum
- ◆ December 11 - Presentation on Varian Fry by Museum staff member David Nelson; at the Museum
- ◆ December 15 - The Luncheon; at The Ritz-Carlton Beach Resort, Naples
- ◆ January 27 - International Holocaust

- Remembrance Day
  - ◆ January - April - *Displaced Persons* Exhibit; at the Museum
  - ◆ January - March - Elliott Katz Holocaust Lectures begins January 11; at Hodges University Naples Campus
  - ◆ March 5 - Triumph 2018 Annual Fundraiser; at Club Pelican Bay
- Opportunity to Display the Boxcar in 2018**

If your school, organization or community group is interested in hosting the Boxcar Exhibit, please contact Sam Parish, Education Specialist, for available dates at [sam@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org](mailto:sam@HolocaustMuseumSWFL.org) or 239.263.9200.

The Boxcar Exhibit is on loan to the Museum from Jack and F.E. Nortman and The Boxcar Foundation.

Thank you again for your support. Wishing you and your loved ones a happy and safe holiday season and a wonderful 2018 as well!

We look forward to seeing you often at the Museum.▲



Pine Ridge Middle School students at the Museum

## Gulf Coast ORTHODONTICS

Dr. Michèle Laboda  
Dr. Van R. Speas

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**My Mother's Kitchen**  
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and the Meaning of Life  
Peter Gethers

## Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

*cordially invites you to attend our*

**COMMUNITY BREAKFAST**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 at 10:00 A.M.**

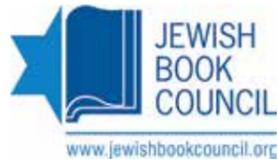


~ Featuring ~  
**Author Peter Gethers**

Come for a delicious breakfast and enjoy a wonderful story about cooking, people and love.

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Fort Myers 33919

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**RSVP to Leni at 239.481.4449 x3**  
or [lenisack@jfedlcc.org](mailto:lenisack@jfedlcc.org)



# Hadassah celebrates Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday

By Arlene Yedid

On May 14, 1948, in Tel Aviv, David Ben-Gurion announced the State of Israel, establishing the first Jewish state in 2,000 years. His proclamation consisted of these words: "We members of the people's council, representatives of the Jewish community of Eretz Israel and of the Zionist movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British mandate over Eretz Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Israel, to be known as the State of Israel."

Tears flowed as the audience wildly applauded. At long last, the birth of Israel! In the distance, the sound of guns could be heard. Israel's statehood was being violently challenged by an Arab declaration of war, waged for almost two tumultuous years.

During these seventy years, Israel has remained strong and proud. Wars ensued, yet Israel has remained a symbol of hope and dreams. From desert and swamp, a remarkable nation bloomed, nurtured by love and resilience. It is a land that fills us with pride.

The Collier-Lee Chapter of Hadassah is celebrating the birthday of Israel with a special brunch at the Hilton Naples on Sunday, February 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. "Hadassah Celebrates Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday" presents a sumptuous brunch featuring Israeli delicacies. Exciting musical performances will feature two talented performers singing popular Israel music: Temple Shalom Cantor Donna Azu and Jane Galler, Cantorial Soloist of Naples Jewish Congregation. The Fort Myers Shalom Dancers will present Israeli dances, inviting guests to participate in the joyful celebration. The Hilton is offering complimentary valet parking.

parking.

Israel's remarkable growth has been assisted by Hadassah Israeli programs and institutions.

In the early days of Palestine, Henrietta Szold, the American founder of Hadassah, brought her skills as a nurse to a scarcely populated land comprised of swamp and desert. She was instrumental in establishing Israeli medical and educational proj-

ects and facilities. Who would have dreamed that one day, Hadassah Hospitals at Mt. Scopus and Ein Kerem in Jerusalem would grow into a world-class medical organization, instrumental in saving and improving lives throughout Israel, the Middle East and the world? In times of international crisis, this medical organization has provided critical help to such countries as Haiti, Darfur, Kenya, Ethiopia, Thailand and the Philippines.

The Hadassah Medical Organization has created outstanding research programs such as Hadassah's Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research Center, one of the most advanced embryonic stem cell research programs in the world. It leads the way with advancements in ALS, breast and colon cancer, diabetes, macular degeneration, mul-

tipl sclerosis, AIDS, Parkinson's disease and cardiac health.

Another project is Youth Aliyah, which has saved the lives of disadvantaged and at-risk children by providing housing, education and training in three Hadassah-supported Youth Aliyah villages.

"Hadassah Celebrates Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday" is a benefit for the Collier-Lee Chapter of Hadassah for Israeli and American life-sustaining projects. The community is invited to this gala event. For information, contact the benefit chairperson, Lee Henson, at 239.495.7866 or lhenson13@gmail.com.

This will be an event to remember, befitting the awe-inspiring 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of Israel! ▲



The Shalom Dancers

## Community Free Synagogue events and programs

### Hanukah celebrations

The festive first night lighting of The Community Free Synagogue public menorah will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12 on Metro Parkway in front of the synagogue building. The 8-foot electronic golden menorah, the creation of Rabbi Thomas Miess, will also be lit at the same time each evening, except for Friday, each night of Hanukah. The public is encouraged to attend. Hanukah treats will be served.

At 6:30 p.m. on Sabbath Hanukah eve, C.F.S. will enjoy a traditional Latke Dinner and Hanukah Sing-Along. Bring your menorah and candles or use ours. As always, dinner is free and open to all. Reservations are not required, but please email [comfree-syn@gmail.com](mailto:comfree-syn@gmail.com) to indicate how many we should expect.

### "Brown Bag Movie Night"

The Community Free Synagogue's next "Brown Bag Movie Night" starts at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 14 and features the 2003 Hanukah cult classic *The Hebrew Hammer*. This "shtick-laden" Jewish parody of the '70s "Blaxploitation" movies like *Shaft*, *Super Fly* and the classic *Sweet*

*Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*, is the off-the-wall story of an Orthodox "superbad" detective out to save Hanukah from the clutches of Santa Claus' evil son. You might want to stay home if you have a "schmaltz" allergy. Pack a dinner; admission and soft drinks are always free.

### C.F.S. Israel Pilgrimage

The Community Free Synagogue's June 4-14 Israel Pilgrimage is beginning to fill up. This very moving and educational exploration of Israel, led by Rabbi Bruce Diamond, is the experience of a lifetime. Custom created by the rabbi, the C.F.S. pilgrimage both informs and inspires the deepest love for what Israel represents to the Jewish people.

All accommodations are "4 Star Plus" hotels and premiere Kibbutz Guest Houses, with travel on the Pilgrimage's exclusive deluxe Wi-Fi-equipped coach. The ten full touring days include all breakfasts and seven dinners, including a sumptuous Farewell Dinner in Abu Gosh.

The touring package is \$2,835 plus air. For more information, visit [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com) or call 239.466.6671. ▲

Stay in touch throughout the month. Sign up for the Federation's e-blasts.

Get the latest information on upcoming community events and cultural activities, breaking news items, updates from Israel and lots more.



Send an email to [lenibsack@jfedlcc.org](mailto:lenibsack@jfedlcc.org)

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# Free weekly winter lecture series with historian Gerald Ziedenberg

By Linda Sweet

Temple Beth El welcomes back snowbirds Gerald and Sheila Ziedenberg from Toronto. Gerald's weekly lecture series, always a big hit at TBE, will take place Mondays at 7:30 p.m. from January 8 to March 12. This stimulating series is free and open to the community. Enlivening his history programs with anecdotes and humor, Gerald covers engaging topics relating to modern Jewish history.

Comprising lectures, films and spirited discussions, the schedule will include:

- ◆ January 8: "The Jewish Banana King," the story of a penniless

immigrant who became a billionaire, overthrew governments, and helped to found the State of Israel

- ◆ January 15: "How David Became Goliath," the story of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces)
- ◆ January 22: "The Story of Vladimir Putin," the dictator of Russia
- ◆ January 29: "Change changes everything," how the growth of technology and the Internet has changed our lives for better and for worse
- ◆ February 5: "Five Non-Jewish Heroes," people who saved lives during the Holocaust

- ◆ February 12: "Yitzhak Rabin," the story of the life and death of one of Israel's greatest prime ministers
- ◆ February 26: *Image Before My Eyes*, a stunning documentary of how three million Polish Jews lived prior to the Holocaust – their lives, culture, hopes and dreams
- ◆ March 5: The life and times of Henry Kissinger: war criminal or great statesman?
- ◆ March 12: The story of *Casaban-*

*ca*, one of the greatest movies of all time, and its innumerable Jewish connections

Gerald entered the academic world following his retirement from a career in pharmacy in Canada. Free to pursue his greatest passion, history, Gerald earned two history degrees. He now consults and lectures in Canada and internationally. He has published four books, including one about Jewish heroes. ▲

## Current Events with Gerald Ziedenberg

Gerald Ziedenberg, Temple Beth El's very popular winter resident historian, is returning for the season and will once again be leading us in our weekly Current Events Discussion every Thursday at 10:00

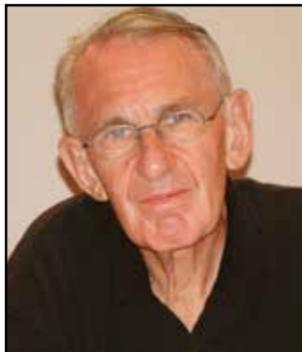
a.m. in the Temple Beth El library beginning January 4.

Topics are always modified for late-breaking news and input from the attendees. Some of the topics we will discuss this season are:

- ◆ The worldwide refugee and immigration crisis
- ◆ Terrorism: What can be done to

stop its spread everywhere?

- ◆ Israel: Will the status quo hold? What is the future of the Bibi government?
  - ◆ Russia and the United States: What is the relationship?
  - ◆ North Korea: Is it a threat to the world?
  - ◆ Protests: How far can they go?
  - ◆ Iran: Is it still a nuclear threat?
- Join us for lively roundtable discussions, and keep up with world and topical events, and how they affect Israel and Jews around the world. All are welcome to attend at Temple Beth El, 16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers. ▲



Gerald Ziedenberg

## A new course for women

*"The Sabbath is to the week what the line break is to poetic language. It is the silence that forces you to return to what came before to find its meaning."*

Please join us for the Rosh Chodesh Society's new course "Pause and Affect," where we will explore Shabbat – the gift of a weekly retreat that can grant us mindfulness, community, tech-free zones, and a deeply satisfying spirituality. We will explore under the challah cover and over the Shabbat flames to see the inner, precious beauty of traditions that go way beyond what the eye can see.

Delve deep into the mysticism and join in the delight of Shabbat. Each

lesson will also feature a hands-on "how to" series on making different Shabbat foods.

We are honored to be a part of the Rosh Chodesh Society, a global initiative that aims to transform the lives of Jewish women, their families and their greater communities through the bonds of shared Jewish experience.

The course takes place on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m., once a month for seven months.

For a complete list of dates, details of each session and to register, visit [www.chabadofcharlottecounty.com](http://www.chabadofcharlottecounty.com). For more information, call Sheina at 941.258.0188. ▲

## Lee County Rabbinical Council formed

On November 1, Rabbis Stephen Fuchs (Bat Yam Temple of the Islands), Nicole Luna (Temple Beth El), James Rudin (American Jewish Committee - retired), Marc Sack (Temple Judea) and Michael Schorin (Gulf Coast Medical Center) met to form the Lee County Rabbinical Council. Rabbi Sol Agin (Temple Shalom, Port Charlotte) will also be part of this group.

The Council is comprised of rabbis who are graduates of an accredited academy of Jewish study and members of a national rabbinical organization. Rabbis Agin, Fuchs, Luna and Rudin are gradu-

ates of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and members of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform). Rabbis Sack and Schorin are graduates of the Jewish Theological Seminary and members of the Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative).

The Council will be a forum for camaraderie, ongoing Jewish learning, discussion of issues of common concern, and planning programs that bring the Jewish community together.

A joint afternoon of study and discussion, led by the rabbis, is being discussed for the spring. ▲



Studying family history brings more than just historical knowledge, it builds relationships. Learning the stories behind names and dates teaches a personal history that explains more than just how each person came to be. **EVERYONE WELCOME.**

**Jewish Genealogy SIG (Special Interest Group)**  
Next meeting: Thursday, December 14  
10:00–11:30 a.m.

LEARN HOW TO BEGIN RESEARCH INTO YOUR FAMILY'S HISTORY OR GET HELP FINDING NEW STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE THE SEARCH YOU HAVE ALREADY STARTED.

There is no cost to attend. **RSVP is a must to Arthur at [genresearch13@yahoo.com](mailto:genresearch13@yahoo.com)**  
Meetings are held at the Jewish Federation • 9701 Commerce Center Ct. • Fort Myers 33908



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For a continuously updated calendar of events, visit [www.JewishFederationLCC.org](http://www.JewishFederationLCC.org).

# Federation helps sponsor Myra Roberts' 2018 'Dream Peace' exhibition

Renowned artist Myra Roberts thanks the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties for its generous support of her upcoming exhibition. "Dream Peace" will run during February at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center in downtown Fort Myers. The collaborative opening reception is Friday, February 2 from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. The exhibit runs through Saturday, February 24.

Pianist/teacher Roxane Olevsky, a new resident of Sanibel, will play during the opening. She has put together a



Myra Roberts

selection of short pieces "reflecting the spirit of the exhibition." Also performing will be Megan Shindler and her theatrical collective S(he) Will Fade, which "creates ethnographic work."



Dream Peace

As an artist focusing on social commentary issues, Roberts' "Dream Peace" is her newest series of multimedia works – more than 60 paintings and found object installations. "Dream

Peace" features poster-style paintings of contemporary political injustices, and of Bielski partisans and other survivors of the Holocausts – some of whom were interviewed by the artist. Also included are spiritual/Buddhist paintings that evoke the antithesis of war.

The testimonial video interviews are embedded in Roberts' found object installations in the form of "talking suitcases." Two-time Emmy Award-winner Jesse Stein helped the artist with the videos. One "talking suitcase" features Sanibel resident Robert "Bob" Hilliard, who was stationed in Germany shortly after World War II's end.

A suitcase assemblage and a portrait depict Irena Sendler. A Catholic, she was "head of the children's bureau of Zegota, an underground organization set up to save Jews after the Nazis invaded Poland on September 1, 1939," *The New York Times* wrote in her obituary. "She and the network of rescuers smuggled about 2,500 Jewish children out of the Warsaw ghetto, some of them in coffins."

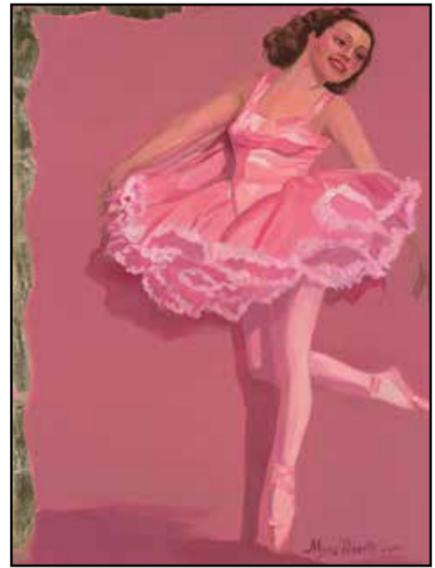
Another portrait is of Francesca Mann, one of the most promising dancers of her generation, who lost her life in a horrific uprising of prisoners in Crematorium 4 at Auschwitz. Another "talking suitcase" features the late Elly Weingarten of Fort Myers Beach. She was born in Czechoslovakia and, at age 13, was one of five children to "miraculously" survive the Auschwitz concentration camp.

"Making meaningful social statements about our human condition is important to me, and links the past and present," explains the artist. "Crimes against humanity continue daily. We are all diminished when any

person suffers because of discrimination. Our differences make life more interesting and our common humanity matters most of all. 'Dream Peace' inspires viewers to ponder the need for change."

"Dream Peace" includes "Sandy Hook," a painting about gun control; and "Never Again," a commissioned work by Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida, titled "Never Again."

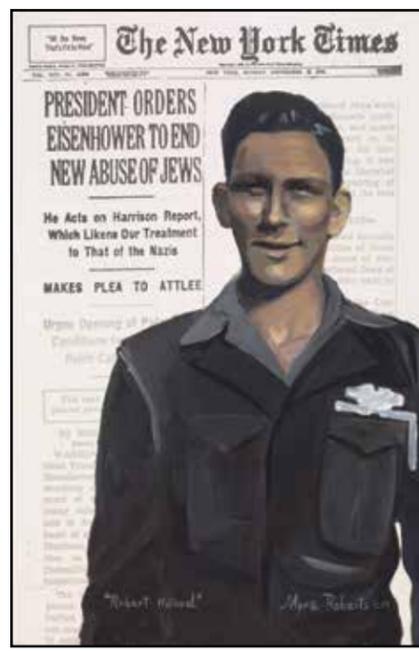
In addition to the "Dream Peace" works, Roberts will exhibit selected pieces from recent series. "Florida Retro" paintings resurrect the Sunshine State's past, and "Endangered Species" works draw attention to future concerns. "Smokescreen: Prelude to the 1940s" is a series of collages that depict American and/or German middle-class domestic life combined with images of Hitler's rise to power. "Angels on Earth" celebrates extraordinary lives. Included is 2014 Nobel Peace Prize co-winner Malala Yousafzai, who is now studying at Oxford University.



Francesca Mann

The Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center hosted a retrospective exhibition of her works in January 2015. WGPU Public Media chose Roberts as one of five "2016 Makers: Women Who Make Southwest Florida." Nominated by the public, the selection of Roberts was based on her impact in the arts and social justice in Southwest Florida.

She lectures and exhibits throughout the United States. Recently, Roberts presented a program during Florida



Robert Hilliard

SouthWestern State College's Cultural Diversity Week at its Fort Myers campus. Roberts also exhibited works at the Progressive Women's Day program in Fort Myers, helped judge the 2018 ArtFest Fort Myers, lectured and had a solo exhibit at Captiva Yacht Club, and gave a presentation to an English class at FGCU.

At the end of January, she will discuss "Dream Peace" with John Davis on WGPU's *Gulf Coast Live* radio call-in show. On Sunday, March 18, Roberts will lecture at the Jewish Community Day of Learning at Temple Shalom in Naples.▲



Ann Jaffe

## Chanuka at the Mall

Join Chabad for the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Community-wide Chanuka Celebration inside the Port Charlotte Town Center Mall in front of Dillard's. Open to the public free of charge. Enjoy the Grand Menorah Lighting, live music, hot latkes, donuts, crafts, and fun for the entire family. For more information, including the date and time (which wasn't available at press time), please call 941.833.3381 or visit [www.chabadofcharlottecounty.com](http://www.chabadofcharlottecounty.com).

## Menorah Lighting at Fisherman's village

This year we will once again have a Menorah Lighting at Fisherman's Village in Punta Gorda. Join us on Saturday, December 16 at 7:00 p.m. for music and refreshments.

**Chanukah begins Tuesday night, December 12**



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**Fort Myers Beach**

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# Ambitious meditation on spiritual transcendence and self-reflection hits all the right notes

Book review by Philip K. Jason, Special to L'CHAYIM

*Forest Dark*, by Nicole Krauss.  
Harper. 304 pages.  
Hardcover \$27.99.

Only a handful of books that come out each year immediately signal “masterpiece.” Nicole Krauss’ *Forest Dark*, a brilliant effort that defines the human condition in an original way, is one of them. It is transformational, and it is about transformation. If not deeply religious (though perhaps it is), it is religiously profound.

The narrative unfolds in alternating chapters with two protagonists. One is a successful, fortyish writer whose path seems blocked. The other, nearing 70, is a successful lawyer and investor who discovers that his life’s patterns have been shaken up in a liberating way.

The transformations the characters undergo, whether sought after or suddenly realized, are described with staggering acumen and accuracy. Each conversion defines and redefines one of the central characters. The chapters that focus on the novelist – let’s call her Nicole – are told in the first person. Those given over to Jules Epstein (most often referred to as “Epstein”) are told in the third person, though the narrator has lavish access to the man’s thoughts and feelings.

Epstein’s life changes are extreme. Soon after his parents die, he ends his marriage, leaves his partnership in a law firm, and frees himself from the

intimidating personality and identity he had built. He seems released into an alternate self. He smiles more, reads books on mysticism, and enters a new zone of experience characterized by a sense of lightness. He no longer believes in assurances. He wishes to be open.

His children worry about him. Nicole comes to realize that her life has been overly structured. She is the result of confining and defining forces, including meeting other people’s expectations. She speculates about how space and time affect people’s identities and destinies. She notices her lack of drive to plan things, and she takes this suspension of will – as Epstein has taken his changes – as a kind of freedom.

A good part of the novel is played out in Israel, particularly Tel Aviv, which holds promises and challenges for both characters. It has long been part of their individual lives. The Tel Aviv Hilton looms large in Nicole’s psyche. Her ostensible reason for staying there is to base a novel on the hotel. However, while she knows that readers expect fictional characters to have reasons for what they do, she wonders if the actions of humans are truly rooted in such reasons.

Nicole is penetratingly occupied with such philosophizing. The author has the astounding ability to make her characters’ streams of interrogation and postulation as vivid and engrossing as powerful descriptions of places and actions. Her contemplations have the

solidity and luster of polished stone.

Each character’s journey involves a sidekick, a kind of spiritual tour guide who often seems half-real. Epstein’s guide is Rabbi Menachem Klausner, who is in charge of researching the Davidic line, an enterprise in which the Epstein name plays a significant role. Or is he a charlatan? It’s hard to be sure. Klausner will open new vistas for Epstein by taking him to the renowned sacred city of Safed, a center for Jewish spiritualism.

Eliezer Friedman, a former literature professor, plays a role in Nicole’s journey that has similar ambiguities. He’s part mentor, part confessor, part spiritual seducer. Friedman has a strange destiny in mind for Nicole: finishing an unknown work by Franz Kafka. This goal allows the Nicole sections of the book to open up into an exploration of Kafka’s peculiar life and career. In these segments, as well, the mystique of King David, particularly his age-old role as a transcendent literary figure, haunts the narrative.

Tour-guide Friedman, rather than returning Nicole to her quarters at the Hilton, becomes – a bit forcefully – her guide to an Israel with which she is not familiar. His speech is hypnotic, somewhat like that of Rabbi Klausner,

who magically flew from New York to Tel Aviv on the same plane as Epstein.

Of course, like Nicole, Epstein is staying at the Tel Aviv Hilton.

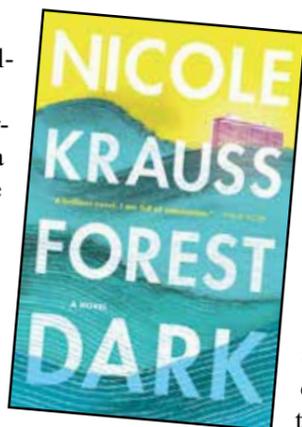
While the storylines of Epstein and Nicole never quite touch, they reflect and illuminate each other in dozens of ways. Each narrative thread of *Forest Dark*, if developed further in isolation, could become a praiseworthy novel. However, interfaced as they are, they generate an outcome that is far more than the sum of its parts. This structural inventiveness, coupled with the author’s soaring imagination, probing intelligence and exquisite style, screams masterpiece.

There is even some unexpected fun in this statuesquely serious novel. The offhand references to two very different Jewish writers, Joseph Telushkin and Matti Friedman, hint at the scope of Jewish cultural experience that Krauss may expect from her readers. Or maybe she’s just having a good time with some friendly name-dropping.

This writer admits that he had a good time and more. ▲

This review first appeared in the *Washington Independent Review of Books*. See [www.washingtonindependentreviewofbooks.com](http://www.washingtonindependentreviewofbooks.com).

Philip K. Jason is Professor Emeritus of English from the United States Naval Academy. He reviews regularly for Florida Weekly, Jewish Book World, Southern Literary Review, and other publications. Please visit Phil’s website at [www.philjason.wordpress.com](http://www.philjason.wordpress.com).



Phil Jason



Nicole Krauss (photo credit Goni Riskin)

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# Aging Jewishly – What our traditions teach us about growing old

## Holiday heartache – grandparents can help divorced kids get through

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

*Judaism has always accepted divorce as an unfortunate fact of life, maintaining that it is better for a couple to divorce than to remain together in a state of constant bitterness and strife. (Tracey R Rich, Jewish 101).*

When a divorce happens, it is important to acknowledge that the holiday season can be a particularly stressful time of the year for the kids. Several years ago, when my daughter, R., was a young adult, I asked her to discuss her experiences as a child of divorce. My daughter offered seven holiday suggestions for divorced families that merit parent and grandparent consideration.

**Don't fight about schedules.** Be flexible. Remember that what is drafted in a legal document often doesn't represent real situations, especially as children grow. R. suggests that both parents discuss a holiday schedule that includes time spent with grandparents as well. She says, "Staying an extra day with you or Daddy or having a visit at Bubby's house didn't mean I loved one family more than the other." Parents and grandparents can wreck a holiday by putting the "legal" schedule ahead of what makes sense for the child.

**Let your grandchildren bring friends over.** Friends are so important and holidays are great times for friendships to develop and deepen. It can be

lonely for a kid to go to dad's (or mom's) or grandparents and be the only child among grown-ups. R. says, "My best holidays at my dad's house or with my Bubby were when he let my best girlfriend come along."

**If parents haven't done so, help your grandchild select, buy and wrap gifts for divorced parents.** My daughter recalls, "I remember how when Chanukah came around and Grandma took me shopping. Even though my mom and dad weren't speaking, Grandma helped me buy a gift for my dad and my aunt. My mom's mom stayed out of the problems between my parents and made sure to model respect and kindness to both parents."

**When it comes to gifts, don't compete.** For grandparents this can be tricky. Now that your own child is divorced from your grandchild's mother or father, your stress level can soar as you contemplate how and when you will see your grandchildren. This stress can translate into buying a child's affection through an over-the-top gift or outing. As you plan a gift, talk to both parents – your own son or daughter and his/her ex – to discuss their feelings about the gift or the outing you've planned. Keeping lines of communication open will avoid your gift becoming a point of contention rather than the joy that it should be.

**Never say bad things about the other parent.** My daughter says, "No matter how you feel, be a grown-up and remember to never say anything nasty about the ex-husband or ex-wife... ever." One seven-year-old child recalls,

"When my mom and grandma said my dad was bad, I felt like half of me was bad. And when my dad and Zayde said the same thing about my mom, I felt like all of me was bad!" Bad-mouthing your son or daughter's ex is one of the most effective ways to ruin your child's self-esteem.

**Holidays are family time so do one thing together as a family.** R. says, "The time you, Dad and all the grandparents came to my school performance and sat together was so nice. Usually I



had to run back and forth between you. But that year, you sat together and I'll never forget how good that felt." Other kids say that a holiday meal or even a stop for ice cream shared with mom and dad and all the grandparents and stepparents are among their fondest memories. If your son or daughter has remarried, your grandchild now must relate to more adults who share the parental role. When you demonstrate your

acceptance and respect, grandchildren will follow suit.

**Emphasize to your family that grandparents are very important.** Your son or daughter may have divorced your grandchild's parent, but grandchildren have not divorced grandma and grandpa. Research indicates that the more contact children have with loving members of their extended families, the healthier human beings they become. If necessary, gently explain that restricting contact can harm children at a critical time when they need the unconditional love of loving grandparents.

So, Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and yours. And if "yours" happens to include ex-spouses, stepparents and blended families, remember that holiday celebrations bring with them special challenges. If you haven't done so yet, this year rise to the occasion. Be more gracious, open and loving than you ever have been before. Your grandchildren will thank you and respect you for it. ▲

*For ten years Rabbi Barbara Aiello served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life in Sarasota as resident rabbi. Currently as Aviva's Rabbi Emerita, she shares her experiences on Aging Jewishly. Contact her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com.*

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# When help was needed

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

The worst expressions of the Holocaust took place across the years 1942-1943. In December 1942, 75 years ago this month, two Polish women, Zofia Kossak-Szczuczka (a writer) and Wanda Krahelska-Filipowicz (a member of Poland's social elite known by her *nom de guerre*, "Alinka"), established an organization named Zegota. This was a secret group based in Warsaw, run jointly by non-Jews and Jews. Its goal was singular in nature: to save Jews from being murdered by the Nazis.

The *Rada Pomocy Żydom*, or Council for Aid to the Jews, originated as the Provisional Committee for Aid to Jews (*Tymczasowy Komitet Pomocy Żydom*), which the two women established on September 27, 1942. Unlike many such organizations during World War II, it did not abbreviate its formal title into an acronym. From the beginning, it was essentially an independent Catholic body. When it was transformed more formally into Zegota, on December 4, 1942, it became a broad-based joint organization of Jews and non-Jews from different

political orientations.

Zegota was the brainchild of Henryk Woliński, a member of the secret Polish Home Army. Once formed, its General Secretary was a member of Poland's Socialist Party; its Treasurer was a member of the Democratic Party. Both of these, of course, had been driven underground by the Nazi invasion and occupation. The fundamental aim of the organization was the common cause of saving Jews in danger from the Nazis, and in this, Poland was the only country in Nazi-occupied Europe where such an organization existed. Ultimately, the Council operated from its foundation in December 1942 until the liberation of Poland in 1945.

The organization was recognized and received assistance from outside. By the late spring of 1944, much of the funding it received was coming from the Polish government-in-exile in London, though owing to the war situation this often only arrived after a circuitous, dangerous and time-consuming route. The financial resources needed to save even one Jewish life ranged from 6,000 to 15,000 zlotys. Depending on the situation, Zegota's monthly budget ranged anywhere from 500,000 to two million zlotys, which, though seemingly large, did not meet the needs of saving as many

Jewish lives as the organization would have liked. As a result, and wherever possible, Zegota operatives sought to prop up their resources in alternate ways (including, it has been alleged, robberies).

Zegota's means were many, but it was found to be much easier to assist Jews if they were outside ghettos and on the "Aryan" side. Medical attention was provided for Jews in hiding, along with food and false-identity documents. Zegota attempted (and often succeeded) in providing help for Jews in forced labor camps, while financial aid was provided when possible. Sometimes Zegota even managed to assist in escapes, though all too often such activities could often not be planned in advance; it was more likely that advantage had to be made of local circumstances as and when they presented themselves.

One of Zegota's major tasks related to the forging of documents, such that on average the organization was said to have been producing up to a hundred sets of forged papers at any one time.

Zegota also played an important role in saving Jewish children by placing them with foster families, or relocating them to orphanages and convents. In Warsaw, the head of Zegota's children section, a Polish social worker named Irena Sendler, assumed near-legendary status through personally taking care of over 2,500 Jewish children. Sendler, who was one of many members of Zegota recognized by Israel's Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, was nominated for a Nobel Prize before her death in 2008.

By the time the Council was established, a majority of Poland's Jews had already been killed, but the organization's activists, at enormous personal risk, still managed to help several thousand of those remaining. Indeed, it has

been estimated that about half of the Jews who survived the Holocaust in Poland – a figure representing over 50,000 people – were helped by Zegota in one way or another.

To as great an extent as possible, Zegota operated as a professional organization. Although extensive in its spread, it worked on the basis of smaller cells, with up to one hundred of these in Warsaw alone. Elsewhere, it operated in Krakow, Vilna (Vilnius) and Lvov (L'viv), with specific "departments" covering such areas as legal, housing, clothing, children's welfare, medical care and finances, among others.

Poland, the only Nazi-occupied country where helping Jews was punishable by death, was also the only country that saw the establishment of an organization such as Zegota. It has been estimated that during the war perhaps up to 20,000 members of Zegota were captured and executed by the Germans, with thousands of others imprisoned and sent to concentration camps. It was remarkable that the location of Zegota's head office in Warsaw, at 24 Zurawia Street, was well known to Poles but was never raided by the Germans.

Zegota was a truly unique phenomenon within the horror of the Holocaust, which bought the lives of tens of thousands of Jews at the cost of tens of thousands of Poles. In an environment in which the history of Polish relations with Jews has frequently been soured by frequent expressions of anti-Semitism, this stands as a shining example of what could have been done throughout the rest of Europe if more people of goodwill decided that it was necessary to make a stand. ▲

Dr. Paul Bartrop is Professor of History and the Director of the Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies at Florida Gulf Coast University. He can be reached at [pbartrop@fgcu.edu](mailto:pbartrop@fgcu.edu).



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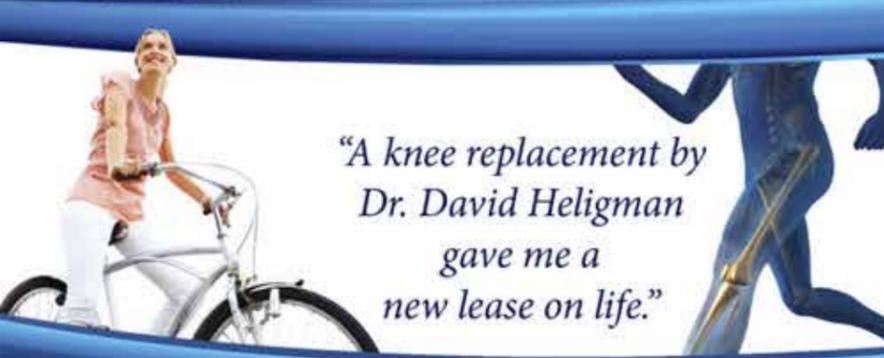


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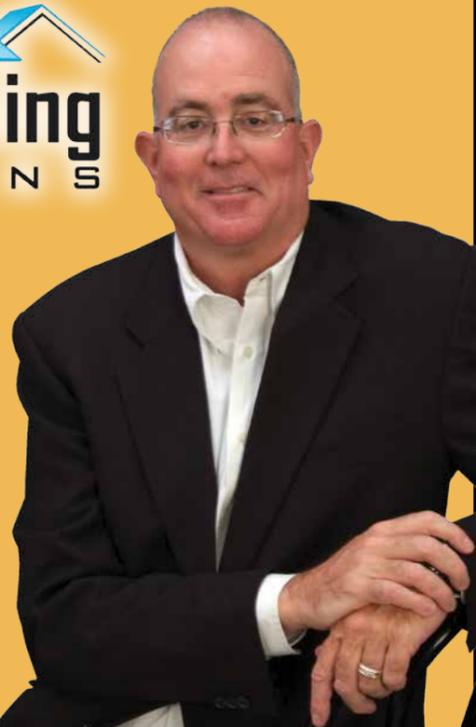
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# Stars of David

By Nate Bloom, Contributing Columnist

**Editor's note:** Persons in **BOLD CAPS** are deemed by Nate Bloom to be Jewish for the purpose of the column. Persons identified as Jewish have at least one Jewish parent and were not raised in a faith other than Judaism – and don't identify with a faith other than Judaism as an adult. Converts to Judaism, of course, are also identified as Jewish.

### Holiday Movies

Here are movies opening from Thanksgiving through the New Year with a "bigish" Jewish connection. Opening Wednesday, November 22 was the animated film *Coco* from Disney/Pixar studios. Capsule plot: Twelve-year-old Miguel dreams of becoming an accomplished musician like his idol, deceased musician Ernesto de la Cruz. However, this family has a generations-old ban on music. He ignores this and journeys to the Land of the Dead where he meets Hector, a charming "trickster," and together they unlock the real story behind Miguel's family history.

The voices of the characters are all provided by Hispanic actors. **LEE UNKRICH**, 50, directed the film and co-wrote the story that is the basis for the flick's screenplay. Unkrich won the Oscar for best animated film in 2011 (*Toy Story 3*, which he produced and directed). He has co-directed many other Pixar hits. Lee and his wife, **LAURA**, are members of a San Francisco-area synagogue.

*Molly's Game*, directed and written by **AARON SORKIN**, 56, is based on the real experiences of Molly Bloom, now 39. When she was 26, she became the target of an FBI investigation because she ran an underground poker empire for Hollywood celebs, pro athletes and the Russian mob. Bloom, who is the daughter of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, is played by Jessica Chastain. Her father, played by Kevin Costner, is a major character in the film. I know Molly's brother, Jeremy Bloom,

a top snow skier and former NFL player, identifies as a Christian. Not sure about Molly. (Opened Wednesday, November 22)

*The Current War* tells the story of the battle between Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse as to whose system will be chosen to provide electricity to homes and businesses in the late 1880s. Sounds dry, but this was a battle royale, with some really weird twists. Michael Shannon plays Edison and Benedict Cumberbatch plays Westinghouse. The original screenplay is by **MICHAEL MITNICK**, 34, the author of several hit regional theater plays. (Opened Friday, November 24)

*The Disaster Artist* depicts the meeting and early friendship of Greg Sestero and Tommy Wiseau, the actors behind the 2003 cult film *The Room*, often hailed as the *Citizen Kane* of bad movies; the troubled making of it; and their respective careers after the surprising success of the film. **JAMES FRANCO**, 39, directed *Artist* and plays Wiseau. His brother, **DAVE FRANCO**, 32, plays Sestero. Appearing in major supporting roles are **SETH ROGEN**, 35, **ALISON BRIE**, 34 (Dave Franco's wife), and **ARI GRAYNOR**, 34 (*I'm Dying up Here* on HBO). (Opens Friday, December 1)

Director/writer **JASON MOSHE**, 40, loves Westerns, although many say it's a dying genre. His 2013 film, *Dead Man's Burden*, is one of the very few good original Westerns made in this century. His new film, *The Ballad of Lefty Brown*, also a Western, opens

## Interested in Your Family's History?

Nate Bloom (see column at left) has become a family history expert in 10 years of doing his celebrity column, and he has expert friends who can help when called on. Most family history experts charge \$1,000 or more to do a full family-tree search. However, Bloom knows that most people want to start with a limited search of one family line.

### So here's the deal:

**Write Bloom at nteibloom@aol.com and enclose a phone number. Nate will then contact you about starting a limited search. If that goes well, additional and more extensive searches are possible. The first search fee is no more than \$100. No upfront cost. Also, several of this newspaper's readers have asked Bloom to locate friends and family members from their past, and that's worked out great for them. So contact him about this as well.**

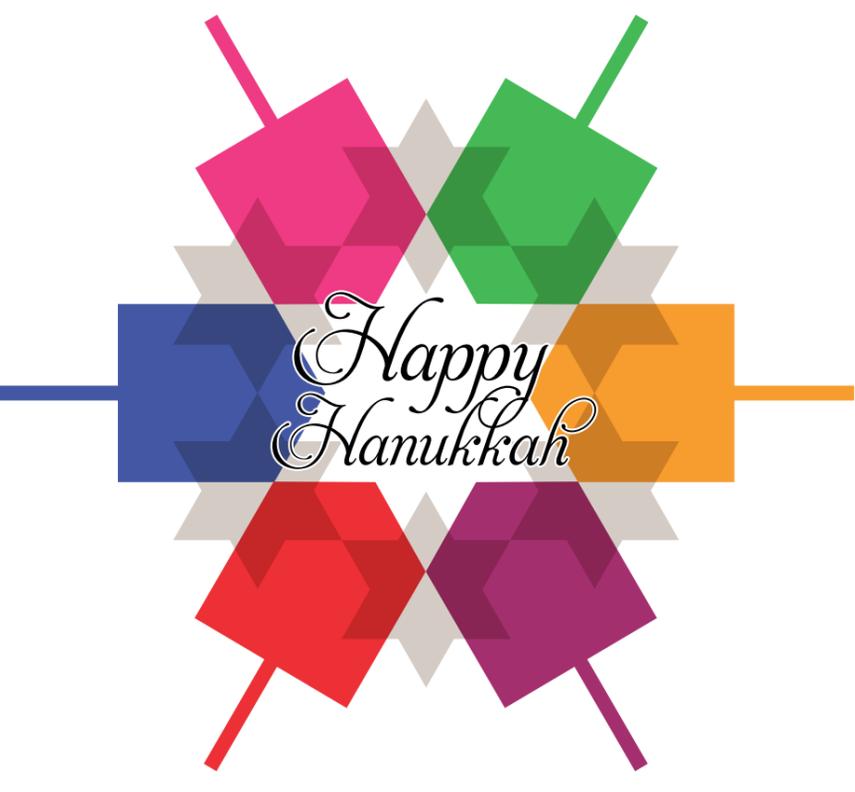
Friday, December 15. Capsule plot: When famed frontier lawman Eddie Johnson (Peter Fonda) is unexpectedly killed, his longtime sidekick and friend Lefty Brown (the late Bill Pullman) will stop at nothing to avenge Johnson's death.

Also opening on the 15<sup>th</sup> is *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*. As you guessed, the Skywalker saga continues as the heroes of *The Force Awakens* (2016) return for an epic adventure. The late **CARRIE FISHER** (Princess Laia) makes her final screen appearance in this film.

*Father Figures* focuses on fraternal twin brothers (Owen Wilson, Ed Helms) whose eccentric mother (Glenn Close) raised them to believe their father died when they were young. When they discover this is a lie, they set out to find their father and, along the way, they learn a lot about their mother, too. The supporting cast includes Oscar-nominee **JUNE SQUIBB**, 87, and **HARRY SHEARER**, 73. This film marks the directing debut of

**LAWRENCE SHER**, 47. He's long been one of the best comedy film cinematographers around. (Opens Friday, December 22)

*The Post* is an historical drama about the role of the *Washington Post* newspaper in the publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971. The papers were secret government reports on the Vietnam War. Meryl Streep stars as Katharine Graham, the publisher of the *Post* (Graham's father was Jewish, but she was raised in her mother's Christian faith). Tom Hanks plays *Post* chief editor Ben Bradlee. Appearing in big supporting roles are **ALISON BRIE** as Lally, Graham's journalist daughter, and **DAVID CROSS**, 53, as top *Post* reporter Phil Gayelin. The film was directed by **STEVEN SPIELBERG**, 70, and co-written by **JOSH SINGER**, 44 (co-winner of the screenplay Oscar for *Spotlight*). (Opens in limited release on Friday, December 22; wide release on Friday, January 12).▲



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# Moroccan Donuts – “Sfenj” – recipe by Dalia Hemed

Chanukah is the holiday of lights, miracles and donuts! Every year for Chanukah, I make the classic jelly donuts – *sufganiyot* (in Hebrew) like we eat in Israel. This year, though, I decided to go back to my roots, and to celebrate Chanukah like I did growing up with my Moroccan family in Israel, and make “sfenj,” traditional Moroccan donuts.

In Israel, the tradition of eating fried foods on Chanukah has come to mean doughnuts above all else – particularly *sufganiyot*. There, the jelly-filled doughnuts trump the potato latkes favored by American Jews, and spill out of every bakery window in the weeks leading up to the holiday. But for Moroccan Jews, sfenj are the Chanukah doughnut of choice.

For Moroccan Jews in Israel they are primarily Chanukah fare and they are commonly made at home during the eight nights of the holiday. Sfenj are also found next to *sufganiyot* in bakeries.

The dough is made with yeast and is fairly easy to make, but it is very soft and sticky, so you must work quickly.

The great thing and the bad thing about these yummy pastries is that they're fluffy and light, much lighter and fluffier than traditional *sufganiyot*. And the best part: they are so delicious! Happy Chanukah!

#### Chef tip:

Before you start, you should know that the dough needs one and half or two hours to rise.

**Optional:** My husband came up with

the brilliant idea to coat them with cinnamon mixed with sugar, which made them taste like churros. My kids suggested to drizzle them with maple syrup or honey, which make them kid friendly. You can also simply eat them with jam. No matter what, they're so good and probably my favorite Chanukah fried food in the entire world.



#### Ingredients:

- 7½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1.8 oz yeast
- ¼ cups sugar
- 3½ cups (800 ml) lukewarm water
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup canola oil in a small bowl – for dipping hands while working with the dough
- Canola oil for deep frying
- A plate or bowl with raw cane sugar for sprinkling (cinnamon optional), maple syrup or honey

#### Directions:

- ▶ Sift the flour into an electric mixer bowl with the dough hook. Add the yeast, sugar and water, and turn on the mixer on low speed for

two minutes. Add the salt and mix for exactly 2 minutes. The dough should be very soft, so don't be tempted to add more flour!

- ▶ Put the dough into a bigger bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise until it doubles in size – about 2 hours.
- ▶ Use a wooden spoon dipped in oil to mix the dough for 1 minute, and then cover again with the plastic wrap until the dough doubles in size again – about 30 minutes.
- ▶ Put enough oil for deep frying in your biggest frying pan (about 3" deep) and turn the heat on medium high. (To check if the oil is at the right temperature, put a small piece of carrot in the pan. You should see bubbles. If there are no bubbles around the carrot, then the oil is not hot enough. If the carrot turns brown in less than 15 seconds, then the oil is too hot.)
- ▶ When you're ready to fry, dip your hands in oil, then grab some dough with one hand, pull it up, and with the other hand, pinch off a handful-sized piece. Hold the dough with two hands, and punch a hole in the middle of it with your fingers. (It sounds complicated but it's really easy and fun.) Stretch the dough a bit to create a ring, and then gently place it in the pan. Fill the pan with as many rings as you can fit.
- ▶ Cook until the bottom of the sfenj is golden brown, then flip them with a metal spatula – about 2 minutes each side.



**Personal Chef Dalia Hemed can be reached at [daliahemed@msn.com](mailto:daliahemed@msn.com).**

- ▶ While the sfenj are frying, place a paper towel on a large flat plate. When the sfenj are done on both sides, remove them from the pan and place on the paper towel, and start frying your second batch.
- ▶ While you wait for the second batch to cook, coat the ones that are done with the sugar. Let them cool for a few minutes – they are best when fresh and warm! ▲

**Look for Chef Dalia Hemed's recipes each month in the pages of L'CHAYIM.**

# Rosé revisited

By The Wine Whisperer

Every once in a while, it's a good idea to take another look at a wine or a grape varietal that we've discussed in the past. Sometimes it's because the wine somehow went out of fashion and then came back. They do that. Other times new types or styles of a particular wine are developed and find their way to the market. And then there's the seasonal situation: we generally write about and review wines that are suitable for the weather and time of year.

Personally, I've never quite believed that we HAVE to drink ONLY whites in the summer, and ONLY full-bodied reds during cooler seasons. But, having sampled widely and with great dedication, I've arrived at a conclusion about rosé. It's this: these wines are excellent choices pretty much whenever.

As I've mentioned in the past, you can make rosé wines in two different ways. It's perfectly legitimate to simply mix some red and white together, which is how many of them are created. Or, if you do it the classier and more expensive way, you crush red grapes, leave the juice on the skins until the liquid achieves the color you want, then drain it off.

Plus, rosés can be made from just about any red varietal. In Tavel in southern France, many are made from Grenache and Syrah, which are the major grapes in the region. One of the samples in the list below is made primarily from Cabernet. But we've sampled others made from Zinfandel and even Pinot Noir.

Since these wines come in such a wide variety of styles, you're sure to find one that's light enough or full-bodied enough, or dry or sweet enough to accompany almost any kind of food and any type of occasion. And, since excellent rosés are made all over the world, you can choose the traditional

styles from the south of France (especially Tavel and Lirac) or other types from California, Washington State or even South America.

The examples below offer a very satisfying range of styles. Sample widely!

**Villa Gemma Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo Rosé (\$15)** – The darkest color of all the rosés we sampled... deep cranberry with a nose that fulfills the promise of the color. Profound cherry notes and an explosion of fruit on the palate. The grape is Negroamaro, and it's extremely full-bodied for a rosé. Serve well chilled and enjoy. WW 89-90

**Frescobaldi Alie Rosé Ammiraglia 2016 (\$22)** – Lovely light pink color with flower peach aromas. Plenty of refreshing strawberry and raspberry flavors. Refreshing any time. WW 86

**Raimat Castell de Raimat Rosé 2015 (\$12)** – This blend of 75% Cabernet and 30% Tempranillo delivers spicy cherry aromas with overtones of smoke. The palate is a pleasing mix of strawberry and blueberry notes, a little bit of spice and a sweetish finish. Serve well chilled. We liked it. WW 88-89

**Fel Pinot Noir Anderson Valley 2015 (\$38)** – A light-than-usual garnet color with aromas of blackberry and pronounced raspberry. Soft and light-bodied on the palate: spice, cedar and strawberry. WW 89 ▲

*Jerry Greenfield is The Wine Whisperer. He is Creative Director of Greenfield Advertising Group, and Wine Director of the international Direct Cellars wine club. His book, Secrets of the Wine Whisperer, is now available through his website. Read his other writings at [www.winewhisperer.com](http://www.winewhisperer.com).*



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Safe Travels

# Two different approaches to Chanukah music: The Yeshiva Boys Choir and Y-Studs!

By Arlene Stolnitz

Two very different groups have come to my attention recently, just in time for Chanukah: The Yeshiva Boys Choir and Y-Studs. Both groups have recorded Chanukah music that is creative, innovative and vibrant. According to the Milken Archive of Jewish Music, their works and recordings of countless other contemporary Jewish composers, that I will write about in the future, are important in preserving the legacy of American-Jewish music and culture for future generations.

You may have heard of the renowned Yeshiva Boys Choir, which has achieved fame in the last 14 years. Traveling worldwide to countries such as England, Canada and Israel, as well as performing across the U.S., they have excited audiences with their renditions of age-old favorites and new compositions. Based in New York City, the group is led by conductor and choreographer Yossi Newman, a former third-grade teacher from Cleveland, Ohio. Together with his childhood friend, Eli Gerstner, who composes and arranges the catchy compositions, they have created a choir of nearly 50 talented young members. And what a choir it is!

One cannot listen to their music without jumping up from your seat! The group is spirited, fun and, most of all, original in their approach to their songs. Their album "YBC 5: Chanukah" contains many familiar and not-so-familiar tunes. Especially, you will want to hear "Daddy Come Home," a tribute to all the daddies who serve in war. Listening to its emotionally charged plea will bring tears to your eyes. Anyone who has had a father who served in a war

(my dad served in WWII) and everyone else will be moved by its powerful message. "Those Were the Nights" is a light-hearted look at the holiday in past years, bringing back pleasant memories. It is filled with fun-filled antics, and showcases the talents of its remarkable young singers. The Yeshiva Boys Choir has many other outstanding albums that they sing on their sold-out worldwide tours.

A very different kind of group, older, yet youthful, and also Yeshiva students, is known as the Y-Studs. A Jewish a cappella group, they are an elite all-male group from Yeshiva University based in New York City. The 15-member group was formed in 2010 by singers from the school who wanted to get together as a singing ensemble. They are immensely popular and have produced CDs and music videos, and are available for weddings and bar mitzvahs. They have traveled internationally with their program.

Of special interest is their CD/video entitled, "Evolution of Jewish Music," in which the group sings mini-clips of Jewish music chronologically through the centuries. It is literally a history of Jewish music throughout the ages.

Two Chanukah videos stand out in their repertoire: "A One Direction Hanukkah -Epic Parody Mashup!" and "Don't Let Me Down." Both songs are not your standard Chanukah-type tunes that we usually associate with the holiday. Instead, they will appeal especially to the younger "hip" generation with their fun-filled outrageous antics and catchy tunes. Plus, these guys are so handsome and cute, even the older generation can't help love them! Their videos can be seen on YouTube and are just plain fun!

\*\*\*

A correction to last month's article: The refugees at Safe Haven in Oswego, New York, were housed there from

August 1944 to February 1946. The facility was later officially closed in December 1946. By then, the refugees had all left to start new lives; some staying in the United States, and others returning to Europe.▲

Arlene Stolnitz, founder of the Sarasota Jewish Chorale, is a member of

the Jewish Congregation of Venice. A retired educator from Rochester, New York, she has sung in choral groups for over 25 years and also sings in Venice's Chorale (formerly Exsultate!). Her interest in choral music has led to this series of articles on Jewish folk music in the Diaspora.



Arlene Stolnitz

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Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties 9701 Commerce Center Ct. Fort Myers 33908

# Gifts - literal, intangible and otherwise

By Jodi Cohen

About 18 years ago, I was the newsletter editor for my congregation in Madison, Wisconsin. One day when the rabbi came over to drop off an article, I asked him what he did all day. His list was long and I noticed there was no mention of him sitting in his study stroking his imaginary beard while studying Talmud. His wife was a therapist, and between their jobs and parenting their adorable two-year-old daughter, there was not a lot of time to do much else, or many funds to hire a babysitter. I offered to spend time with the rabbi's daughter one evening a week so the rabbi could study, go to Target, or return books to the library. It was an opportunity for a triple mitzvah, a good deed! I could bond with a delicious two-year-old, the rabbi could spend time with his wife, and the community would benefit greatly from having a happier rabbi. This arrangement went on for a year. The daughter is now 20 and still delicious. The rabbi is a brilliant leader of a Jewish community in Denver, and the wife of the rabbi is still my best friend.

Over the years, my holiday gifts have included coupons for friends with kids that read, "This coupon is good for one night of childcare." I have given coupons to friends of all ages that read, "This coupon is good for one adventure of your choosing."

We are in the thick of the holiday season and so the carousel of life revs up a little faster than usual. During Chanukah we tell the story of how the oil that was supposed to last for only

one night ended up lasting for eight nights, which was a miracle. Chanukah is a celebration of that miracle and has come to include eating latkes, spinning dreidels and exchanging gifts. Speaking of gifts, the gift of listening is always appreciated; the gift of paying attention is always timely.

In my role as Senior Outreach Coordinator at the Federation, I meet wonderful, interesting people who either don't have family, or any local family, who would love to visit, share their stories, and hear some of yours. The shortest distance between two hearts is a story.

There's a wonderful opportunity to connect with some of the seniors in our area this month with the delivery of the Chanukah bags prepared by Federation volunteers. Bags can be picked up between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. starting Sunday, December 3, or during the following week. It's simple: Contact Leni Sack, Education & Program Director, and let her know you're interested in delivering one or more bags, and she will give you names and contact information. Leni can be reached at 239.481.4449 x3 or lenisack@jfedlcc.org.

If you'd like to visit with anyone during any time of the year, it would be my pleasure to play matchmaker. You can contact me at 239.481.4449 x6 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org.

Chag Sameach, Happy Holidays. May your light shine within you as well as all around you. And may you share your light with others.▲

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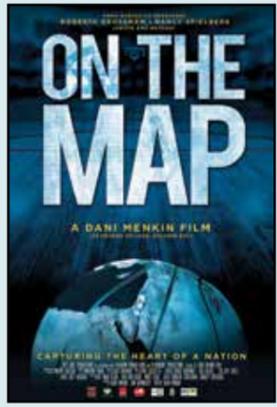
**All films will be screened at the Regal Belltower Stadium 20.**

**Open seating at all films for general admission tickets.**

**Tickets will be mailed up to December 31.**

**Tickets ordered after December 31 will be available after 6:00 p.m. inside the theater on the day of the show.**

**Thursday, January 11 at 7:15 p.m.**



## ON THE MAP

*On the Map* tells the against-all-odds story of Maccabi Tel Aviv's 1977 European Championship, which took place at a time when the Middle East was still reeling from the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the 1972 Olympic Massacre at Munich, and the 1976 hijacking of an Air France flight from Tel Aviv. Through the lens of sports, *On the Map* presents a much broader story of how one team captured the heart of a nation amid domestic turmoil and the global machinations of the Cold War. As one of the players famously said, "Israel is now on the map, not just in sport, but in everything."

**Language:** English **Running Time:** 1 hr. 25 min.

**Tuesday, January 16 at 7:15 p.m.**



## THE INVISIBLES

Berlin, February 1943: The Nazi regime declares the Reich's capital "free of Jews." At this point in time, 7,000 Jews have succeeded in going underground. Almost 1,700 will survive the horrors of the war in Berlin. *The Invisibles* tells the stories of four young Jews who survive by living so recklessly, they become "invisible." The dramatic reenactments are supplemented with impressive interviews with the actual people whose lives inspired this film. The two levels blend together into an intensive, emotionally moving film.

**Language:** German w/English subtitles **Running Time:** 1 hr. 50 min.

**Thursday, January 18 at 7:15 p.m.**



## SHELTER

Naomi Rimon, a Mossad agent, is sent on an easy mission: to protect Mona, a Lebanese collaborator, in a safe house in Hamburg, Germany, for two weeks. But there are no easy missions in this world, certainly not in the world of espionage and intrigue. No one saw what was coming. No one knew that this supposedly quiet "shelter" would turn dangerous and that a new shelter would need to be found. In this game of deception, beliefs are questioned and choices are made that are not their own. And yet their fate takes a surprising turn in this thriller.

**Language:** English, Hebrew, Arabic w/English subtitles  
**Running Time:** 1 hr. 33 min.

**Tuesday, January 23 at 7:15 p.m.**

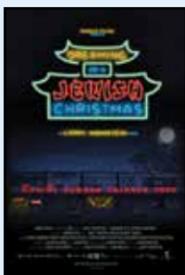
## Double Feature



## TALIA

Talia is a young woman with Asperger's high-functioning autism. She has discovered a passion for acting and filmmaking. This documentary follows Talia on her journey to learning her craft as an actress, as well as developing her communication skills for life. Rozzi Osterman, co-president of the Jewish Federation and an award-winning documentary filmmaker, wrote and directed this film. There will be a Q & A with Rozzi after the film.

**Language:** English **Running Time:** 26 min.



## DREAMING OF A JEWISH CHRISTMAS

*Dreaming of a Jewish Christmas* is an offbeat, irreverent musical documentary that tells the story of a group of Jewish songwriters, including Mel Torme and Irving Berlin, who wrote the soundtrack to Christianity's most musical holiday. It's an amazing tale of immigrant outsiders who became irreplaceable players in pop culture's mainstream.

**Language:** English **Running Time:** 50 min.

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**Thursday, January 25 at 7:15 p.m.**



**COMEDY ROAD**

A young Jewish comedian from L.A. implored, cajoled and encouraged his professional colleagues of all faiths to join him on a comedy tour in Israel. They came to a country many of them had never thought about visiting and put themselves out on stage in front of an audience that might or might not get their comedy, and that might or might not be in the midst of a war or a wave of terrorism. *Comedy Row* shows what it was like for them to perform, how they got along, the sights they saw, and the effect that Israel had on them.

**Language: English Running Time: 1 hr. 16 min.**

**Tuesday, January 30 at 7:15 p.m.**

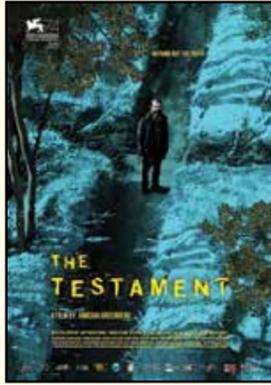


**LOVE IS THICKER THAN WATER**

When Arthur, a poor Welsh student, meets Vida, a wealthy Jewish cellist, sparks fly. As these two rush headlong into a relationship, their bond is soon tested when the fates of their two vastly different families converge. The movie explores the ups and downs of a young couple in contemporary London. Religion and class definitely collide in this whimsical upstairs-downstairs modern day Romeo and Juliet love story.

**Language: English Running Time: 1 hr. 41 min.**

**Thursday, February 1 at 7:15 p.m.**

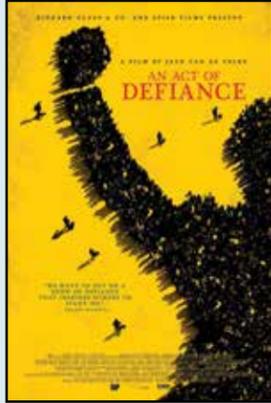


**THE TESTAMENT**

Yoel, a senior Holocaust researcher, is in the middle of a widely covered legal battle with powerful forces in Austria, concerning a brutal massacre of Jews that took place toward the end of WWII in an Austrian village. While investigating the incident, Yoel examines classified testimonies of Holocaust survivors, and to his shock and surprise finds a testimony given by his mother, a testimony he didn't know existed. In it, she confesses to a substantial secret from her past. Yoel, who's conducting a double-investigation, personal and scientific, is trapped between walls of silence – on one side denial of the Holocaust, and on the other, his mother's silence regarding her past.

**Language: Hebrew, German, English, Yiddish w/English subtitles Running Time: 1 hr. 33 min.**

**Tuesday, February 6 at 7:15 p.m.**

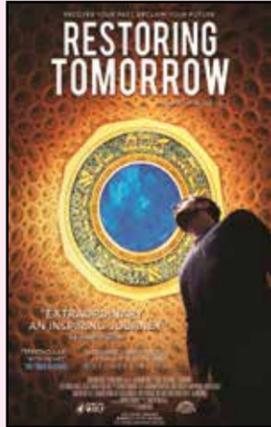


**AN ACT OF DEFIANCE**

In this riveting historical drama, ten political activists, including Nelson Mandela and his inner circle of Black and Jewish supporters, face a possible death sentence for conspiracy to commit sabotage after they are arrested by the apartheid South African government during a raid in the town of Rivonia during the summer of 1963. Bram Fischer, a sympathetic lawyer, risks his career and freedom to defend these men, attempting to hide the fact that he, too, frequently convened on the farm where they were arrested.

**Language: English, Afrikaans w/ English subtitles Running Time: 2 hr. 4 min.**

**Thursday, February 8 at 7:15 p.m.**

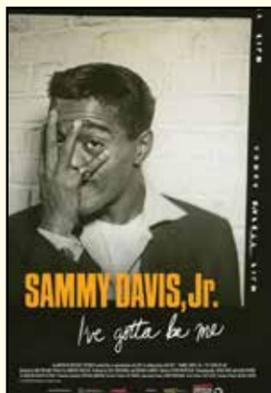


**RESTORING TOMORROW**

In these divided times, religious institutions are losing young members and even closing their doors at an alarming rate. Director Aaron Wolf's personal journey of rediscovery comes alive in *Restoring Tomorrow*, a universal story of hope, as a treasured local temple near demise is lifted up by a community's determination to achieve the impossible. Wolf's journey explores how when any community puts its mind to it, the impossible becomes possible. Wilshire Boulevard Temple, a Los Angeles treasure built by the original Hollywood moguls, needs to raise millions to restore its majesty and vibrancy, thus also restoring the future of the Jewish community, the greater Los Angeles community and, on a personal level, Wolf himself.

**Language: English Running Time: 1 hr. 22 min.**

**Tuesday, February 13 at 7:15 p.m.**



**I'VE GOT TO BE ME**

*Sammy Davis, Jr.: I've Got to Be Me* is the first major film documentary to examine Davis's vast talent and his journey for identity through the shifting tides of civil rights and racial progress during 20<sup>th</sup> century America. Sammy strove to achieve the American Dream in a time of racial prejudice and shifting politics. He was the veteran of increasingly outdated show business traditions trying to stay relevant; he frequently found himself bracketed by the bigotry of white America and the distaste of black America; he was the most public figure to embrace Judaism, thereby sealing his identity to another persecuted minority. The documentary features interviews with stars like Billy Crystal, Norman Lear, Jerry Lewis, Whoopi Goldberg and Kim Novak.

**Language: English Running Time: 1 hr. 40 min.**



**The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties thanks the members of the 2018 Jewish Film Festival Committee for their help in reviewing and selecting films:**

- Sara Krivisky, Chair**
- Carolyn Gora, Lynn Talone,**
- Helene Glocer, Irwin Kash**
- Jan Klein, Elissa Grossman**
- Claire Goldhagen, Susie Ferkel**

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- \_\_\_\_\_ The Invisibles.....1/16/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shelter.....1/18/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ Double Feature.....1/23/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ Comedy Road.....1/25/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ Love is Thicker than Water....1/30/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Testament.....2/1/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ An Act of Defiance.....2/6/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ Restoring Tomorrow.....2/8/18
- \_\_\_\_\_ I've Got to be Me.....2/13/18

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# ADL Audit: Florida sees dramatic increase in anti-Semitic vandalism

Boca Raton, Florida, November 2, 2017 ... According to the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents released today, there were 69 verified incidents of anti-Semitism in Florida in the first three quarters of 2017. While this trend marks a decrease of incidents in comparison to the 85 verified incidents in the first three quarters of 2016, the finding that there has been a 200% increase in anti-Semitic vandalism should be cause for concern.

Nationally, anti-Semitic incidents rose to 1,299 – a 67% increase from the same time period in 2016. In addition to the significant bump in the first quarter of the year, there was also a notable increase after the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August. From January through September 30, according to ADL, there were:

- ◆ 702 incidents of harassment, including 162 bomb threats against Jewish institutions
- ◆ 585 incidents of vandalism, including 52 against Jewish institutions
- ◆ 12 physical assaults

“We are seeing a disturbing escalation, where anti-Semitic rhetoric and expressions have progressed into acts of vandalism, as highlighted in the audit’s findings. This is a sobering reminder that we must be vigilant in educating and speaking out in the face of hate,” said Sheri Zvi, ADL Florida Regional Director.

Florida continues to be in the top states reporting incidents of anti-Semitism, with New York, California and Massachusetts reporting higher incidents. The ADL Audit comprises criminal and non-criminal incidents reported to the ADL Florida office and

law enforcement, including incidents of vandalism, assault and harassment targeting Jewish individuals and institutions.

The counties with the highest number of reported incidents were Miami-Dade with 17, Palm Beach with 16, and Orange with 9. In total, incidents were reported in 16 of Florida’s 67 counties.

A significantly disturbing trend has been an increase in the use of swastikas and Holocaust-related imagery and references in anti-Semitic vandalism and harassment.

## Anti-Semitic Vandalism

The following is a list of selected instances of anti-Semitic vandalism in the first three quarters 2017:

- ◆ Escambia County: Swastikas and racist graffiti, including ‘14-88,’ were spray-painted on homes and cars. 14 refers to one of the most widely-used white supremacist slogans, ‘The 14 Words: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”’ As ‘H’ is the 8<sup>th</sup> letter of the alphabet, 88 is used by white supremacists to refer to the phrase ‘Heil Hitler.’
- ◆ Boca Raton: An individual awoke to find a swastika painted on his garage door, allegedly by a neighbor.
- ◆ Boca Raton: Parents became extremely concerned as images of swastikas etched into the door of a school bathroom stall at Omni Middle School went viral online. Immediately, ADL reached out to the school to avail them of our resources. The school district mandated that all students (1,400) participate in an ADL-led conversation about identity-based bias and the anti-Semitic history of the swastika.

## Harassment, Threats and Events

The ADL Audit recorded 50 cases of anti-Semitic harassment in Florida in the first three quarters of 2017.

Incidents included verbal attacks and slurs against Jewish individuals (or individuals perceived to be Jewish); anti-Semitism conveyed in written or electronic communications, including anti-Semitic cyberbullying; and anti-Semitic speeches, picketing or events. Of particular note was the prevalence of the use of the swastika symbol in a significant number of harassment cases.

Florida Jewish institutions received 21 bomb threats this year. As the arrests that have been made in these bomb threats reveal, many anti-Semitic incidents were not carried out by organized extremists.

The following is a list of selected instances of anti-Semitic harassment, threats and events in the first three quarters of 2017:

- ◆ Miami-Dade County: For Valentine’s Day, a student disseminated Valentine’s Day cards with the phrase ‘Would Jew Be Mein?’ and an image of Adolf Hitler.
- ◆ Southern Palm Beach County: A Jewish institution received several faxes with anti-Semitic components, including one that read “...we gonna purge the Jews 1488.”
- ◆ Pinellas County: A Jewish student was subjected to having pennies thrown at him, and was belittled with Holocaust jokes. Holocaust-themed memes were also disseminated at the school. Additionally, a classmate drew a swastika and a number, similar to those which were tattooed by Nazis on concentration camp prisoners, on the

student’s arm.

- ◆ Broward County: A business was given an online review as a ‘Jew-run business.’
- ◆ Palm Beach County: An employee of a Holocaust-related organization received a phone call, with the caller saying, “Those Jews deserved it.”

## Anti-Semitic Assaults

Two anti-Semitic assaults occurred in Florida in 2017, up from a single assault in the previous year.

Selected incident:

- ◆ Palm Beach: A man from Jupiter, claiming to be ‘German royalty,’ pushed a woman and made anti-Semitic remarks, including, “You Jews and blacks should just get over Hitler.”

## About the ADL Audit

The ADL Audit includes both criminal and non-criminal acts of harassment and intimidation, including distribution of hate propaganda, threats and slurs. Compiled using information provided by victims, law enforcement and community leaders, and evaluated by ADL’s professional staff, the Audit provides a regular snapshot of one specific aspect of a nationwide problem while identifying possible trends or changes in the types of activity reported. This information assists ADL in developing and enhancing its programs to counter and prevent the spread of anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry.

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913, is the world’s leading organization fighting anti-Semitism through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry. Follow us on Twitter: @ADL\_Florida and Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ADL.Florida](http://www.facebook.com/ADL.Florida). ▲

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# Israeli, Arab, European firemen share cross-border drill

**Firefighting and search-and-rescue teams from Jordan, Israel, Palestinian Authority, Italy, France and Spain had a joint disaster exercise in Israel.**

By Abigail Klein Leichman, ISRAEL21c, www.israel21c.org, October 19, 2017

As forest fires and other major catastrophes engulf many parts of the world with greater frequency, the European Commission and the Israeli government organized an international exercise in Israel this week for firefighters from Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Italy, France and Spain.

"In recent years, we have witnessed large-scale disasters take the lives of tens of thousands of victims, such as earthquakes, floods, fires and incidents involving hazardous materials. These are disasters that countries cannot al-

ways deal with on their own, and for which they need assistance," said Israeli Fire Commissioner Lt. Gen. Dedi Simhi.

The exercise scenario – a large forest fire that spread across borders – included the controlled setting of small fires in two Negev forests, one northeast of Beersheva and the other southeast of Kiryat Gat.

The Israeli contingent included representatives of the Foreign and Public Security ministries, the Israel Police, the Firefighting and Rescue Authority, Magen David Adom, the Home Front Command, the National Security Agency and Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund.

Months of planning sessions preceded the Middle East Forest Fires drill. There were lots of logistics to coordinate as firefighting planes from Jordan, France, Italy and Spain also were sent to Israel for the simulation.

While Israeli firefighters have worked with counterparts from the Palestinian Authority and several Mediterranean countries in the past, it was the first

time all of these countries came together for a joint exercise. The content of the sessions had to be translated into several languages though English was the

dominant language.

Separately, at an army base in southern Israel, search-and-rescue teams from the Israel Defense Forces, Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Spain practiced how to respond cooperatively to a simulated massive earthquake that trapped "victims" underneath the rubble of a collapsed building constructed for the exercise by soldiers on the base.

The joint exercise ended with a ceremony for all participants before they departed back to their home countries.

At the ceremony, Simhi said that since its inception in 1948, the State of Israel has been guided by the Talmudic axiom, "One who saves a single life is as if he has saved the entire world."

"We sent rescue forces from the Home Front Command to assist during earthquakes in Turkey, Nepal, Haiti and, most recently, Mexico. Our aerial firefighting unit provided assistance last year to Cyprus, and this year to Montenegro and Macedonia," Simhi said.

"And we, too, needed assistance in two recent events. Last November, during an unprecedented number of fires, we requested and received assistance



A firefighting plane from Italy participates in the joint forest fire drill (photo courtesy of Israel Firefighting and Rescue Authority)



Firefighters participate in a joint Middle East Forest Fires drill in Israel (photo courtesy of Israel Firefighting and Rescue Authority)

from our Palestinian and Egyptian neighbors, from Cyprus and from many other countries. And such was the case during the Mount Carmel fire in 2010.

"Therefore, there is great operational importance to an exercise involving international cooperation, so that in the event of an emergency, we will be familiar with one another and know how to work in collaboration," he continued.

"I also believe that a personal relationship between commanders from different countries can be of great value during a large-scale disaster." ▲

Abigail Klein Leichman is a writer and associate editor at ISRAEL21c. Prior to moving to Israel in 2007, she was a specialty writer and copy editor at a major daily newspaper in New Jersey and has freelanced for a variety of newspapers and periodicals since 1984.

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# Miami delegation attends N.Y. Gala raising record \$35m+ for Israeli soldiers

New York, Oct. 24 – A select delegation from the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) Greater Miami Region attended the FIDF National N.Y. Gala Dinner at the New York Hilton Midtown, raising a record \$35 million to support educational and well-being programs for the brave soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

The “Night of Heroes” saluted the brave soldiers and veterans from all of Israel’s military operations and historic wars.

Among the Miami delegation members were FIDF National Board Member and Miami Executive Board Member Dr. Shmuel Katz and his daughter, Elizabeth; FIDF supporter Albert Taran; and FIDF Greater Miami Region Executive Director Dina Ben Ari.

Honored guests included Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Amb. Danny Danon; Consul General of Israel in New York

“I’ve flown 10 sorties in the F-35, and it is a game changer for the Israeli Air Force – not just because of its capabilities, but because it will elevate and strengthen the entire IDF,” said Eshel at the gala.

Distinguished guests included Fox Business Network anchor Liz Claman, who presided as master of ceremonies; FIDF National Chairman Arthur Stark; FIDF National President Rabbi Peter Weintraub; FIDF National Director and CEO Maj. Gen. (Res.) Meir Klifi-Amir; and FIDF Tri-State Executive Director Galit Brichta.

The evening held a special commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Six-Day War led by legendary IAF test pilot Danny Shapira, who was one of the very first to fly over Israel and served in most of its wars.

Also speaking was Amir Ofer, a hero of Operation Entebbe, the famous Israeli rescue mission at Uganda’s Entebbe Airport in 1976 that saved 102

New York.

“Since its founding, Israel has fought for its right to exist as a free nation and guarantee the security and prosperity of its people. This freedom and safety relies first and foremost on the existence of a strong and moral army,” said Maj. Gen. (Res.) Klifi-Amir. “At this ‘Night of Heroes,’ we salute the men and women soldiers who have taken part in the ongoing struggle of the State of Israel. Each and every one of them is another link in the chain of the IDF heroism and the Jewish state, as they continue to serve today – *L’dor Va’dor* (from generation to generation) – and we all owe them our deepest gratitude. While their job is to look after Israel, our job is to look after them.”

FIDF’s flagship national event was chaired by FIDF National President Rabbi Peter Weintraub. A Reform rabbi and businessman, Weintraub has been an avid FIDF supporter for over 16 years and has sponsored academic scholarships for more than 85 IDF combat veterans through FIDF’s IMPACT! Scholarship Program.

“The heroic men and women of the IDF put their lives on the line every day to defend the Jewish state and protect Jews everywhere,” said Weintraub. “Tonight’s gala honors their sacrifices, celebrates their victories, and affords us the opportunity to personally thank them for all that they do in service to Israel and the Jewish people.”

Notable among the donations was a \$7 million gift pledged by Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson, who continued their generous support for FIDF. Or Lachayal pledged \$2 million and FIDF Young Leadership New York pledged \$1.5 million. A number of anonymous donors pledged more than \$1 million each. Genesis Philanthropy Group, Masa Yisraeli, Nefesh B’Nefesh, and



Israeli soldiers with Outgoing Israeli Air Force (IAF) chief Maj. Gen. Amir Eshel; FIDF Greater Miami Region Executive Director Dina Ben Ari; FIDF supporter Albert Taran; FIDF National President Rabbi Peter Weintraub; FIDF National Director and CEO Maj. Gen. (Res.) Meir Klifi-Amir

Dani Dayan; and business magnates, philanthropists and steadfast supporters of Israel, Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson.

Speaking at the gala was outgoing Israeli Air Force (IAF) chief Maj. Gen. Amir Eshel, who commanded the forces protecting Israel’s skies for five years and oversaw the recent acquisition of the new F-35 fighter jets – the most advanced warplane in the region – from the United States.

hijacked Air France passengers who were held hostage by terrorists. Ofer, who was then a soldier in the IDF’s most elite special operations unit, was the first Israeli commando to enter the Entebbe Airport terminal, where he used a megaphone to tell the hostages, “Stay down! Stay down! We are Israeli soldiers!”

Special guests included 25 IDF soldiers and officers from several military units and the IDF Orchestra, including one of the IAF’s few women combat flight navigators, Capt. “N.”; Maj. “G.,” who pilots one of the IAF’s new F-35 fighter jets; Sgt. Shira, a paramedic who has been treating wounded Syrian refugees; and Israeli Navy Sgt. Matan, a “Lone Soldier” – or one who immigrates to Israel with no immediate family in order to enlist in the IDF – originally from Westchester,

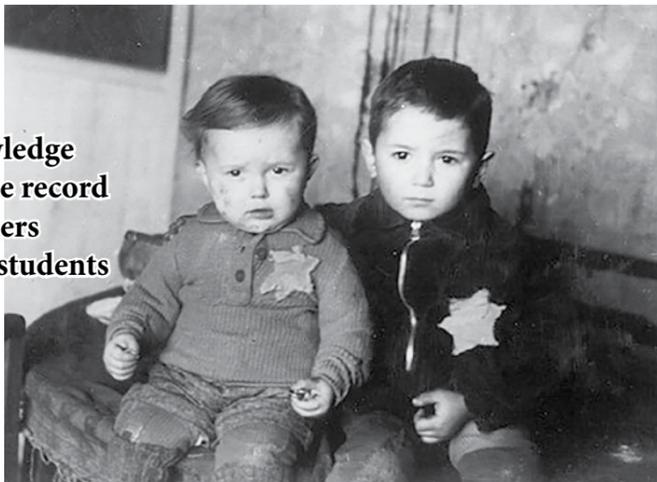


The Miami delegation joined over 1,200 prominent FIDF leaders from across the U.S. and Israel for “A Night of Heroes,” celebrating soldiers and veterans from all of Israel’s operations and wars (photo credits: Shahar Azran)

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FIDF National Vice President Marc Perlman each pledged \$1 million, and the Iranian American Jewish Federation pledged \$600,000.

Funds raised at the gala will provide much-needed and well-deserved services such as academic scholarships to combat veterans, financial assistance for soldiers in-need, support for Lone Soldiers throughout their service and upon release, crucial aid for wounded veterans and the families of fallen soldiers, weeks of rest and recuperation for entire IDF units, as well as educational, cultural and recreational facilities. The evening presented a rare and exclusive opportunity to pay tribute to the State of Israel and its brave men and women in uniform.

### About Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF):

FIDF was established in 1981 by a group of Holocaust survivors as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with the mission of offering educational, cultural, recreational and social programs and facilities that provide hope, purpose and life-changing support for the soldiers who protect Israel and Jews worldwide. Today, FIDF has more than 150,000 loyal supporters, and 20 chapters throughout the United States and Panama. FIDF proudly supports IDF soldiers, families of fallen soldiers, and wounded veterans through a variety of innovative programs that reinforce the vital bond between the communities in the United States, the soldiers of the IDF, and the State of Israel. For more information, visit [www.fidf.org](http://www.fidf.org). ▲

## BRIEFS

### IRON DOME MOVES NORTH

In response to the likely threat from Iranian forces in Lebanon and Syria, Israel announced it was stationing a battalion of its Iron Dome anti-rocket systems in northern Israel.

There is also a battalion assigned to southern Israel to defend against the rockets Hamas had amassed in Gaza.

After Iran-backed Hezbollah launched a major rocket attack in 2006 and convinced Israel that Iron Dome was worth developing and deploying, the system was seen as an emergency weapon, to be kept in storage and mobilized for use in wartime.

It has not worked out that way. (*Strategy Page*)

### BDS IS A DISMAL FAILURE

The anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement has entered a critical downward spiral in Canada.

During the past two years, BDS has been forcefully rejected by students at the University of Waterloo, University of Toronto, McGill University, and the University of British Columbia.

Far from being anti-racist, BDS is the definition of racism. To boycott an entire nationality of people – including athletes, artists and professors – because of political disagreements with their government is clearly bigoted and counter-productive.

The hard reality is that the BDS movement is not motivated by a sincere desire to make things better for Palestinians, but rather a perverse drive to make things worse for Israelis and Jews. (Michael Mostyn, B’nai Brith Canada CEO, *Toronto Sun* - Canada)

### ISRAEL WINS 8 MEDALS AT EUROPEAN PARALYMPIC YOUTH GAMES

The Israeli team brought home three gold medals, two silver and three bronze at the European Para Youth Games held in Liguria, Italy, on October 9-15, where it competed for the first time.

Seven of the medals were won by three swimmers and the eighth was in bocce. Overall, Israel ranked 12<sup>th</sup> out of 24 countries. (Abigail Klein Leichman, *Israel21c*)

### GROWING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST THROUGH OLIVE OIL

Ayala Meir’s family owns a small olive press in northern Israel. Khaled al-Juneidi is a Palestinian engineer and olive oil expert.

The two met four years ago through the “Olive Oil Without Borders” project, funded by the U.S. government. Together, they have learned about pre-harvesting, parasite control, supplementary irrigation and quality control.

In the past five years, USAID has helped more than 2,600 Israeli and Palestinian growers produce better olive oil. (USAID)

### MORE THAN HALF OF ISRAELI JUDGES ARE WOMEN

Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked said recently that 54% of judges in Israel are female, and that there have been three women presidents of Israel’s Supreme Court. (Greer Fay Cashman, *Jerusalem Post*)

*continued on next page*

Briefs...continued from previous page

### WORK ON ISRAEL-CYPRUS-GREECE ELECTRICITY LINK TO START IN 2018

Nasos Ktorides, who heads the EuroAsia Interconnector project, said recently in Nicosia, Cyprus, that work on an electric cable linking the power grids of Israel, Cyprus and Greece is on track to start in the first quarter of 2018.

The 1,520-km. (945-mile) under-sea electric cable with a 2,000-megawatt capacity will be able to both receive and transmit electricity.

Work on the cable is expected to last until 2022. (*Washington Post*)

### ISRAELI DETERRENCE IN A NEW MIDDLE EAST

Israel's borders with Egypt and Jordan are quiet, with security cooperation between Israel, Jordan and Egypt at its peak.

The situation in the West Bank is fragile but manageable. Two years ago, there was an effort to ignite a new intifada, but a strong response by Israel combined with effective intelligence and monitoring of social media subdued most of the efforts to carry out terrorist attacks.

What also contributed was a policy to allow nearly 100,000 Palestinian workers to continue working in Israel. Thus, Israel succeeded in isolating the perpetrators from the rest of the population.

Moreover, the PA security services still cooperate with their Israeli counterparts and, together, thwart terrorist plans. (Yossi Melman, *Jerusalem Post*)

### HOW ISRAEL MODIFIED THE F-35 FIGHTER

Israel is modifying its new U.S.-made F-35 fighters from the outset to integrate Israeli technologies.

These include an Israeli-developed command, control, communications, computer and intelligence (C4I) system that does not interact with the F-35's computer system, but sends sensor data to other Israeli military assets, particularly nearby fighters, to help detect, prioritize and attack enemy targets.

Facing Hizbullah, which has 150,000 tactical rockets, Israel needs to rapidly draw in launch-location data, process it, and quickly churn out a prioritized target list for the Israeli Air Force.

The F-35I will also carry Israeli-designed missiles. Rafael's SPICE 1000 is so accurate it can place half of all bombs within nine feet of their target. It will also carry Israel's Python-5 infrared air-to-air missile.

Added fuel tanks were also built in to extend the plane's range by 36%. While the addition of an external fuel tank would compromise the F-35's stealth, the fuel tank could be used during early phases of an air operation where stealth was not necessary, and jettisoned after use. (Kyle Mizokami, *National Interest*)

### WOMEN RUNNING BANKS IS THE NORM IN ISRAEL

Three of Israel's leading banks are currently led by women, myself included.

At Bank Leumi – which I have had the privilege to lead for the past five years – more than 40% of the top management are women.

This is in addition to the governor of the Bank of Israel, the supervisor of banks, and the director of the capital markets, insurance and savings authority – all of whom are women.

We, as a country, have been fortunate to bear witness to a string of powerful women who influenced this nascent society in its early days.

Women were encouraged to become political leaders, farmers, founders of kibbutzim and rural and urban communities, cultural and literary

luminaries, and managers within the budding national economy.

Israeli culture encourages women to shake off old notions of passivity and obedience and to engage as equals with men academically, professionally and in the military. (Rakefet Russak-Aminoach, *American Banker*)

### AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER TURNBULL LAUDS STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull hailed Australia and Israel's deep ties and shared values after meeting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem on Monday, October 30. Turnbull said their shared values were being tested by "militant Islamist terrorism" – both in the Middle East and the Philippines. "It is a threat to Israel, it is a threat to Australia, it is a threat to all who value and cherish freedom," Turnbull said. "We have a vital interest in working more closely and intensely together to keep our people safe from terrorism."

Turnbull's visit is linked to the commemoration on Tuesday of the centenary of the Battle of Beersheba during World War I, when Australian horsemen helped liberate Palestine from the Ottoman empire. "It was a great victory – the last successful cavalry charge in military history," Turnbull said.

Netanyahu said "the rebirth of the Jewish people...would not have been possible without the heroism and sacrifice of Australian troops who liberated this land from 400 years of Ottoman rule with tremendous courage." (*Australian Associated Press - Guardian - UK*)

### WHY BAHRAIN IS LEADING GULF ARAB OUTREACH TO ISRAEL

In recent weeks, the Kingdom of Bahrain has emerged as the Gulf Arab country most actively pursuing better relations with Israel, both for reasons of its own and, presumably, with the blessing of its principal benefactor, Saudi Arabia.

Quiet contacts have been maintained since at least 1994. In September, at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa expressed opposition to the ongoing Arab League economic boycott of Israel and said that citizens of Bahrain and Israel should feel free to visit each other's countries without restrictions.

*continued on next page*



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*Briefs...continued from previous page*

If shared concerns about Iran's influence lie at the core of potential improved relations between Gulf Arab countries and Israel, Bahrain has a particular incentive to explore the possibilities since Iran has a history of claiming Bahrain as part of its own territory.

Moreover, Bahrain is almost certainly acting on behalf of Saudi Arabia and some of its other Gulf Cooperation Council allies in taking the lead in exploring the potential for dialogue with Israel. Nonetheless, without any significant progress on Palestinian issues, the political space for such a dialogue will remain limited. (Hussein Ibish, Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington)

**BRITISH PRIME MINISTER REJECTS CALL TO APOLOGIZE FOR BALFOUR DECLARATION**

Prime Minister Theresa May addressed a dinner in London on Thursday, November 2 to mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration.

◆ In 1917, "with Britain still embroiled in the midst of the First World War, the idea of establishing a homeland for the Jewish people would have seemed a distant dream... Yet it was at this very moment that Lord Balfour had the vision and the leadership to make this profound statement about restoring a persecuted people to a safe and secure homeland."

- ◆ "When some people suggest we should apologize for this letter, I say absolutely not. We are proud of our pioneering role in the creation of the State of Israel. We are proud to stand here today together with Prime Minister Netanyahu and declare our support for Israel. And we are proud of the relationship we have built with Israel."
- ◆ "It is only when you witness Israel's vulnerability that you truly understand the constant danger Israelis face – as I saw on my visit in 2014, when the bodies of the murdered teenagers Naftali Frenkel, Gilad Shaer and Eyal Yifrah were discovered. So I am clear that we will always support Israel's right to defend itself."
- ◆ "As we work together toward Balfour's vision of a peaceful co-existence, we must be equally clear that there can never be any excuses for boycotts, divestment or sanctions: they are unacceptable and this government will have no truck with those who subscribe to them."
- ◆ "Neither can there ever be any excuse for anti-Semitism in any form... And yes, this means recognizing that there is today a new and pernicious form of anti-Semitism which uses criticism of the actions of the Israeli government as a despicable justification for questioning the very right of Israel to exist."
- ◆ "This is abhorrent and we will not stand for it. That is why the United Kingdom has been at the forefront of an international effort to create a new definition of anti-Semitism which explicitly calls out this inexcusable attempt to justify hatred... Criticizing the actions of Israel is never – and can never be – an excuse for questioning Israel's right to exist." (Prime Minister Theresa May, Prime Minister's Office - UK)

**ISRAEL'S IRON DOME A QUICK FIX FOR SEOUL'S VULNERABILITY TO NORTH KOREAN ATTACK?**

South Korea's capital, Seoul, is 35 miles from the demilitarized zone, within range of North Korean artillery and short-range rockets that hold 25 million South Koreans – half the country's population – hostage. Truck-mounted Thaad missile defense batteries began deploying in South Korea earlier this year. But Thaad is not configured to deal with artillery shells, and rocket launchers located right over the border don't loft their munitions to an altitude where Thaad could be effective. So protecting Seoul against short-range threats is difficult.

In October, Raytheon displayed an effective solution at the annual exposition of the Association of the U.S. Army in Washington that could be available for deployment within months. Raytheon calls the system SkyHunter, but longtime military observers will know it as Iron Dome – the short-range air and missile defense system that Israel activated in 2011 to counter rockets fired by Hizbullah in Lebanon.

Iron Dome has a success rate of over 90% in countering short-range ballistic threats and has successfully intercepted over 1,500 hostile munitions headed for Israel. It is designed to defend precisely the kind of target the South Korean capital represents – a densely populated urban area. Its radar, built by Israeli company Elta, can track the trajectories of over a thousand targets simultaneously.

SkyHunter looks to be the only combat-proven option that could be on the ground and in action in South Korea by next spring. So chances are, U.S. investment in Israel's defense is going to pay dividends few observers could have imagined when Iron Dome was first conceived. (Loren Thompson, *Forbes*)▲

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Do a Mitzvah and help us pack and deliver our Hanukkah bags to the Jewish residents in our community living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Fort Myers and Cape Coral. The residents enjoy not only the contents of the gift bags, they love being visited by the members of the community who deliver them.

- Bags will be packed on Thursday, November 30 at 11:00 a.m.
- Bags will be delivered starting Sunday, December 3. Volunteers can pick up the bags between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. on Sunday. (Other pick-up and delivery times can be arranged also, if needed.)

This is an opportunity for all family members to get involved. Seniors love having young children come visit. From babies to bubbes – it doesn't get much better than that!

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Gift cards to places like Publix, Walmart, Target, etc., as well as Cash donations, are also appreciated. Jewish Family Services helps seniors, individuals and families with a variety of needs.

# Dear Aleksandra Cybulska

By David Harris, AJC CEO, October 22, 2017

I just read about your designation as a Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, the Jerusalem-based Holocaust museum and research center.

Heartfelt congratulations on this remarkable distinction!

It was given because – together with your late husband, Kazimierz, who was similarly recognized – you saved the life of a Polish Jewish girl, Sonia Berkowicz, during the darkest period in human history, the Holocaust. Sonia was the daughter of your friends.

I have never had the privilege of meeting you, but I read and reread the article about you in the Israeli newspaper, *Haaretz*, and stared transfixed at your photo, showing you in your home in Gdynia, Poland, on the eve of your 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, receiving the certificate from an Israeli diplomat.

In looking at you, I tried to understand what made you act, what led you to risk your own life in an attempt to protect someone else's.

Frankly, I am in awe. The Nazi oc-

cupation of Poland was beyond brutal and ruthless. All Poles were targeted for slavery and suppression by the Third Reich, yet, even as you and your family were in peril, you chose to add exponentially to the danger by sheltering a young Jewish child.

That act, had it been discovered, would have led to your immediate imprisonment in a German concentration camp, if not death on the spot. And it goes without saying what Sonia's fate would have been.

Sonia's parents and siblings were killed by the Germans, but she was saved because of your courage, because you saw in Sonia someone who deserved the opportunity to live, because you understood that the affirmation of our common humanity dare not be sacrificed no matter what else might have been going on around you.

Some people say that too much attention has been paid to those who tried to protect Jews because it distorts the history of this period. After all, these

righteous individuals were so few in number, so why create a seemingly skewed impression of how large a role they actually played?

I believe quite the opposite. More attention is needed.

According to the *Haaretz* article, Yad Vashem has honored a total of 26,513 people for their bravery in helping Jews, one-quarter of them Poles.

Poland, as we know, had the largest Jewish presence in Europe on the eve of the war. Fully ten percent of the Polish population was Jewish, and in Warsaw, the country's capital, approximately one-third of the residents were Jewish.

True, compared to the larger European population at the time, the number of rescuers is microscopic, even if we assume there were others who escaped the attention of the museum, and even if we add those people in countries like Albania, Bulgaria, Denmark and Finland who were part of larger national efforts to save Jews.

But it's precisely because there were so few such heroes – and they were true heroes, even as the word today is so shamefully overused and devalued – that we need to understand what prompted them to act, and what we can possibly hope to learn from their

examples.

In similar circumstances, let's be honest, how many of us would have behaved as Ms. Cybulska and her husband did, knowing that the consequence could be our own deaths and, yes, even those of our children? Hopefully, we will never have to know the answer.

Still, your legacy ought to live on not only via Sonia and the family she was miraculously able to create after the war, and not just through the laudable addition of your name to the Yad Vashem list, but also because your example should serve, at a minimum, to inspire us all to aim higher and show more genuine concern for the most vulnerable among us.

Words become inadequate in seeking to express admiration and gratitude to you for affirming life in the midst of such death and destruction.

May we learn from your powerful story – and may we be worthy of the gift of humanity we've been given in our one and only chance to live life as it was intended. ▲

## COMMENTARY BRIEFS

### WHY THERE IS NO PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Peace is not possible in the Middle East because values and goals other than peace are more important to Middle Easterners. Loyalty to kin, clan and cult are the cultural imperatives. Some prefer to attribute the problems of the Middle East to outsiders, such as Western imperialists, but it seems odd to suggest that the local inhabitants have no agency and no responsibility for their activities.

Honor comes from winning. Having lost in a political struggle results in loss of honor. Losing is regarded as deeply humiliating. Only the prospects of a future victory and the regaining of honor drives people forward. An example is the Arab-Israel conflict, in the course of which the despised Jews repeatedly defeated the armies of Arab states. The only way to regain honor is to defeat and destroy Israel. This is why no agreement over land or boundaries will bring peace: peace does not restore honor. (Philip Carl Salzman, professor of anthropology at McGill University in Canada, Gatestone Institute)

### WHAT RAQQA SAYS ABOUT GAZA'S DEATH TOLL

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, over 3,000 people were killed in Raqqa, including about 1,130 civilians, during the course of a four-month battle. In the 2014 Gaza war, according to UN figures, 2,251 Palestinians were killed. But a comparison of raw numbers is meaningless; the relevant comparison is casualties as a proportion of the population.

According to *The New York Times*, Raqqa had a population of 300,000 when ISIS took it over. In comparison, Gaza's population in 2014 was 1.79 million, according to official Palestinian statistics. In other words, the casualties in Raqqa represented 1% of the city's pre-ISIS population. The casualties in Gaza represented 0.12% of the population. Thus, as a proportion of the population, casualties in Raqqa were 10 times higher than those in Gaza. Moreover, roughly 6% of buildings in Gaza were destroyed or badly damaged. *New York Times* reporter Ivor Prickett wrote, "when I visited eastern Raqqa, it was hard to find a street or building that had not been damaged by the fighting."

ISIS and Hamas employed virtually identical tactics. Both dug extensive tunnel networks under civilian buildings, wired civilian buildings with explosives, stockpiled arms in civilian

buildings, and fought from the midst of a civilian population. Yet despite the enemy's similar tactics, Israel produced vastly lower casualties as a proportion of Gaza's population and much less property damage than the Western coalition against ISIS did. In other words, the very Western countries that accused Israel of "disproportionate" and "excessive" harm in Gaza were guilty of far greater harm in Syria and Iraq. (Evelyn Gordon, *Commentary*) ▲

The AJC West Coast Florida office, located in Sarasota, can be reached at 941.365.4955.

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# It all begins with Abraham and Sarah, but it comes down to us

What is the major difference between the true God of the Torah and all the pagan gods people worshipped in ancient days?

It is not so much that they worshipped idols, and it is not so much that they had many gods and we have one.



■ Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

The difference is God's agenda! Before the Torah, people worshipped gods because they presumed they had power. The whole purpose of religion was to appease these gods. They made offerings to bribe the gods not to use their presumed power to harm the worshippers, but to perhaps induce them to use their power to help them.

Our God's agenda was and is different.

The God of the Torah created the world with the hope that we human beings, who are charged with responsibility for the quality of life on earth, would create on this planet a just, caring, compassionate and peaceful society.

God's first attempt in the Garden of Eden failed!

So did God's second attempt that ended with the flood because the world was full of violence, corruption and immorality.

After the flood, God tried a third time, with the promise that the Eternal One would never destroy the earth again.

Take note: God promised never to destroy the earth again, but there was never a guarantee that we humans will not.

But that third society, after the flood, worked out no better than the other two.

After the Tower of Babel, God had a serious three-pronged dilemma:

- God still cared and would not give up the hope that humans could create the society God wanted.
- God was still dismayed by human failure to do so.
- God had promised never to destroy the earth again.

God's answer was to choose Abraham and Sarah and their descendants (that is all of us) to create the just, caring and compassionate society for which God has yearned since the time of creation.

God's charge to Abraham, "Be a blessing," is God's charge to us today!

If each of us seeks to use our individual talents in ways that bring blessings to others and not just to ourselves, we can have – at last – the type of world God wants.

For more detailed development of these ideas, please read my book *What's in It for Me? Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives*. The book is now available in English, German, Russian and Spanish.

Here is the Amazon link:

<http://tinyurl.com/jdd4cvn> ▲

Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs serves at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel Island.

## "God was with us"

I like to say that Jewish theology – our understanding of God – is situational. Sometimes we believe one way and sometimes another. Our theology is not systematic. One approach cannot be applied to all situations.

This is certainly true when it comes to our understanding of Chanukah. Who saved the Jews and Judaism of ancient Israel: God or the Maccabees? We've got different answers to that question.



■ Rabbi Marc Sack

I grew up singing the Chanukah song, "Mi Y'maleil," "Who can retell." We sang the song both in Hebrew and in English. But I've recently learned that the Hebrew version does not correspond to the English translation we were given. The literal translation of the Hebrew song is as follows:

*Who will describe the mighty deeds of Israel?*

*Who can count them?*

*See, in every generation*

*A hero arises*

*Who saves the nation.*

*Listen! In those days in this season!*

*The Maccabee was a savior, a redeemer!*

*And in our days, let all the nation*

*Israel*

*Unite, rise up, and be saved.*

That's not the English version I learned. That song contained lines like, "Who can retell the things that befell us?" And, "Brave Maccabeus led the faithful band." And finally, "But now all Israel must as one arise, redeem itself through deed and sacrifice."

The Hebrew version is a modern Zionist song that celebrates the hero who saves the nation. It says nothing of the "things that befell us," and has no

hint of God's presence. Not so the English we were taught. In that version, Maccabeus leads a "faithful band," and the Jewish people redeems itself "through deed and sacrifice." Okay. God's not on the surface, but God is clearly implied as the source of Jewish strength and resolve, an idea nowhere in the original Hebrew. And the Hebrew version makes no mention of "the things that befell us." The original song is not about Jewish suffering and redemption with God's help. It's about Jews taking their destiny into their own hands.

So, which one is it? Jews taking care of Jewish survival on their own, or Jews being victorious and thriving with the help of God? Chanukah puts that question before us and lets us decide for ourselves.

There is no one answer to the question of God's role in history. Maybe one religious response can come from a common understanding of God's encounter with Moses after the incident of the Golden Calf, the time when God tells Moses that he can see God's back but not His face. What does it mean to see God's back? We can see the after effects of God's presence. We can look back at a time and say, "God was with us."

That is how I feel about God in history. We cannot wait for God to respond to our challenges, to fight our battles. We must do these on our own. But we can look back at some times and say, "God was with us." I understand that this raises as many questions as it answers, but that is the nature of our tradition. As one guide to Judaism says, "It's more important to have asked the questions than to have all the answers." I agree with this. ▲

Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.

## Latkes

Who can imagine Hanukkah without latkes? The crackling sound of potatoes frying in oil, that first crisp bite, the cool applesauce or sour cream mingling with the warm latke. We eat fried foods



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

on Hanukkah to remind us of the miracle of the special oil used for the Temple menorah lasting for eight nights. But why fried potatoes? In Israel, they eat fried doughnuts. And go to any state fair and you will see plenty of options of fried food. Imagine eating fried Oreos all Hanukkah long! According to Gil Marks, author of the *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food*, potato latkes date only from around the 1800s when potatoes were planted extensively across eastern Europe. But latkes – a fried pancake – existed long before then, so what were Jews frying before potatoes?

The original ingredient for the latke comes from the Book of Judith. The Book of Judith is not part of the Tanach, the Hebrew Bible, but is literature from the Second Temple period, after the Jews returned to Israel after exile. It's a story about an evil villain set out to kill the Jews, and the beautiful heroine who murders him. The villain, Holofernes, a general of the Assyrian army, is about to capture the town of Bethulia in Israel. Judith, a young widow, convinces the town leaders to follow her plot to save the people. She goes out to the enemy camp and offers herself to the general as a spy. Smitten

by her beauty, he agrees and throws a great feast, planning to seduce her. At the banquet, Judith serves him salty cheese, washed down with rich wine. At the end of the night, he passes out drunk on the bed. Judith then takes his sword, grabs the hair on his head, and strikes his neck twice with all her might, cutting off his head. She places the head in a bag and runs back to her town. The Israelites attack the army by surprise the next morning, and when they see their general's head on a stick, they scatter and flee.

This gruesome but compelling story is thought to have originated at the time of the Maccabees. Long before potato latkes became the official Hanukkah food, medieval Jews ate cheese and dairy dishes to celebrate Hanukkah in honor of Judith and her bravery against the enemy. By frying them into pancakes, they combined two traditional types of foods – fried and dairy – into the perfect Hanukkah treat: cheese latkes. As the Jews migrated into eastern Europe and began frying with animal fats, cheese latkes were no longer kosher, so potatoes became the perfect substitute.

Hanukkah is the festival of light and also courage. The story of Judith is a story about great bravery, about a woman facing an evil general set to destroy her people. Using both her cleverness and her physical strength she defeats him. As we enjoy our potato latkes this Hanukkah, fry up some cheese, eat cheesecake or kugel, and remember the courage of Judith. ▲

Rabbi Nicole Luna serves at Temple Beth El in Fort Myers.

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## Struggle and blessing

Nothing worthwhile in life ever emerges without a certain tension and even pain. The birth of a baby, the building of a business, the creation of a career, the development of a happy family life all are the products of people who are determined to wrestle with a challenging situation until it yields a blessing. The remarkable thing is that we really never obtain anything in life except by facing stress; as it challenges us, it tempers our iron and makes it steel.

This theme of tempering through stress is illustrated in the following true story. America has produced only one great form of the violin. The original maker searched all his life for wood, which would enable the violin to have a certain haunting and beautiful reso-

nance. He finally found the wood in the timberline, the last stand of trees above the Rockies, 12,000 feet above sea level. Up there where the wind blows so fiercely and steadily, the bark to the windward has no chance to grow. All the trees lean in one direction. But they stand firm and they do not fall to the ground. That wood, after facing years of challenge of the elements, is so resonant and beautiful that it sings to the touch of the bow.

All of us all our lives will have to face stressful elements. Like our ancestors the Maccabees, we must have the courage to think, we must have the tenacity that love demands, we must have the desire to be and become everything that we might be in time. We must hold life firm and in everything that we face, we must be prepared to struggle and to hold fast, until we have found our satisfaction. ▲

*Rabbi Solomon Agin serves at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte.*

## “What is to give light must endure burning”

As our Festival of Lights approaches, I'm drawn to psychotherapist Viktor Frankl's sobering observation, “What is to give light must endure burning.” This might very well be the most concise statement ever regarding Jewish history.

Dr. Frankl knew more than any person should about burning, having survived Auschwitz, where his mother and brother were murdered. His wife was murdered in Bergen-Belsen.

His experience in the camps reinforced his conviction that a person's search for meaning and purpose was the most essential element of an individual's humanity. That sense of meaning gives us “the courage to be,” as existential theologian Paul Tillich put it.

Frankl teaches that it is possible to slither through living in the protective shadows of a purposeless, unremarkable life, but he would assert that such persons never fully experience what it truly means to be a human being. They live depressed, listless existences that

need lots of propping up with all manner of destructive stimulations.

Only those who lift themselves into the light by taking moral stands know what it really means to be truly human, deriving boundless energy from within. As he put it, they are prepared to “endure burning” in order to live in the light and share it with others.

Isn't that the story of Hanukkah? While so very many were prepared to “go along to get along” with their pagan overlords, a small handful took a principled stand, and most of them paid the ultimate price. Only one of the five Maccabee brothers, Simon, survived the conflict with the Selucidians. Judah, Yohanan, Eleazer and Jonathan perished in the long and seemingly impossible struggle as did countless other martyrs. They “endured burning” but shed great light.

It is that light that continues to shine even “*bazman hazeh*” – until this very day – that very same light we celebrate in this month's eight-day festival. ▲

*Rabbi Bruce Diamond serves at The Community Free Synagogue in Fort Myers.*

## Happy Chanuka

The literal meaning of Chanuka is “inauguration” or “dedication.” Chanuka celebrates the purification and rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, after its defilement by the Greeks.

Whenever we celebrate a Jewish holiday, the same spiritual forces that came into play thousands of years ago are reenacted, as we say in our prayers, “In those days and in our times.” During Chanuka, we are imbued with an extra strength to renew and rededicate the spiritual “Holy Temple” that exists within each of us. Today, the enemy is the Evil Inclination and the difficulties of the exile, which threaten to “defile the oil” and “cause us to forget Your Torah.” On Chanuka, our eternal bond with G-d is reinforced and fortified.

“Chinuch,” which is also translated as “education,” means becoming accustomed to something new. Whenever we embark on a new course, we need extra strength and incentive to succeed. For example, it is a Jewish custom that

when a Jewish boy is brought to “cheder” for the first time, we throw candies at him and tell him they are from the angel Michael. The candies make the child happy, and instill in him the desire to learn. After the Holy Temple was defiled, an extra measure of holiness was required. The self-sacrifice of the Jewish people for the sanctification of G-d's Name provided this extra spiritual power that allowed the Temple to be rededicated and renewed.

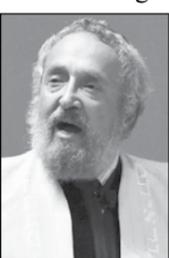
The miracle of Chanuka involved light, which is symbolic of an intensification and increase in Torah and mitzvot, as it states, “For a candle is a mitzva, and the Torah is light.” On each day of Chanuka we light an additional candle, increasing the illumination in the world. Indeed, this is a Jew's mission each day: to successfully utilize the strength we derive from Chanuka to rededicate ourselves to Torah and mitzvot, in an ever-increasing manner.

May the lights of Chanuka culminate in the light of the era of Moshiach, when “the night will shine like the day; darkness will be as the light.” ▲

*Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.*



■ Rabbi Solomon Agin



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# Temple Beth El high school students meet with Congressman Rooney

By Mackenzie Sax, Brianna Murray, Sarah Gatof, Evan Kagan, Temple Beth El Hebrew Chai students

As part of Temple Beth El's high school program, Hebrew Chai, we had the incredible opportunity to meet with Representative Francis Rooney on October 18 at Temple Beth El.

We spoke to Rep. Rooney and brought to light the issues of white supremacy, anti-Semitism and Holocaust education in today's society. As Jewish

high school students we have experienced the effects of ignorance, and we shared stories with Rep. Rooney about anti-Semitic incidents such as having Holocaust jokes directed toward us and having pennies thrown at us.

Holocaust education is so important because we have also had fellow students ask us what the Holocaust is. We've even had teachers ask us ques-

tions about it. We felt it was important to share our firsthand experiences because if we do not talk about the problems, no one will know and nothing will get solved.

We specifically asked Rep. Rooney to support a House resolution condemning hate speech and a House resolution encouraging more Holocaust education in school. Rep. Rooney was very warm

and told us his own story about being part of a Catholic minority growing up in Oklahoma. We appreciated how intently Rep. Rooney listened to us.

Temple Beth El's Hebrew Chai program has inspired us to advocate for our beliefs and issues important to us. We believe we can make a difference through our advocacy efforts. ▲



*Michael Shapiro*  
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<p>March 6 Shalom Life Center "Celebrating Passover" 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>April 26 Temple Judea "Fun on Lag B'Omer" 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.</p>

Bring your children to enjoy an hour of stories, arts & crafts, games, a light dinner and more in celebration of upcoming Jewish holidays. There is no cost to attend. The programs are open to everyone with children ages 2-8.

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**TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS**  
**Fort Myers**

**Temple Judea Religious School**  
*Liz Singer*  
*Dir. of Congregational Learning*  
Life after the hurricane has involved a lot of readjusting, but Temple Judea Religious School is great at being flexible. There are two classrooms that are in the process of being repaired and, as a result, classes are meeting in the sanctuary, resource room and pretty much every free space available.

The holiday celebrations were very special. Students have spoken a lot about the concept of *teshuvah* (repentance) and *selichot* (asking for forgiveness).

Now that we are through the holidays, classes are busy. Our PreK - 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are learning about the value of *bikur cholim* (visiting the sick), and recently made cards to send to people recovering in hospitals. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders have been excitedly preparing for their upcoming class Shabbat which will take place on Friday, December 15. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are focusing on Modern Jewish History.

Currently the school is looking at the value of *B'tselem Elohim* (being made in G-d's image). This includes self-image and how we treat others. On November 19 we are connecting to the monthly value by having an extended day and going to see the movie *Wonder* after Religious School. *Wonder* is a story about a young boy, August Pullman, who was born with facial differences and the challenges for him when he enters a mainstream school for the first time.

The Cooking Chug (elective) has made delicious shakshuka, which is a tomato stew with vegetables and eggs; chocolate balls, which is a mixture of cookies and chocolate; and homemade pita and hummus, which of course was delicious. The Media Chug got footage of the Cooking Chug, interviewed sukkah builders about the holiday, and



Devyn Frey adds ingredients to the hummus



Making pita

worked on a skit of the weekly Torah portion of the week. Currently they are combining all of their footage and are planning to make a Temple Judea commercial.

- Important dates:
- December 15: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Shabbat Consecration
  - December 16: Congregational Chanukah Party
  - December 24 - January 3: winter Break

\*\*\*

**Temple Judea Preschool**  
*Joann Goldman, Temple Judea Preschool Director*

What an amazing time we have had in preschool. The children enjoyed all the activities we had planned for the fall season. Our activities ranged from early math skills to environmental awareness. Children used their imagination as our dramatic center changed weekly from a Fire Station to Publishing Company, where children created books. The children had a blast.

Winter is just around the corner. The children will be learning about the coldest season by taking a look at winter clothing, and changes that occur during this season. We will set up an ice skating rink in the dramatic play area as snow fills our entire classroom. The older children will be experimenting with ice and snow in the sensory table.

December promises to be an exciting one in Pre-K. We will kick off the month by introducing our brother and sister bear team. Fred E. Bear and Fran E. Bear will begin their journey home with each of our Pre-K students this month. Each child will have an opportunity to take the bears home in their suitcase for the weekend. The bears come with toothbrushes, special bear combs, and an assortment of clothes. The children will be utilizing their new journal writing skills as they share about their weekend in the journal that goes home with the bears. This program teaches the children how to be responsible and caring.

In December we will be teaching the children songs and finger plays from around the world. We will be celebrating and learning about many different cultures in the world. Our students will have a chance to use the passports they created so we can travel to different countries.

We will be celebrating Hanukkah on the 13<sup>th</sup> with music and games. The children will have fun during our book exchange, which will take place at our Hanukkah party. We learned new Hanukkah songs and the children will have a chance to win some gelt as they play the dreidel game. The entire school will come together to light the menorah, which will take place in our pre-kindergarten class. We will sing and dance to celebrate this festive holiday!

If you would like to learn more about Temple Judea Preschool, please call 239.482.1121.

Temple Judea Preschool wishes everyone a Happy Hanukkah and very Happy and Healthy New Year.



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The story of Chanukah recounts the Jewish victory of the Maccabees over the Greek-Syrian ruler Antiochus over two thousand years ago. The Greeks were determined to defile the Temple and extinguish the light of Judaism. Following the battle, the Jews found only enough oil to light the menorah for one day. The flame was lit and it miraculously burned for eight days. The Maccabees fought a battle for religious tolerance and that battle continues today in many places across the globe.

This struggle has reached us here at home where the darkness of hate and prejudice most recently reared its ugly head in the terror attack in New York City just steps away from the site of where the World Trade Center

once proudly stood. The horrible attacks we once viewed only in the Middle East and Europe are now occurring in American cities. We live in times of uncertainty and fear, and our solidarity with those who stand for tolerance and religious freedom is vital. In these times of darkness, we are all looking for the light.

Across the world, as oppressive governments cling to power, we need to work together with our partners for peace in fighting for equality, human rights and dignity. Even the smallest light will illuminate a vast darkness, and with this idea as our guiding principle, we can bring meaningful and lasting peace to our troubled world.

We look to our ancient texts to find the hope and inspiration to persevere. The rabbis of the Talmud recounted the Chanukah story about a jar of oil that should have been enough for only one night but miraculously burned for eight days. Hillel teaches us why we light

the Chanukah candles the way we do today. He said that you start with one light, then two, three, and so on with the message: "D'ma'alin b'kodesh v'ein moridin" – in matters of holiness we do not decrease, only increase."

As we light the Chanukah candles this year, during what seems like a darker time, let us commit to increasing hope, faith and action.

We celebrate Chanukah as the festival of lights, and this miracle serves as a symbol to remind us that with a little faith in G-d, hope is possible. With this story of light, the focus was shifted from the battlefield to Divine power, to that spark of hope that one day the light of freedom and tolerance will illuminate the entire world. In each and every age we are challenged by those who wish to destroy us, stand against the nation of Israel and our covenant with the Almighty. Light has always defeated the darkness. May the beauty of this year's Chanukah lights remind us that history will repeat itself once more and the light of hope, love, com-

passion and tolerance will prevail!

We will join together at Shalom Life Center on Friday, December 15 at 7:30 p.m. to "Light Up the World" with our epic community menorah lighting, musical Shabbat service and lots of delicious, gourmet latkes and other Chanukah treats!

Don't forget to mark your calendars for Saturday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m. for our annual "Winterfaith Concert." Swing and sway into the season with your Shalom Life Center community as we dazzle Southwest Florida with a festive interfaith holiday musical extravaganza followed by a delicious dessert buffet!

This will be an evening of inspiring and uplifting holiday music with a few special surprises that you don't want to miss! The concert is open to the whole community. To RSVP, visit [www.shalomlifecenter.org](http://www.shalomlifecenter.org). For more information, call us at 239.218.3433 or email [info@shalomlifecenter.org](mailto:info@shalomlifecenter.org).

### ZIONIST ORG. of AMERICA

Southwest Florida Chapter

(914) 329-1024

#### ZOA presents

Dr. Shoula Romano Horing

Jerrold L. Sobel

On October 23, 1995, the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress passed into public law the Jerusalem Embassy Act. With overwhelming support from both sides of the aisle, the legislation called for the relocation

of the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Israel. Unfortunately, successive administrations from Clinton to Trump have signed waivers thwarting implementation of the law.

Needless to say, the Zionist Organization of America is sorely disappointed in this vacillation. The Act also called for Jerusalem to remain an undivided city and for it to be recognized as the capital of the State of

Israel. This is the supposed crux of the matter. Disregarding the fact that Jerusalem has been the unequivocal capital of the Jewish people for millennia, it is not internationally recognized as such. Thus, upon this pretext, the aforementioned presidents have withheld recognition pending final status talks.

On Wednesday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m., Dr. Shoula Romano Horing, noted attorney, opinion columnist, radio talk show host, law professor, and

national public speaker, will be speaking at the Chabad Jewish Center of Naples (1789 Mandarin Road) on this pivotal topic and other issues of war and peace relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$22 at the door; \$7 for students. Send your check to ZOASWFL, 4003 Upolo Lane, Naples, FL 34119. For further information, contact me [jerrysobel@aol.com](mailto:jerrysobel@aol.com) or 914.329.1024.

### HUMANISTIC JEWISH HAVURAH

of Southwest Florida

(239) 495-8484

#### Chanukah, oh Chanukah,

a time for reinvention

Paula Creed with Rabbi Jeffrey Falick

The Humanistic Jewish Havurah invites you to celebrate Chanukah at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 16 in the Fireside Room of the Bonita Bay Club. Make your reservation by mailing a check payable to "HJH" in the amount of \$40 per person to Joan Weinstein, 15191 Cedarwood Lane, Apt. 2505, Naples, FL 34110. Reservations must be received by Monday, December 11. You are encouraged to bring your menorah. Candles will be provided.

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Would it matter if you discovered that the Chanukah "miracle of the oil" was a legend invented hundreds of years after Jews began to celebrate the holiday? For Humanistic Jews it matters a great deal because knowing the origins of our holidays helps us see how they evolved and why, liberating us to make them our own.

In mid-second century B.C.E. Israel, Greek influences had led many Jews – particularly the well-educated and powerful – to embrace a more cosmopolitan Hellenized way of life. Backed by Seleucid Greek rulers, they even gained control of the Temple. Meanwhile, the more traditionally-minded fumed at what they perceived as disobedience of God. When the Greek emperor Antiochus IV backed the Hellenizers, imposing anti-religious laws, war broke out.

The Maccabees won and established their own kingdom. To mark their triumph, they declared an eight-day celebration beginning on 25 Kislev, a date that conveniently falls near the time of the winter solstice. Solstice festivals to encourage the return of the sun by lighting fires were widespread in that region. These rituals gave a small sense of control to those who lived at the mercy of a capricious natural world.

Though the Maccabees saw themselves as anti-assimilationists par excellence, they were not immune from

outside influences or ignorant of festivals of light. The book of II Maccabees claims that the new rulers declared an eight-day festival as a delayed celebration of the fall holiday of Sukkot which they failed to commemorate during the war. They also had in mind Solomon's dedication of the original Temple during Sukkot. But one other element of Sukkot may have tipped the scales because, alongside the sukkah and other familiar Sukkot traditions, ancient Sukkot observances also featured torchlight ceremonies. So, was the Maccabees' invention of Chanukah an attempt to devise their own winter solstice festival?

Whatever their self-proclaimed reasons for inventing Chanukah, two things are clear: 1) The holiday is as closely timed to the winter solstice as a lunar calendar will allow, and 2) there is not a single mention of the "miracle of oil" in any contemporaneous account of the war and its aftermath.

That little addition to the Maccabee tale is first mentioned hundreds of years later by Talmudic Rabbis who sought to re-position the Maccabee victory as entirely dependent upon

God. This, they hoped, would tamp down on any future plans for zealous uprisings, something they knew would be disastrous for the Jews.

For Humanistic Jews, the Maccabees' invention of the holiday and the later Rabbis' willingness to invent a new "reason for the season" serve as reminders that every Jewish tradition is both human created and open to re-evaluation and re-definition.

In the centuries to come, Zionists would position the Maccabees as heroes of Jewish self-determination. In America, rabbis emphasized its themes of religious liberty, resonant in the "land of the free." Meanwhile, American Jewry – inspired by Christmas just as surely as the Maccabees were by Greek and solstice traditions – decorated and exchanged gifts like their Christian neighbors.

For Humanistic Jews, this flexibility of interpretation reminds us that there have always been multiple voices in Judaism; that it is a living tradition we ourselves create and continuously re-fashion for our own needs.

### GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

(239) 963-9347

#### Is reading ten pages of a book enough? As Tevye would say, "yes" and "no"

Ida Margolis

Those of you who have seen *Fiddler on the Roof* may remember that when attempting to decide some issue, milkman Reb Tevye would argue with himself presenting both sides, often prefacing each side by saying "on one hand" and then "on the other hand."

How does this relate to reading ten pages of a book? It relates because this year I have told many people about the excellent, compelling, illuminating book, *Displaced Persons: Growing Up American After the Holocaust* by Joseph Berger, that GenShoah SWFL has selected for discussion. Their response is often that it sounds good but

they have so many other books to read. I can relate to that because as a member of the Hadassah Book Club and a Patron

of the Jewish Book Festival, I have a lot of books that I want to read. But I also want members of GenShoah to feel invested in the book discussion of *Displaced Persons*. Berger, author of several books and a *New York Times* reporter and editor since 1984, included a ten-page brilliant, powerful, insightful introduction that itself is enough to understand this book and enable one to participate in a discussion.

So is reading ten pages of this book is enough? On one hand, yes, ten pages is enough. But on the other hand, no. By not continuing to read the book, one will miss out on so many stories about Berger's family in the U.S. and their background in Europe, and not get the entire experience of reading this "remarkable tribute not only to his parents

but to an entire generation of Holocaust survivors who, in spite of the burden of suffering they carried from Europe and its legacy of hatred and violence, succeeded in rebuilding their lives and dreams."

So what should one do? Do whatever works for you. If you have time, read the entire book. But if you are too busy to read the entire book, read just the ten-page introduction. It will be enough to give you insight into Berger's book, and it is likely that you will want to read the remainder later.

The first discussion will take place at the GenShoah Pot Luck Dinner on Sunday, December 17 at 4:30 p.m. All those attending are requested to bring a dish that all can share. Space is very limited at this event and RSVPs are required. Email Shirley Besikof at [shirleybesikof@gmail.com](mailto:shirleybesikof@gmail.com) and let her know what dish you can bring.

GenShoah SWFL is a group for children of Holocaust survivors and

others interested in: promotion of Holocaust education and human rights, preservation of the history and memories of the Holocaust, connection of the Second Generation (2gs) with one another, and support of the Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida.

GenShoah SWFL will present a variety of programs for the public and children of survivors this season. A listing of the programs appears below and additional information about upcoming GenShoah programs will be featured in future editions of the *Federation Star* and in the monthly GenShoah newsletter.

A very special program, "Through Their Eyes" for 2gs, will be presented in January. For more information about this program or GenShoah, to receive the GenShoah newsletter, or to become involved with this group, please email [genshoahswfl@gmail.com](mailto:genshoahswfl@gmail.com).

**JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

**(239) 566-1771**

**Are you just a Jewish statistic  
or are you making an impact?**

*Marina Berkovich*

As you may have already heard, the Jewish Federation of Collier County has completed its 2017 Collier County Jewish Community Study. It is very detailed and some may wonder why a complex study like this was needed in a community of relatively low Jewish presence and visibility.

Here's my insight into some of the numbers and the story they tell me.

We were expecting a 10,000 estimate of the Jewish population of Collier. The results came in at about 7,800. It means there are even fewer of us, but just look at the mountains of good work we are accomplishing at establishing a Jewish community where there was none before the 1950s. It tells me that every 10<sup>th</sup> Jewish resident of Collier County is engaged with the Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida. That is quite a lot for an orga-

nization this new, of primarily local importance, and in a community already packed with other causes and activities.

In January 2018 at our Annual Florida Jewish History Month Celebration, we will be honoring Murray Hendel. He is in this statistical analysis in the following way: 8% by overall age, 6% by current involvement, 11% by full-time residence, 12% by time lived in Naples, and 100% by the importance to the Jewish and non-Jewish community of Collier County, Southwest Florida and beyond.

But don't you dare tell Murray Hendel that he is a mere statistic! Murray spent every day of his very active 30+ year presence in this community to make sure he will be remembered if not for his name, then for his efforts.

Murray became so involved in so many organizations that there is hardly a cause he has not espoused or actively pursued. A former IRS man, he earned the respect of the government workforce in Collier County and the City of Naples by putting his expertise to work for them. Many elected city and county

officials credit his wide influence for their victories, at least in part. His involvement with the Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida as co-president, and Temple Shalom as board member, left a lasting impact for the "Jewish insiders" and the overall community he and his wife Pauline care so much about.

And yes, there is a mile-long stretch of the boardwalk that bears his name. And it was a given that when JHSSWF was deciding on the title of the film about Murray, *Murray's Mile* was there reminding us not to reinvent the well-oiled wheel Murray has kept going here for the decades of his presence.

Come celebrate Jewish History Month with us and thank Murray for sticking his Jewish neck out for all of us and making this community more accepting of any and all of us.

The sixth film in the *Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers* Film Series, *Murray's Mile*, will premiere on Sunday, January 21 at the Jewish Historical Society's Florida Jewish History Month Celebration. This annual major event's Honorary Chairman is Naples

Mayor, Honorable Bill Barnett.

For tickets, please visit <https://jhsmurrayhendel.eventbrite.com> or email [office@jhsswf.org](mailto:office@jhsswf.org). To advertise in the event program, purchase a table or become a sponsor, please email [jhsswf@gmail.com](mailto:jhsswf@gmail.com).

Explore the early Jewish life of Southwest Florida at Virtual Museum of Southwest Florida Jewish History by going to <http://jewishhistorysouthwestflorida.org/>.

**Our Mission**

Collecting, protecting and preserving Jewish history to celebrate the contribution by Jews in Southwest Florida every day of every year is part of our mission.

Become a member of JHSSWF, a sponsor, business associate, volunteer and/or donor. Contact us at:

The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida  
899 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Suite 116,  
Naples FL 34108  
239.566.1771

[office@jhsswf.org](mailto:office@jhsswf.org) ~ [www.jhsswf.org](http://www.jhsswf.org)

The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida is a section 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

**HADASSAH  
Collier/Lee Chapter**

**(239) 370-6220**

*Karen Cohn*

Our Hadassah Chapter had its Opening Brunch on October 31 at Cypress Woods Country Club. Carol Finn, Interim Program Vice President, planned the brunch and took care of everything. Our speaker was Roz Rosen, and she had everyone so engaged and interested that people participated. Nobody left early. We voted on the new slate. Our installation of new officers is in January.

Even as our President, Ellen Hershkin, once said, "We all know the im-

portance of cooperation." Hadassah itself was built with women cooperating with each other to better lives for all women's rights. For example, Hadassah women have been known to travel to Washington, D.C. to speak to congressmen to let our voices be heard. They also have joined in for "A Day in the District" to meet a congressman in their specific district to voice an opinion. As a group we can more successfully make a difference.

There are a few Hadassah programs I want to let you know about.

- Tuesday, December 5 at Beth Tikvah: Joy Katzen-Guthrie will be performing "Joy of Jewish Music."

Iris Shur ([irisjimshur@aol.com](mailto:irisjimshur@aol.com)) and Lynn Weiner ([lynninaples@yahoo.com](mailto:lynninaples@yahoo.com)) are the coordinators.

- Sunday, December 17: Brunch for Major Gifts/Keepers of the Gate and Chai Society. Nancy Wiadro ([nwiadro@hadassah.org](mailto:nwiadro@hadassah.org)) is the coordinator. If you did not get an invitation, let Nancy know.
- Tuesday, January 30: Installation Luncheon
- Sunday, February 25: Major Fundraiser. Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bountiful Breakfast. Lee Henson ([lhenson13@gmail.com](mailto:lhenson13@gmail.com)) is the chairperson.

If you are a new Hadassah member or just want to contribute to this cause, the Chai Society is a good start.

For \$15 a month you can be part of great organization. Chai Society can help transform a life. It can help mend a broken body at a Hadassah hospital in Israel. Luba Rotsztain ([lubabeto@yahoo.com](mailto:lubabeto@yahoo.com)) is the chairperson.

Our chapter is always looking for people to volunteer in any capacity. You can help at a program or luncheon, fundraiser or anything else that may interest you. You can do a one-time job or you can do a job that is ongoing. Carol Hirsch is Membership/Volunteer Coordinator. We would love to have you meet new people and help.

At this time we are looking for an Education Vice President and Fundraising Vice President. If you are interested, please let us know.

**JEWISH WAR VETERANS  
Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400**

**(239) 246-3151**

*Eryka Aptaker*

Our "post-hurricane" meeting was a huge success! The venue was the American Legion Post 38, and it was lovely to see the turnout and interest in our meeting. Present was a guest named "Tino" who came to Florida in 1945. He spent 12 years in the Air Force and gave us a wonderful introduction of himself. Commander Harvey Charter presented him with the Vietnam pin.

Commander Charter thanked the Honor Guard for being present at Mat-

thew Lawrence's memorial service. He was a great man and will be greatly missed.

We heard from another one of our members, Harry Shapiro, who had not been feeling well. It was wonderful to hear that he is doing much better. We are all keeping Harry in our thoughts and prayers, and are looking forward to seeing him soon.

Our guest speaker this month was Undersheriff Carmine Marceno, and with him was Capt. Robert Gizzi. Undersheriff Marceno gave a wonderful speech and shared his background. Carmine grew up in the Bronx, New York, then moved to Long Island with his family. His father was a profession-



JVV Post 400 members with Capt. Robert Gizzi and Undersheriff Carmine Marceno

al baseball player and a Marine. Carmine came to Florida with his family on vacation and he knew he wanted to be here. (Seemingly, the same way we all wound up down here!) He started his career in Collier County and 15 years later had the opportunity to work for Sheriff Scott. Over time, Sheriff Scott had seen Carmine's potential and sent him through the FBI Academy at Quantico. Listening to this man speak, you had to realize that he was a very humble and very accomplished person. We are all very grateful that Undersheriff Marceno and Capt. Gizzi were able to attend our meeting, especially since they have been immensely busy since the hurricane.

An early "happy birthday" was wished to Col. Bert Kurland, another well-accomplished person with an amazing military career. The only thing I am having difficulty figuring out is how he is a WWII veteran and only 35?! We love you Bert!

On November 4, the VPT Post 400 participated in the Lee Memorial Military Appreciation Day. Commander Charter, Bob Ruberto, Isaac Osin and Herb Lutsky were there in conjunction



Isaac Osin, Commander Harvey Charter, Bob Ruberto

with Hearts & Homes for Veterans, assisting any homeless veterans who had needs. Thank you so much for all you do!

Please consider joining this fabulous group of dedicated people. We meet once a month (usually, the last Sunday) at the Jewish Federation in Fort Myers. The breakfast meeting starts at 9:30 a.m.

**HAZAK 55+ CHAPTER  
at Temple Judea**

**(239) 433-0201**

*Joyce Rosinger*

Saturday, December 30 at 9:30 a.m. is the annual HAZAK Shabbat service at Temple Judea. HAZAK members will participate in the service and sponsor the Kiddush. Our special guest speaker is Zohar ben Hamu, Temple Judea's Israeli Shaliach. Join us at this special service.

**Save the dates:**

On Sunday, January 21 at 4:00 p.m., guest speaker Cynthia Williams will treat us to a visual presentation entitled "The Hidden History of Fort Myers." Dinner after the program will be at a local restaurant to be determined. For additional information, please call Jan Klein at 239.482.6073.

On Thursday, February 15, HAZAK will visit the Holocaust Museum & Education Center of South-

west Florida in Naples. The Museum will provide a docent. Car pools will be formed at 9:00 a.m. in Temple Judea's parking lot. The group will have lunch at Brio Tuscan Grille in the Waterside Shops. For additional information and to RSVP, please call Lynda Maslow at 239.703.7273.

Temple Judea's active HAZAK Chapter is a chartered member of the USCJ. Dues are a modest \$5 per year per person. Membership in the organization is open to the community. Join HAZAK and meet new friends. The HAZAK Chapters are for singles or couples. It's an organization formed by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism to enable members to meet and socialize with each other. Our monthly programs vary in nature. For additional information, please call Bunny Lawrence at 239.245.7708, Shirley Schiffman at 239.395.0135, or George or Joyce Rosinger at 239.437.1566.

**TEMPLE BETH EL**  
**Fort Myers****(239) 433-0018**  
**www.templebethel.com**

Open to the community: fabulous one-stop Chanukah shopping at Temple Beth El on Sunday, December 3 from noon until 3:00 p.m. TBE's holiday bazaar will offer gift items at great prices. Jewelry, original art, Judaica items, home-baked goods and much more will be available for your shopping pleasure. All are invited to this unique shopping experience, a great opportunity to complete your Chanukah shopping at affordable prices.

During Rabbi Nicole Luna's maternity leave, the traditions of our people will be upheld as we reach out in prayer together. Come to services and get to know Cantor Bessman. Shabbat

services (and Tot Shabbat) will be led by Cantor Bessman and volunteer lay leaders. Rabbi Luna met with congregants to present an outline to follow, as well as how to give a short *dvar Torah*. Our newly trained lay leaders will lead services (and Lunch & Learn) for the next few months.

Last January we celebrated Rabbi Luna's arrival with a festive installation dinner. This January we will celebrate Cantor Bessman with a lovely welcome dinner on Saturday, January 20 in TBE's Dubin Center.

Following the Las Vegas shooting tragedy, Morah Dani's art students sent messages of peace to Temple Ner Tamid in Las Vegas. Their handmade cards incorporated colorful paper that the children had marbled themselves. In return, Rabbi Sanford Akselrad sent

the following note: "Thank you so much for sending those beautiful cards of hope and healing to our congregation. As you know, the recent tragedy was devastating and everyone here felt its impact. Your thoughtfulness and that of the children to think of us truly warmed our heart. I shared the cards at services this past Shabbat, and to the entire religious school during *tefillah*. The children learned that even as we help our friends, sometimes it is even more important to help those that we don't know. That an act of kindness to someone else can restore hope and bring healing. In fact, I think our art teacher will take your lead and come up with a similar project and so the chain of love and kindness will continue to find its way to others in need. Again, thank you for your creativity, your kindness and support."

We thank Cypress Lake United Methodist Church for attending Shab-

bat services with us on November 3. It was a touching and memorable evening, with both Pastor Thom and Rabbi Luna on the bimah. Rabbi Luna gave the church members a special blessing. Pastor Thom spoke of his connection to Judaism, growing up on Miami Beach and taking Torah lessons (and a shot of Manischewitz) from a Jewish neighbor. Pastor Thom's message of inter-faith cooperation was delivered with warmth and humor. Phyllis and Berny Aronson accepted the church's invitation to Sunday services two days later, where they were warmly received. Says Phyllis: "If more of us took the time and made an effort to understand what religion means, the world would certainly be in better shape. Hugs do work!"

Save the date of Sunday, February 18 for the "Uptown Express" doo-wop and Motown show at the Crowne Plaza Hotel (Bell Tower).

**TEMPLE BETH SHALOM**  
**Cape Coral****(239) 772-4555**  
**www.templebethshalomcc.org**

Remember the days when you could have a civil discussion about politics and in the end agree to disagree? Experience that again at Temple Beth Shalom's Brown Bag Lunch With the Rabbi.

Well-informed people of all viewpoints come together every other Wednesday to discuss current events. The discussion is lively, frequently heated and always respectful. You can add your point of view or just listen. Either way, you will find the conversations to be informative and interesting. Brown Bag Lunch is open to everyone and are a good introduction to the unique mem-

bers and atmosphere at Temple Beth Shalom. Although it is called Brown Bag Lunch, lunch is optional.

As popular as it is, Brown Bag Lunch is just one of many activities at Temple Beth Shalom. Friday night services start at 7:30 p.m. every Friday, and Torah Study is Saturday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Mah Jongg is every other Tuesday and the bowling league meets on Sunday mornings at HeadPinz.

December promises to be a busy month with the Sisterhood Annual

Chanukah Dinner and Gift Exchange on Monday, December 11 at 5:30 p.m. at Chen's China Bistro. Contact Merna Stein at 239.772.9209 or momndadstein@aol.com for reservations. There will also be a Chanukah party with latkes for the whole congregation.

Temple Beth Shalom's annual Honoree Banquet will be on Saturday, January 13. We will be honoring Stuart Berman and Marcia Strumwater for their exceptional dedication to the temple. Watch for more details.

**Send updates and changes to the Directory below to loriramos@jfedlcc.org.**

**TEMPLE BETH EL**

**REFORM**  
16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908  
Rabbi Nicole Luna  
E-mail: rabbiluna@templebethel.com  
Temple educator: Dale Cohen, Ma.Ed., R.J.E  
Preschool director: Jesyca Virnig  
President: Ellis Rabinowitz  
Phone: 433-0018 • Fax: 433-3235  
Web site: www.templebethel.com  
Shabbat services: 7:30 p.m. Friday; Torah study 9:00 a.m. Saturday; B'nai Mitzah 10:30 a.m. Saturday  
Religious School: 9:30 a.m.-noon Sunday  
Hebrew School: 5:00-6:30 p.m. Wednesday  
Judaica Gift Gallery  
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**TEMPLE BETH SHALOM**

**REFORM**  
702 S.E. 24th Ave., Cape Coral, FL 33990  
Rabbi Devora Buchen  
President: Arnie Schwartz  
Phone: 772-4555 • Fax: 772-4625  
E-mail: office@templebethshalomcc.org  
Web site: www.templebethshalomcc.org  
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday  
Religious School: Thursday 4:00 - 6:30 p.m.  
Torah study with Rabbi Buchen: Shabbat 10:30 a.m.  
Organizations: Brotherhood, Sisterhood, Family Service (1st Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m.)

**BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS**

**REFORM**  
Meets at Sanibel Congregational Church  
2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel Island  
Rabbi Stephen L. Fuchs  
President: Alan Lessack  
Phone: 239-579-0296 (Oct-Apr)  
773-251-8862 (May-Sept)  
Email: batyamsanibel@gmail.com  
Cantor: Murray Simon  
Web site: www.batyam.org  
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday (Nov-Apr)  
7:00 p.m. Friday (May-Oct)  
Adult Education:  
Saturday, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. (Nov-Apr)  
Jewish Current Events: Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. (Nov-Apr)  
Write: P.O. Box 84, Sanibel, FL 33957  
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**TEMPLE SHALOM CHARLOTTE HARBOR AND THE GULF ISLANDS**

**REFORM**  
23190 Utica Ave., P.O. Box 494675  
Port Charlotte, FL 33949-4675  
Rabbi Solomon Agin  
President: Gary Wein  
Phone: (941) 625-2116  
E-mail: shalom06@netzero.com  
Web site: templeshalomfl.com  
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday  
Religious school: Sunday 10 a.m.  
Beginning Hebrew: Tuesday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.  
Advanced Hebrew: Thursday 4:15 - 5:15 p.m.  
Organizations: Sisterhood  
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**SYNAGOGUES & ORGANIZATIONS**

IN LEE &amp; CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

**COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE**

**REFORM**  
10868 Metro Parkway, South Fort Myers  
(The Southwest Florida Masonic Center)  
P.O. Box 07144, Fort Myers, FL 33919  
Rabbi Bruce Diamond  
(bdiamond5@comcast.net)  
Coordinator: Natalie Fulton  
Adult Educator: Jessica Evers  
Phone: (239) 466-6671  
E-mail: comfreesyn@gmail.com  
Web site: www.fortmyerssynagogue.com  
Community Sabbath eve dinner each Friday at 6:30 p.m.  
Sabbath eve worship every Friday at 7:30 p.m.  
Light breakfast and Torah study with the rabbi every Saturday morning from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

**TEMPLE JUDEA**

**CONSERVATIVE**  
14486 A&W Bulb Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908  
Rabbi Marc Sack  
E-mail: rabbi@tjswfl.org  
President: Jennifer Manekin  
Director of Congregational Learning:  
Elizabeth Singer  
Preschool Director: Joann Goldman  
templejudeapreschool@gmail.com  
Phone: 433-0201 • Fax: 433-3371  
E-mail: tjswfl@gmail.com  
Web site: www.tjswfl.org  
Services: 6:15 p.m. Friday and 9:30 a.m. Saturday Minyan: 9:00 a.m. Monday  
Religious School: Sun. 9:30 a.m.-noon; Wed. 4:30-6 p.m.  
Early childhood education:  
Preschool, M-F, ages 18 months-5 years;  
"Mommy & Me," 12 months-2 years  
Affiliated: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

**CHABAD OF BONITA SPRINGS/ ESTERO**

**ORTHODOX**  
24850 Old 41 Road, Suite 20 (in the Bernwood Centre)  
Bonita Springs, FL 34135-7024  
Rabbi Mendy Greenberg  
Phone: 949-6900  
Web site: www.JewishBonita.com  
Services: Saturday at 10 a.m., followed by a kiddush

**CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY**

**ORTHODOX**  
204 E Mckenzie St Unit B, Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
Rabbi Simon Jacobson  
Phone: (941) 833-3381  
E-mail: chabadpg@yahoo.com  
Web site: www.chabadofcharlottecounty.com  
Services: Saturday at 10 a.m. followed by a kiddush  
Torah study: Wednesday at 8 p.m.

**CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

**ORTHODOX**  
5620 Winkler Road  
Fort Myers, FL 33919  
Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz  
Phone: 433-7708 • Fax: 481-9109  
E-mail: rabbi@chabadswf.org  
Web site: www.chabadswf.org  
Services: Friday 5:15 p.m.; Saturday Kabbalah class 9 a.m.; Shacharit 10 a.m.; Kiddush at noon  
Minyan: Monday & Thursday 7:00 a.m.

**CHABAD JEWISH CENTER OF CAPE CORAL**

**ORTHODOX**  
1716 Cape Coral Pkwy. W., Cape Coral, FL 33914  
Rabbi Yossi Labkowsky  
Phone: 963-4770  
E-mail: info@chabadcape.com  
Web site: www.chabadcape.com  
Services: Friday Evening 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday morning 9:30 a.m. followed by Kiddush luncheon  
Sunday morning 8:00 a.m.  
Monday-Friday morning 7:00 a.m.  
JLI Courses: Monday evening at 7:00 p.m.  
Weekly Torah Study: Tuesday evening 7:30 p.m.  
Hebrew School: Sunday 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Jgirls: Tuesday 6:00-7:00 p.m.

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

- Shalom Life Center
- Lawrence Dermer, Spiritual Leader - 218-3433
- AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee): Jacki Waksman - (954) 653-9053
- AJC (American Jewish Committee): Brian Lipton - (941) 365-4955
- Anti-Defamation League: (561) 988-2900
- B'Nai B'rith International: (941) 302-4500
- Chevra Kadisha: Gene Sipe - 841-4615
- Generations of the Shoah SWFL: 963-9347
- Hadassah - Collier/Lee Chapter: Lynn Weiner - 598-1009
- Hadassah - Sharon Chapter (Charlotte County): Odette Port - (941) 505-1409
- Hazak 55+ Chapter: Joyce Rosinger - 437-1566
- Humanistic Jewish Havurah: Paula Creed - 495-8484
- Israel Bonds: Regional Headquarters: (800) 622-8017
- Jewish Community Services: 481-4449
- Jewish National Fund: (727) 536-5263
- Memorial Tree Planting in Israel - 1-800-542-8733
- Jewish War Veterans: Post 400: Commander Harvey Charter - 246-3151
- Mikvah Bashka of Southwest Florida: Nechamie Minkowicz - 822-2784
- ORT - Gulf Beaches Chapter: Marina Berkovich - 566-1771

**BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS**

**Sanibel**

**(773) 251-8862**

**www.batyam.org**

It is delightful to be at Friday evening Shabbat services conducted by Rabbi Stephen Fuchs and Cantor Murray Simon. They are “new” to Temple Bat Yam but the depth of their experience and knowledge makes for a beautifully coordinated and dynamic evening of worship through song and teaching. As our seasonal snowbirds arrive, they too will quickly enjoy the “new” experience at Temple Bat Yam.

Saturday morning Adult Education classes continue in December. At 9:00 a.m., Rabbi Fuchs teaches Hebrew reading for those interested in learning to read Hebrew and those who need a refresher. From 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Rabbi Fuchs discusses the Bible portion for the week and its relevance to us today with plenty of opportunity for questions and discussions. From 10:30

to 11:15 a.m., the congregant presentations in December focus on the topic “Ghettos in Europe – Patterns of Political Resistance,” coordinated by Renee Sugar.

Since Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Fuchs keeps reminding his Temple Bat Yam audience about the most repeated dictum in the Biblical text. It requires ethical treatment of the stranger because we, the Jews, were strangers in the land of Egypt. Since then, we have been considered as strangers in many other countries. This requirement from the Bible remains pertinent to us today as 65 million refugees seek safety.

Rabbi James Rudin, a retired military chaplain, was the featured speaker at two Christian-Jewish Kristallnacht events in early November. As the Temple Bat Yam resident historian, he reminded us that the week around Kristallnacht is momentous for Jews for other historical reasons. The Balfour Declaration was issued in 1917; the Bolsheviks overthrew the Russian

government in 1917; Egypt and Israel signed a cease-fire agreement in 1973; the Berlin Wall fell in 1989; Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in 1995.

In preparation for the Shared Scholar Lecture, the Reverend John Danner, Senior Pastor of Temple Bat Yam’s host church, will present a two-part introductory course on Wednesdays, November 29 and December 6 at 10:00 a.m. and repeated at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

The 2018 Shared Scholar Lecture will take place on Sunday, January 14 at the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ. The shared scholar for 2018 is Dr. J. Clinton McCann. He will speak about the Psalms as a bridge to interfaith cooperation. A reception will follow the program. On Tuesday, January 16, Dr. McCann will offer a workshop on music in the life of religious congregations.

Dr. McCann is Evangelical Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Eden Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He earned a PhD from Duke University.

He is active with CROP/Church World Service, Bread for the World and Heifer International. He is especially interested in the intersection of religion and culture, and is committed to the importance of multicultural education.

The Shared Scholar Lecture is co-sponsored annually by Temple Bat Yam, the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ, St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, First Church of Christ Scientist and Captiva Chapel by the Sea. Temple Bat Yam is grateful that its sponsorship is underwritten by the Leo Rosner Foundation in honor of June Rosner.

Mark your calendars for the Sanibel-Captiva Heart Walk on Sunday, January 28. Rabbi Fuchs will be the featured speaker prior to the walk.

All Temple Bat Yam services and classes take place on the campus of the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ located at 2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel, where members of the community, guests and visitors are always welcome to join with congregants.

**TEMPLE JUDEA**

**Fort Myers**

**(239) 433-0201**

**www.tjswfl.org**

Monday evenings of Jewish Learning continue with Rabbi Marc Sack and Liz Singer, Director of Congregational Learning, sharing their knowledge with adult learners.

Temple Judea’s Sisterhood, Chaverot, is in full swing with a Dairy Potluck Brunch from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 3. Along with their potluck dishes, members will bring personal stories of the journeys that led them to Fort Myers and Temple Judea.

Plans for Hanukkah celebrations

are underway. Children and adults of Temple Judea are looking forward to their annual Hanukkah party. This year’s party is on Saturday evening, December 16. There will be

great food, activities for children, and wonderful music supplied by the Shalom Band from Miami. Call the synagogue office to make your reservation.

The following morning, Religious School students will have a special holiday program. You can never have too much Hanukkah fun!

Congregants continue to volunteer each month at Sally’s Café, a Salvation Army-sponsored program to feed the homeless and those in need. To volunteer, call the synagogue office. Volunteers are needed for the following Sun-

day evenings: December 10, 24 and 31. Just call the synagogue office.

A wine and cheese reception is held every Friday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. right before Shabbat services. It’s a great time for members to enjoy socializing and to greet prospective new members and those visiting the synagogue.

Join Rabbi Sack at his Torah study session at noon the first Thursday of each month, held at the offices of Myers and Brettholtz and Company. It is an hour of open discussion of Torah and Judaism where all levels of background and all questions are encouraged. Everyone is welcome and there is no cost to attend. The next Torah study is December 7.

Hazak, Temple Judea’s 55+ group, will sponsor the Shabbat service on

Saturday, December 30. In addition to members of the group helping to lead morning services, Zohar ben Hamu, Temple Judea’s Shliach, will be the guest speaker.

For more information about Temple Judea or upcoming programs, call or email the synagogue office.

**Regular scheduled events:**

- Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m.
- Lunctime Torah study with Rabbi Sack the first Thursday of each month – next Torah study is on December 7.
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m.

**COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE**

**Fort Myers**

**(239) 466-6671**

**www.fortmyerssynagogue.com**

Heartfelt thanks to Rabbi Marc Sack of Temple Judea for the generous donation of 27 Conservative Sabbath and Festival Morning prayer books for C.F.S.’ 2-year Cantor Certification Program. These siddurim will enable our 11 cantors-in-training to broaden and deeper their understanding of Jewish liturgical tradition.

Welcome Reverend C.J. McGregor, new spiritual leader of Fort Myers’ All Faiths Unitarian Congregation. Rabbi Bruce Diamond was instrumental in its 2001 founding, and was invited to participate in Rev. C.J.’s installation on Sunday afternoon, November 5.

The congregation extends the warmest welcome to the Bat Yam Congregation’s new religious leader, Rabbi Fuchs, and Temple Beth El Cantor Richard Bessman. Both men bring a wealth of experience and boundless

enthusiasm for enriched Jewish living to our community, and we pray for their long and happy tenures among us!

The community is invited to join Rabbi Diamond as he once again helps conduct Fort Myers Memorial Gardens’ Luminary Service at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 3. This moving interfaith gathering connects the participants to their loved ones whose memories loom even larger at the holiday season.

The festive first-night lighting of The Community Free Synagogue public menorah is at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12 on Metro Parkway in front of the synagogue building. The 8-foot tall electronic golden menorah, the creation of Rabbi Thomas Miess, will also be lit at the same time each evening, except for Friday, of Hanukkah. The public is encouraged to attend. Hanukah treats will be served.

C.F.S.’ next “Brown Bag Movie Night” starts at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday December 14 in the Community Hall featuring the over-the-top 2003 Hanu-

kah cult classic parody *The Hebrew Hammer*. (“An orthodox Jewish blaxploitation hero saves Hanukkah from the clutches of Santa Claus’s evil son.” – imdb) Pack your dinner; admission and soft drinks are free.

At 6:30 p.m. on Sabbath Hanukah eve, C.F.S. will enjoy a traditional Latke Dinner and Hanukah Sing-Along. Bring your menorah and candles or use ours. As always, dinner is free and open to all. Reservations are not required, but please email comfree-syn@gmail.com to let us know how many to expect. Heartfelt thanks to Fort Myers Memorial Gardens for underwriting the meal!

The next C.F.S. Israel Pilgrimage departs June 4 for 10 days of learning, celebrating and enjoying in the Holy Land. For more information, visit [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com).

Each Friday at 6:30 p.m., The Community Free Synagogue serves a traditional Sabbath dinner. It is free and reservations are never required. At 7:30 p.m., the Sabbath is welcomed with prayer and song. A coffee hour follows worship.

Every Saturday at 9:30 a.m., C.F.S. offers a light breakfast followed by a lively discussion of the week’s Torah portion until 11:30 a.m., when the Mourner’s Qaddish is recited.

Now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year, The Community Free Synagogue is a not-for-profit open community religious resource, not a private membership-based organization. All of its events and programs, including youth and adult Jewish education, are open to all and always free.

C.F.S.’ founder and leader, Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D., celebrates the 40<sup>th</sup> year since his ordination at The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, and marks his 20<sup>th</sup> year in Fort Myers.

The purpose of The Community Free Synagogue is “Study, Worship and Benevolent Acts,” generally following Reform traditions. The synagogue meets at the Southwest Florida Masonic Center, 10868 Metro Parkway in South Fort Myers. For more information, visit its website at [www.fortmyerssynagogue.com](http://www.fortmyerssynagogue.com).

**TEMPLE SHALOM**

**Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands**

**(941) 625-2116**

**www.templeshalomfl.com**

Temple Shalom is Charlotte County’s only Reform Congregation affiliated with the Union of Reform Judaism and whose rabbi is a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

All of our programs and events are open to the entire community and in most cases, they are free. The programs are made possible by donations to the Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund. No assis-

tance or support comes from the Federation or any other organization.

On Friday evening, December 8, Rabbi A. James Rudin will return as a guest speaker. His

topic will be “The Rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and the United States in 2017.” The presentation is made possible by the Robert Bader donations in the Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund. Shabbat services will start at 7:30 p.m., followed by an Oneg.

On Tuesday, December 5, “Introduction to Judaism” continues with a special program devoted to Hanukah,

and it is open to all. Each session has a new topic.

On Sunday, Decembers 17 at 4:00 p.m., join us for our Outdoor Celebration of Chanukah and the lighting of the large outdoor menorah, with music by Jane Galler and Rabbi Agin on bass. The temple will provide latkes, Chanukah candies, dreidels, sufganiyot,

cookies and much more.

On Sunday, December 17 at 5:00 p.m., the Jewish Film Committee presents *The Chosen*. A deli dinner will follow. A \$15 donation is requested for the dinner.

For additional information, call Temple Shalom at 941.625.2116.

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