

Advancing our mission

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

■ Alan Isaacs



the world) and K'lal Yisrael (taking responsibility for one another).

Contributions of time, skills and financial resources combine to support a system that provides

As our 2017 campaign year draws to a close I reflect on the generosity of our community. Generosity comes in several forms, all of which enable the Jewish Federation to provide the programs and services that we are mandated to deliver in furtherance of our **mission**: *To strengthen and enrich the Jewish Community by providing and supporting philanthropic, educational and social service programs locally, in Israel and throughout the world, and in line with our vision: A Jewish Community that is based on Jewish values such as Tzedakah (benevolence), Tikkun Olam (repairing*

for the cultural, social and educational needs of our community at large, and serves as a social service safety net for those who face temporary and chronic challenges in their daily lives. We depend on you for your involvement as participants, volunteers and supporters.

It is the Federation's intention in 2018, as it is every day, to advance our mission and to draw yet closer to our vision for our community. These goals are only attainable through your involvement: Participate now! Volunteer now! Support now! ▲



For complete information on all 11 films, dates, times and a ticket order form, see pages 16-17.

PJ LIBRARY RADIO LIVE!



Now PJ library families can listen to Jewish kids music — anytime, anywhere.

Introducing *PJLibraryRadio.com*, an online streaming radio station with more than 2,000 songs from hundreds of artists across the globe.

Music is available 24/7 with special music blocks for Shabbat, Holiday and Bedtime.

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- Download the free app on iTunes, Google Play or Tune In Radio



Jewish Federation and Temple Beth El Sisterhood invite you to a screening of

JEWISH PIONEERS

A film about Jewish life in Lee County as seen through the eyes of

Sheila & Jerry Laboda

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18
2:00 P.M.**

Temple Beth El
Dubin Center
16225 Winkler Rd.

The film is a project of the Jewish Historical Society of SW Florida.



After the film enjoy a dessert reception sponsored by the TBE Sisterhood and have time to “schmooze” with Sheila & Jerry and the filmmakers, Marina Berkovich and Alex Goldstein.

To donate to the Federation's Annual Campaign, call 239.481.4449 or visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org.



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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.

Program notes

I hate the Jewish Film Festival. Now that I have your attention – that is absolutely not true! I love the film festival and it is my favorite event of the year – which you probably know since I have expressed the same sentiment in this column for the past four years.



■ Leni Sack

On Thursday, January 11, we will begin the Federation's 22nd annual Jewish Film Festival of Southwest Florida and my fifth. The excitement of sharing the films that the committee has selected, the anticipation of seeing old friends and welcoming new ones, and the sincere appreciation for the support of the sponsors and the attendees all come together for me in this one big event.

Two things to note this year:

- ◆ Rozzi Osterman is not only a co-president of the Federation, she is also an experienced documentary filmmaker and will be on hand to give some insights into her film *Talia*, which is part of the double feature event on Tuesday, January 23.
- ◆ Seven of the eleven movies being shown over the ten evenings are in English. Only four films will have subtitles. Usually it is the other way around. All the information about the film festival, including a ticket order form, can be found on pages 16-17. Please note the list of committee members, as well as the list of sponsors also on those pages. We owe all of them much thanks.

There is lots more happening over the next few months. Here are some highlights:

PJ Library

Families with children ages two through eight are invited to a Tu B'Shevat program on Thursday, January 25 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Temple Beth El. It is the first in a series of four programs for young families to come together for stories, music, and arts and crafts celebrating different Jewish holidays. Food to keep the little ones happy will also be provided. Zohar Ben Hamu, Temple Judea's shlichah from Israel, will lead the programs. There is no cost to attend. RSVPs are required. To reserve a space, please contact me at lenibsack@jfedlcc.org or 239.481.4449 x3.

Speaking of PJ Library: They recently launched PJ Library Radio, a free streaming music service for

kids! Check out the ad in this issue or go to www.pjlibraryradio.com for more information.

Jewish Pioneers, Sheila and Jerry Laboda

The Jewish Federation and the Temple Beth El Sisterhood are joining together to present one of the films in the Jewish Pioneers series by the Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida. A retrospective view of Jewish life in Lee County through the eyes of Jewish Pioneers Sheila and Jerry Laboda will be shown on Sunday, February 18 at 2:00 p.m. in the Dubin Center of Temple Beth El. Sheila and Jerry will be on hand, as will Marina Berkovich and Alex Goldstein, who wrote and produced the film. Desserts will be provided by the TBE Sisterhood. The event is free and open to the community.

Author event at Alliance for the Arts

Come hear author Laura Albanese talk about her book *Stolen Beauty* at the annual event co-sponsored by the Federation and the Alliance for the Arts on Wednesday, February 21 at 7:00 p.m. From the dawn of the 20th century to the devastation of World War II, this novel of love, war, art and family gives voice to two extraordinary women and brings to life the true story behind the creation and near destruction of Gustav Klimt's most remarkable paintings. If you are a lover of art, a lover of Jewish history or just a lover of a good read, you won't want to miss this event. Go online at www.artinlee.org to reserve a space. Space is limited.

Other events and programs

Of course, the usual monthly events continue: senior lunches, book club, genealogy, Israeli dancing and Jewish War Veterans meetings.

Mellow Mah Jongg also continues every Tuesday from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. But if you don't know a crack from a bam and think a soap is only what you wash with, then you will want to come to the series of six mah jongg lessons starting on Friday, January 19. There are only a couple spaces left, so sign up now. Just email or call me for more details. The cost is \$30.

Our year is just beginning. There are many more events still on tap, including our annual Holocaust Memorial Service on April 8 and a big Israel at 70 celebration on April 15. You'll be hearing more about those in the coming months.

Be sure to read through each issue of *L'CHAYIM* to find out what's happening "Jewishly" throughout Lee and Charlotte counties. I wish everyone a very Happy and Healthy 2018.▲

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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.

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**FEBRUARY ISSUE
EDITORIAL DEADLINE:
Friday, January 5**

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**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



**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 & 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

December's lunch was hosted by Temple Beth Shalom in Cape Coral and the program featured Israeli shlichah Zohar Ben Hamu. Zohar shared stories about her background as well as her work at Temple Judea, where she teaches the children and teenagers about Israel, and serves as a liaison between the congregation and Israel.

The lunch on Thursday, January 18 will be filled with magic! That's because we will be entertained by award-winning comedian and magician Stuart Rudnick. He's funny, he's Jewish and

he's got great shtick. Temple Beth El will host the lunch, which will be sponsored by the Grandezza volunteers of Estero. The Grandezza volunteers ex-



pressed an interest in supporting the Senior Lunch program and offered to sponsor the lunch as well as volunteer. The Federation is honored by their support and generosity of spirit.

The Senior Lunch Bunch program is an opportunity for people to come together and make new friends, visit with old friends, enjoy a program and, of course, eat! The monthly gathering is lively, people are welcoming, and we have a 'buddy system' for new folks so no one feels left out. Everyone truly cares about each other and there is always a place at the table for you, so come on down.

RSVP by Tuesday, January 16 if you would like to attend the lunch. Call me at 239.481.4449 x6 or email jodicohen@jfedlcc.org. Please let me know if you will need a ride to the lunch and if it's your first time attending. I look forward to seeing everyone soon so we can watch Stuart pull a rabbit out of his hat! ▲

Leading supporters of Jewish Federation programs and services enjoy an evening with actor and author Stephen Tobolowsky hosted by FineMark Bank.



Stephen Tobolowsky charms the crowd (photos courtesy Mike Shapiro)



Federation co-president Rozzi Osterman addresses the attendees



Jewish FGCU students and Temple Judea shlichah Zohar Ben Hamu (2nd from right) were guests at the event

UPCOMING FEDERATION EVENTS 2018

JAN. 11- FEB. 13 **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. 21 **Author Event at Alliance for the Arts** - Laurie Lico Albanese's book, "Stolen Beauty", combines European Jewish historical fiction with art.

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!



STOLEN



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 Herman Israel
from Linda & Jeff Shuster and Henry Smernoff

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

Mellow Mah Jongg

Each Tuesday afternoon, an open session of Mah Jongg is held at the Jewish Federation.

Players must be at least advanced beginners, as no lessons are given.

DAY: Tuesdays, 12:30~3:30 P.M.
FEE: \$1 per week



for more information call
Rona Strausberg at 239.949.9003



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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 or contact the Federation at 239-481-4449, ext. 4 or email loriramos@jfedlcc.org.

Holocaust Museum update

By Susan Suarez, Executive Director

Happy New Year! On behalf of our Board of Directors, staff and dedicated volunteers, we wish you and your families a very happy and healthy 2018!

Thanks to all who made our sold-out event, The Luncheon, a huge success.



■ Susan Suarez

Net proceeds of the event support the Museum's Education programs. The event, held December 15 at The Ritz-Carlton Beach Resort in Naples, featured the national debut performance of *In Flight*. The short inspirational play is based on the childhood experiences of Holocaust survivor and Museum speaker Sabine van Dam. It was written by Hester Kamin, and produced in partnership with Gulfshore Playhouse. *In Flight* will be presented in local schools as part of the Museum's Education programming this year. Designed to fit within a typical classroom period, the professionally-acted play provides students with an opportunity to see how our choices and actions define us.

Our new exhibit, "Resettling and Rebuilding: The Displaced Persons in Post-War Europe," will be on display from January 9 through May 30. It explores the creation and use of Displaced Persons camps which were set up by the Allies during post-war Occupation. The DP camps were an important part of the new start in life for millions of people displaced by the war. The Jewish population in particular was in need of help. Reduced because of the persecution during the Holocaust to one-third of their pre-war population, they incredibly still faced the anti-Semitism of their neighbors when they returned to their home countries. Several of the artifacts in the exhibit are from local residents and Museum volunteers. They belong to families who were impacted by DP camps and subsequently settled in the

U.S. to start a new life.

I am pleased to announce a new opportunity to support the Museum and its programs! The Legacy Society has been created to celebrate friends who affirm their commitment to our Museum, its mission and programs through their will or other planned gift. Your generosity demonstrates an investment in our future. Gifts from Legacy Society members will offer operating or endowment support to provide exhibits, educational programs, artifact conservation, Museum admission for students and more. The most common way to make a legacy gift is to remember the Museum in your will through a bequest. You can leave a specific sum of money or a percentage of the remainder of your estate. Other options include naming the Museum as a partial or full beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy. Be sure to include the full name of the Museum in your will or gift documents: The Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida.

Saturday, January 27 is International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Please visit www.holocaustmuseumsfwl.org for information on programming to mark the commemoration. The Museum is the sponsor for the January "Wake Up Naples" event sponsored by the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce at the Hilton Naples on Wednesday, January 10 at 7:30 a.m.

The 6th Annual Elliott Katz Holocaust Lecture Series begins Thursday, January 11 at 10:00 a.m. at the Hodges University Naples campus. Reservations are required for each of the six lectures in the series which ends March 22. The cost is \$12 per lecture or \$60 for the series. Payments and reservations are being handled directly by Hodges, and may be made online at http://www.hodges.edu/cil/lecture_series.aspx. Or, you may contact April May at Hodges at 239.598.6143 or amay@hodges.edu.

The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida will honor former Museum Co-President Murray Hendel

at a brunch at the Hilton Naples on Sunday, January 21. Doors open at 10:30 a.m., with a buffet brunch starting at 11:00 a.m. The short documentary *Murray's Mile* will be premiered at the event. Honorary Chair for the event is Mayor Bill Barnett. For more information, please call 239.566.1771 or email office@jhsswf.org.

Group tours of the Museum are a great way to get together with friends or a club for an educational and inspiring experience. For more information or to schedule a tour, call Museum Education Assistant David Nelson at 239.263.9200 x205.

Please mark your calendars and join us on Monday, March 5 for the Triumph 2018 Reception and Dinner. We are so pleased to have as this year's featured speaker, David Eisenhower. Mr. Eisenhower is an historian, Director of the Institute for Public Service at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, and

grandson of the late president, Dwight D. Eisenhower. The world owes an immense gratitude to Dwight Eisenhower because, in his capacity as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, he ordered that the existence of the newly-liberated concentration camps be recorded for history so that no one would say that it never happened. The event will also honor the Golden Gate Middle School class which 20 years ago created the "Out of the Ashes" project on the Holocaust with their teachers David Bell and Michelle Lee. They made it their mission to remember and share the lessons of the Holocaust with their family, schoolmates and friends. They vowed to tell their own children when the time came, carrying on the work General Eisenhower started.

We thank you for your support of our mission. We have an exciting lineup of programs scheduled in 2018, and hope to see you at the Museum! ▲

Hadassah celebrates Israel's 70th birthday

By Arlene Yedid

The Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah is celebrating the 70th birthday of Israel with a special brunch at the Hilton Naples on Sunday, February 25 at the from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

"Hadassah Celebrates Israel's 70th Birthday" presents a sumptuous brunch including Israeli delicacies. Exciting musical performances will feature two talented performers singing popular Israeli 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. The cost is \$70 per person for this Hadassah benefit, which will be an event to remember, befitting the awe-inspiring 70th birthday of Israel!

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 projects and facilities. Who would have dreamed that one day Hadassah Hospitals at Mt. Scopus and

Ein Karem 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 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, multiple 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 70th Birthday" is a benefit for the Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah for the Hadassah Medical Organization and the work of Hadassah. The community is invited to this gala event. For information, contact event chair Lee Henson at 239.495.7866 or lhenson13@gmail.com. ▲

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BIRTHS

With abundant gratitude to God, **Rabbi Nicole Luna and Joe Bord** are overjoyed to announce the safe arrival of their new daughter, Iris Luna-Bord. Born Saturday, November 18 at 10:22 p.m.; 8 lbs., 7 oz., 21 inches.

BAR MITZVAH

Bryan Dworkin, son of Michael and Kira Dworkin, brother of Shauna, grandson of Al and Eileen Dworkin and Mickie and Larry Sonin, was called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, December 2 at Temple Beth El.

Bryan is a seventh-grader at Cypress Lake Middle School where he excels in math, science, theater and computers. This year he will be earning his certification for Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

Taking after his sister with her love of animals, Bryan will be working with the Humane Society to care for rescued pets and help them find good homes.

In addition to swimming with Swim Florida, Bryan loves to be goofy and make people laugh, and is also an avid fan of Pokemon (the card game). He also spends lots of time playing video games (like most 13-year-old boys), cards and board games.

Bryan would like to thank his friends and family for helping him to achieve this important stepping stone in his Jewish life. Bryan thanks Morah Dale Cohen for all of her guidance and wonderful motivation and spirit. Thank you, Rabbi Luna. Also thanks to all of his Hebrew school teachers who put up with him through this wonderful experience.

NACHES



Asher Pincus, son of Suzanne and David Pincus, learns about the tallit and tefillin in preparation for his Bar Mitzvah celebration at The Community Free Synagogue.



Congratulations to **Brian Berger**, son of Community Free Synagogue participants Miriam and Marvin Berger, who was awarded an Outstanding Citizen Citation by the Town of Hempstead, New York, for his dedicated service to Temple Hillel of North Woodmere. Brian, who, when in town, regularly join his parents at C.F.S. Sabbath Torah Study, reads Torah and helps conduct worship at Temple Hillel.

Each month, *L'CHAYIM* will list your Life Cycle events – births, B'nai Mitzvah, engagements, weddings, anniversaries and obituaries. For B'nai Mitzvah, please include up to 200 words about your child. Submit your events to LChayim36@gmail.com.

Photos are appreciated; please e-mail as JPGs at 300dpi.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE ADVERTISERS WHO SUPPORT OUR FEDERATION & HELP MAKE L'CHAYIM POSSIBLE.

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Community Free Synagogue events and programs

Israel Pilgrimage

The first Community Free Synagogue 2018 Israel Pilgrimage informational meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 7 in the congregation's Community Hall, 10868 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers.

The synagogue's 6th Israel tour, led by Rabbi Bruce Diamond, is from June 4-15. Hailed as "the experience of a lifetime" by its participants, this deeply-moving and highly-informative tour is a mixture of history, faith and current events.

The "pilgrims" will stay in 4-star deluxe accommodations, premiere Kibbutz Guest Resorts, and tour in their own luxury Wi-Fi-equipped bus, enjoying sumptuous Israeli buffet breakfasts, several gourmet dinners, and magnificent welcome and farewell banquets. The Pilgrimage is also fortunate to once again secure one of Israel's top professional guides, Colonel Yoram Black.

Come find out more about this extraordinary Israel adventure at the informational meeting. The cost of the tour package is \$2,835 plus air.

"Brown Bag Movie Night"

The Israel hit *The Women's Balcony* will be shown at The Community Free Synagogue's Thursday, January 11 "Brown Bag Movie Night" starting at 6:30 p.m. in the congregation's Community Hall. Pack a dinner; complimentary soft drinks are served.

According to Rotten Tomatoes, which gave the film a Fresh 96%: The women in an Orthodox Jewish community in Jerusalem are appalled when

their synagogue gets a strict new rabbi who preaches rigid gender roles. The ladies soon decide to fight back against



his ultra-traditionalist beliefs, while raising money to repair the "women's balcony" in the synagogue.

The Hebrew name of the film, *Yismah Hatani*, comes from a traditional Sephardic wedding song, since the setting of the story is an Israeli Sephardic community.

Mini-Course on "American anti-Semitism between the World Wars"

The next installment of The Community Free Synagogue's "Institute of Adult Jewish Education" starts takes place from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Sunday, January 28, and continues the following two Sundays in the congregation's Community Hall.

Taught by FGCU Adjunct Professor of American History Jessica Evers, Associate Director of the university's Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, the course will examine a broad-based American anti-Semitism that reached into the highest echelons of government, media and business.

All Community Free Synagogue events are free and open to the public.▲



Jessica Evers

"Communication: Its Art and Soul" – new JLI course

The rise of the Internet, mobile phones and social media has completely changed the way we relate, interact and communicate with one another – and it's high time we reclaim this lost art.

Communication is the fabric of society and the driver of every facet of our lives – think work, family and friends.

Judaism offers timeless, rare and powerful insights into communication – life's most important skill – that are both clarifying and astoundingly fascinating!

Come to a new six-week course

by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute presented by Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida, 5620 Winkler Road, Fort Myers.

The six-week day course begins Thursday, January 18 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. The six-week evening course begins the same day from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. The cost of \$99 includes textbooks. For more information or to register, call 239.433.7708 or email rabbi@chabadswf.org.

JLI is a project of Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida and sponsored by Dr. Gary and Marlene Price.▲

Jewish Prisoner Outreach – help us make a difference

By Sid Kleiner

Most folks, synagogues and organizations are unaware that there's a long-established, non-profit, totally volunteer-driven Jewish-inmate-outreach organization based here in Southwest Florida. Currently, we are accommodating the spiritual and advocacy needs of over 300 Jewish and Jewish-interest inmates and their loved ones.

Why do we reach out to you today? Because we think you might be able to assist us in carrying out our relentless and ongoing endeavors of *mitzvot*, *chesed*, *zedakah* and *tikkun olam*.

Just recently, we mailed our last copy of *Gates of Prayer* to a requesting inmate. We have one or two *Chumashim* and *Tanakhim* left on our shelves and all of our donated *tefillin* have been mailed. Our mailbox brims over with requests for print and non-print Judaica.

Contemplate our more than 30 years of outreach to those who have strayed when we say that those who embrace

their Jewish heritage typically become good, tax-paying citizens. But we need the tools that help keep our clients growing in the faith.

With the preceding in mind, we're asking you to share your dormant Judaica with those who will value, treasure and need it the most. Books, *siddurim*, *tallitot*, *tefillin*, *Tanakhim*, *Chumashim*, used, new, whatever. Frankly, we lack the funds to purchase these spiritual necessities. That's precisely why we appeal to you today to help us help our wayward brethren on their path to rehabilitation and freedom.

We look forward to hearing from you. Here is our contact information: Sid Kleiner, President Beth Tikvah Jewish Prisoner Outreach Serving Jewish Inmates & Their Loved Ones 10188 Winterview Dr., Naples, FL 34109 239.566.7702 ~ BTJPO@comcast.net (Not affiliated with Beth Tikvah synagogue of Naples)▲

The gem of Southwest Florida's art events

By Tom Hall

Hot Works' Estero Fine Art Show returns to its new home at Gulf Coast Town Center on Saturday and Sunday, January 6-7. Organized by Hot Works, LLC and consistently voted a top-100 juried art fair, this show includes a select group of artists typically not featured anywhere else. Among this year's exhibitors is metal screen sculptor Bonnie Shanas.

Shanas' art was shaped by intensive study in the studio classes of Israeli artist No'am Douieb and through a mentorship by sculptor Shulamit Hartal. From the former, Shanas developed an unerring eye for figurative studies. From Hartal, Bonnie acquired the skill to use mesh sculpting to capture the human form.

"As an artist, I find myself most intrigued by the study of the human form," Shanas remarks. "I am as much inspired by dance and movement as I am by the subtleties and simplicity of unspoken gestures. Together these compose a universal language which I attempt to instill and imbue in my work."

In fact, Shanas' *Dancers* collection belies both a love of dance and fascination for bodies in movement. With titles such as *The Dance Within*, *The Melody Within* and *Just a Small Dance Away*,

this body of Shanas' work expresses not just dance steps or poses, but the inner emotion that gives impetus to the flow, harmonic interdependence and kinesthesia that characterizes dancers at the moment when legato supersedes cognition.

In her *In Two's* series, Shanas finds ways to use metal and modeling to convey the subtle little ways that lovers



connect, from the touch of their fingertips to the clench of their hands as their bodies align. The fact that these pieces are typically monotone adds to their focus and augments their mesmerizing allure.

For Shanas, wire mesh is an obvious choice of medium because its translucence and transparency infuse an air of simplicity and lightness to gestures and movement she strives to capture in her sculptural work. But the metal's durability also ensures its longevity. "The hardness of the metal promises that the moment captured continues well beyond its fragment of time," Bonnie observes.

Most artists shy away from unforgiving media like wire mesh. That quality is another feature that attracts Shanas to the medium. "While most forms of sculpture are additive or reductive, I enjoy the challenge of breathing life into a sheet of steel wire mesh, where no material can be added or removed, and no crease erased."



Bonnie's path to a career in art was rather circuitous. A New Jersey native, her family relocated to Israel when she was still very young. In school, her



Bonnie Shanas

studies carried her into a life in the corporate world. But she closed her office doors in 2006 to answer the call of artistic creativity, and since returning to the United States in 2009, she has continued to develop her talents and establish a reputation as an accomplished metal sculptor.

Today, Bonnie exhibits in both juried and invitational exhibits and national shows. Not surprisingly, she has won numerous awards and honorable mentions. Over the past five years, she has also participated in a number of art residencies in France and Poland, collaborating with internationally-acclaimed artists on themed exhibits.

Shanas' work can be found in public installations in France, Poland and the United States as well as private collections here and in England and Australia. You can acquire one for your own collection at the Estero Fine Art Show. You will find the show outdoors at the Gulf Coast Town Center. The Estero Fine Art Show is produced by Hot Works, which has been producing quality, juried, perennially top-100 art fairs and festivals since 2003.▲



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, January 11
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.



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

For more information, please contact Executive Director and Producer Patty Narozny at 941.755.3088 or info@hotworks.org, or visit www.hotworks.org.

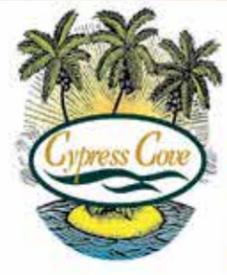
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Transform your world with ART

See a dazzling array of artwork at ArtFest Fort Myers on Saturday and Sunday, February 3-4, with an Opening Night on Friday, February 2. Nationally ranked for the quality of the artists, this fine art festival at the downtown Fort Myers waterfront is a true local favorite.

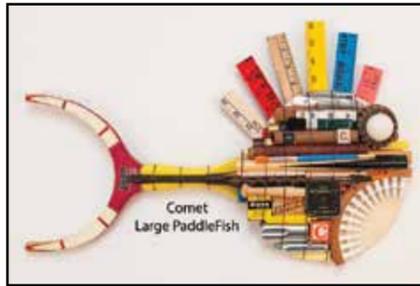
Membership in the VIP Experience at ArtFest Fort Myers guarantees your reserved parking, admission to the Friday Night Opening VIP Tent with delicious food and drinks, plus unlimited weekend access to the VIP Tent with breakfast treats, a delightful lunch and beverages all weekend long. The VIP Experience is \$125 per person and your support contributes to the year-round ArtFest Fort Myers' art education outreach programs.

Be sure to bring the entire family to this fun and free outdoor fine art festival, where the work of over 200 professional artists are showcased. Take

time to enjoy our talented high school artists' work at the Art Under 20 Exhibit and Competition, and prepare to be amazed as students create large street paintings in the Chalk Block. Always a crowd-pleaser, the Publix Art Yard and Youth Stage are full of opportunities for children of all ages to join us in creating a Public Art piece, while enjoying a variety of great performances. And be sure to visit the art festival's Dining Galleries, where delicious culinary fare from around the world is the norm.

Meet a few of the artists who will be exhibiting at ArtFest Fort Myers this February:

Stephen Palmer's Jewish grandparents emigrated from Russia to Los Angeles and that is where his mother was born. His artistic bent comes from both parents, who were poets, although he vividly remembers joining his mother on plein air painting outings



and attending openings and exhibits that featured his mother's paintings. Stephen's Mixed Media 3-D work combines found and antique objects to create sculptural and fanciful fish.

Woodworker Steven B. Levine was interested in creating from an early age, but a career as an artist/craftsman didn't occur to him until his path crossed that of George Segal, the 20th century sculptor known for his iconic human figures created from plaster bandages. As a high school-aged Boy Scout, it was Steven's good fortune to earn a merit badge in art with the famous George Segal as his mentor. Steven explains, "I identified with Mr. Segal immediately. He was Jewish and his parents emigrated from Eastern Europe as did my grandparents.



He became an instant role model, and working with him was an experience I'll never forget. I often wonder if Mr. Segal ever guessed how much he influenced this one young man."

Barry Bernstein, ceramic artist, never dreamed that the ballroom dancing lessons of his youth (Says Bernstein, "All the better to dance with mother at my Bar Mitzvah...") would help to form his artistic ethic. Those lessons, emphasizing balance, strong form, movement, beauty and grace, are the same traits that he uses when creating his clay vessels. Bernstein has been creating Raku pottery for over 35



years, using the wheel thrown vessel as his canvas and the unique multiple firing process as his paint brush. The hues and textures he creates are truly unique.

By sharing his experiences through his paintings, Dan Bondroff draws the viewer into his story. "I see my paintings like a movie director sees the characters in his/her films. Like my



paintings, most films have a strong lead character, supporting roles and extras. My work is all about escape, involving taking real life and using imagination as the vehicle for the journey." Bondroff hopes to take us to a magical place through his artwork.

For more information, visit www.ArtFestFortMyers.com - Like Us on Facebook - Connect with us on LinkedIn - Tag us #artfestfm.▲



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Thanks to the film festival committee who selected this year's films:
Sara Krivisky, chair

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Jan Klein, Elissa Grossman, Irwin Kash, and Lynn Talone

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR ATTENDEES for helping to make our festival a success each year.



Correction:
Gerald Ziedenberg's first evening lecture has been moved to Tuesday, January 9 instead of Monday, January 8. All other lectures will be on Monday evenings as announced.

SENIOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

LUNCH BUNCH

Come out for lunch, see familiar faces and meet new friends at our monthly senior lunches.

UPCOMING DATES:

Thursday, January 18th, 12 PM

Temple Beth El
16225 Winkler Rd., Fort Myers
(rsvp by Jan. 15th)

Thursday, February 22nd, 12 PM

Community Free Synagogue
10868 Metro Pkwy., Fort Myers
(rsvp by Feb. 19th)

Let us know if you will be driving or if you would like a volunteer to pick you up.

RSVP to: Jodi Cohen
239-481-4449, #6 or
jodicohen@jfedlcc.org



“Behind Enemy Lines: The True Story of a Jewish Spy in Nazi Germany”

Marthe Cohn was born in Metz, France in 1920. She was a devoutly religious Jewish woman living across the German border in France, when Hitler rose to power. As the Nazi-occupation escalated, Marthe's sister was sent to Auschwitz while her family fled to the South of France.

Marthe chose to fight back, and joined the intelligence service of the First French Army. Utilizing her perfect German accent and “Aryan” appearance, Marthe posed as a German nurse desperately trying to obtain word of a fictional fiancé. She traveled the countryside and approached troops

sympathetic to her ‘plight,’ thereby obtaining critical information for the Allied commanders.

When at age 80, Cohn was awarded France's highest military honor, the *Medaille Militaire*, not even her children knew to what extent this modest woman faced death daily to defeat the Nazi empire. At its heart, this remarkable story is the tale of an ordinary human being who, under extraordinary circumstances, became the hero her country needed her to be.

In 2002, Marthe penned her memoir, *Behind Enemy Lines: The True Story of a French Jewish Spy in Nazi Germany*. She lives with her husband

in Palos Verdes, California, and travels internationally, sharing her remarkable story.

“It is rare that we have the opportunity in our lifetime to meet a heroine the likes of Marthe Cohn,” said Rabbi Yossi Labkowsky, director of Chabad of Cape Coral. “With the passing of time, the possibility to hear these stories firsthand grows smaller and smaller. I encourage our community to come hear this remarkable woman tell her incredible story of courage and faith.”

Marthe Cohn will be the featured speaker at Chabad's Annual Gala Dinner on Wednesday, February 7 at the

Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village. Chabad's continued growth and expansion serving the local community is a true testament to the survival of the Jewish people.

This event will feature a VIP Cocktail Reception followed by dinner and music. You will have the opportunity to meet Marthe Cohn, purchase her book and have it autographed.

This event is open to the entire community. For additional information and to purchase tickets visit www.ChabadCape.com or call the Chabad Jewish Center at 239.963.4770. ▲

Monthly Shabbat services at Brookdale Independent Living

By Jodi Cohen, Senior Outreach Coordinator

The weekend I moved to Fort Myers, singer Neshama Carlebach, who I met online when asking a question about purchasing her music, was the Artist-in-Residence at Temple Shalom in Naples. I would finally get to meet my new friend! The sanctuary was packed at Neshama's Saturday night concert and we all sang together with voices that were in tune, out of tune, and that rose up beyond the roof. I had just moved to town, yet by the end of the evening I felt completely ensconced in community. There is something about singing together that connects people more quickly than anything else, except laughter.

For the past year and a half, the residents at Brookdale Independent Living on College Parkway in Fort Myers have been gathering for the Shabbat service the first Friday of the month. Since my father is a resident there, I have had the privilege of joining the group as we recite the prayers over the candles, wine and challah, and

friends and relatives.

We've had several guests, including Lawrence Dermer, who played piano and led the services for the first three months; Irwin Lewin, who accompanied us on classical guitar; Rabbi Marc Sack and Rabbi Nicole Luna, who each gave a talk about the weekly Torah portion. We've also had guests from Temple Judea and Brookdale talk about the Torah portion and lead discussions about how the topic relates to all of us.

In December, Cantor Bessman from Temple Beth El accompanied us on piano and was kind enough to play a song by himself, upon request by one of the residents. Randi Kashi from Temple Beth El will be joining the group as the musical accompanist in the future. It is truly the music that brings the Shabbat service to life.

The Brookdale residents are so appreciative of the Shabbat service, and the staff has been wonderful as well. Some non-Jewish residents join us, as

well as some of the staff when they're able to. Early on, community member Malka Forschner made little challahs for everyone. I've made chocolate covered matzoh for Pesach, hamantaschen for Purim, and challahs for the group as well. Harvey Cohen ends every gathering with what he refers to as “levity,” and tells a few jokes. What would a gathering of Jews be without food or laughter? At the end of December's Shabbat service I heard someone say, “You know, we didn't have this before, but now it's so good that we do.”

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties helps to sponsor the Brookdale Shabbat service. If you are interested in volunteering for or creating an opportunity like this in your community, I would love to talk with you. Please contact me at 239.481.4449 x6 or jodicohen@jfedlcc.org. ▲



singing Shabbat songs, including “Shalom Aleichem,” “Oseh Shalom” and “Hineh Mah Tov.” It's a joyous gathering and a chance for everyone to share *simchas* and good news, as well as to sing the the prayer for healing for our



Alon Nechushtan and his Jazz Trio at Temple Judea

Alon Nechushtan, a jazz pianist raised and trained in Israel (Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, formerly Rubin Academy), will play at Temple Judea on Sunday, February 4 at 4:30 p.m.

Since moving to New York in 2003, Alon has performed at Carnegie Hall, Jazz @Lincoln Center, Central Park Stage, The Blue Note Jazz Club and the Kennedy Center, either as band leader or as an in-demand sideman. In October 2015, the Kennedy Center commissioned from Alon a new piece for the Billy Strayhorn Centennial Celebration. In 2017, the Smithsonian Museum commissioned from him a program of lesser-known compositions by Thelonious Monk.

Fascinated with experimenting with both Klezmer (Eastern European) and Sephardic and Middle Eastern music, Alon founded the Talat ensemble, recording the CD “The Growl.”

Alon has written for ensembles and orchestras around the world, including the Tel Aviv Soloist Orchestra, the New England Conservatory Composers' Orchestra, the BMI Jazz Orchestra and the Yokohama Festival Orchestra. *All About Jazz* magazine called this



widely-published composer and performer “a fantastic pianist-composer with abundant chemistry and boundless eclecticism.”

This performance is open to the public. The recommended donation is \$10. ▲

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January 1943 in the Warsaw Ghetto

By Paul R. Bartrop, PhD

Seventy-five years ago this month, in January 1943, the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto embarked upon a course of action which Nazi Germany considered impossible: they took up arms and, for the first time, fought back in an attempt to stop the Nazis from achieving their murderous aims.

Through the summer of 1942, the Germans deported or executed more than 300,000 Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto. During a two-and-a-half-month wave of deportations to Treblinka, from July 22 to September 12, 1942 – a period known to the Germans as “*Gross-Aktion Warschau*” (General Action Warsaw) – it was intended that this would end the Jewish presence in Warsaw. On average, more than 5,000 Jews were deported each day, leaving alive only somewhere between 55,000 and 60,000 by the time the operation came to a close.

While those in the ghetto did not know the precise destination or fate of those who had been deported, vague reports of mass murder at Treblinka did manage to leak back. In response, members of Jewish youth groups, in particular *Hashomer Hatzair*, formed the *Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa* (ŻOB),

or Jewish Fighting Organization, on July 28, 1942. They issued a proclamation calling on the ghetto residents not to go to the trains when ordered to do so.

While the deportations were taking place, one member of *Hashomer Hatzair*, 23-year-old Mordecai Anielewicz, had escaped to southwest Poland on an underground mission to organize other branches of his movement, but upon returning to Warsaw he found the ghetto devastated. He, and others, knowing from the outset that they could not defeat the Nazi war machine, now decided to resist any further deportations from the ghetto. In November 1942, members of the ŻOB elected Anielewicz as their leader, and preparations started for a defense of the ghetto whenever the next wave of deportations should begin.

Most of the more senior members of the Jewish communal leadership in the ghetto disapproved of armed resistance out of fear of provoking a devastating German retaliation. However, Anielewicz and another Zionist leader, Yitzhak Zuckerman, began looking for support outside the ghetto. Contacting the Polish government in London, they managed, with difficulty, to obtain a few rifles and pistols. The ŻOB then officially became part of the High Command of the Polish Home Army (*Armia Krajowa* or AK), which began providing additional

weapons and training.

In the meantime, the ŻOB prepared for the next onslaught by the Germans. On December 22, 1942, Zuckerman, Miriam (Gole) Mire and Adolf Liebskind were sent by the ŻOB to Kraków to meet with resistance fighters there. While in the city, they took part in an attack on a café that was frequented by the SS and the Gestapo. Liebskind was killed. There is debate regarding Gole's fate. Some say she was killed soon afterwards; others assert she played a part in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in the spring of 1943. Zuckerman, although shot in the leg, managed to escape and return to Warsaw.

Once back, he then became the unofficial armorer of the ŻOB. He negotiated through contacts he had made with external resistance groups, attempting to procure rifles, pistols, ammunition and grenades. These were smuggled into the ghetto via the Warsaw sewers, and his ongoing negotiations meant that he had a good idea of how he might navigate the labyrinth in the future.

In early January 1943 – 75 years ago this month – *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler visited the Warsaw Ghetto and ordered one final deportation of all the remaining Jews. This began, unannounced, on January 18. In response, although lightly armed and poorly trained for combat, the ŻOB saw its first action. Mordecai Anielewicz developed a plan in which his fighters obeyed the deportation orders until they reached a certain part of town, where they received a signal to attack. Despite the death of most of the early *Hashomer Hatzair* fighters, many Jews escaped at this time.

Surprised by the opposition and suffering several casualties, the Germans withdrew from the ghetto to regroup their forces and evaluate the situation.

Four days later, they stopped the deportation altogether – at least for the time being.

One of the Jewish leaders in this first expression of armed resistance in the ghetto was a young woman, Tova (Tosia) Altman. Directly involved in the fighting, she, along with several others, was captured and taken to the *Umschlagplatz* (collection point for deportation). She managed to escape with the aid of a Jewish ghetto policeman acting on behalf of *Hashomer Hatzair*. Placed in charge of maintaining contact with ŻOB members outside the ghetto, she then spent a large part of her time on the Aryan side, but, always prepared to fight, returned whenever she heard of an impending roundup.

Shocked that the Jews would arm themselves and fight another round of deportations, the Germans returned in force in April to liquidate the ghetto completely. The resultant Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the starting date of which Jews employ to commemorate Yom HaShoah each year, saw the first and most extensive expression of urban guerilla resistance against the Nazis by any population during World War II.

It is important to place this in its proper context, however. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of April 19 - May 16, 1943 did not emerge out of nowhere, and 75 years later it is incumbent upon us all to recognize and honor the brave young Jewish men and women who decided to enter upon a course from which there was no going back, taking up arms to resist the Nazis in January 1943.▲

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.

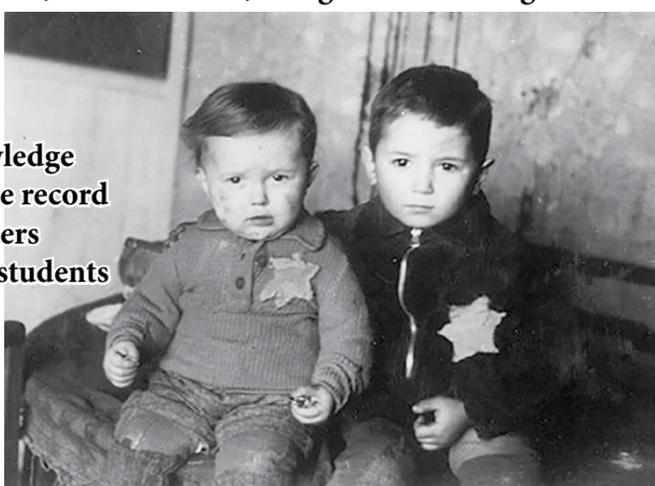


■ Dr. Paul Bartrop

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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.

Five-Star Recommendation

The eight-episode premiere season of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* is now streaming on Amazon. Any Amazon Prime member can watch Amazon original series, like *Maisel*, for free. Rarely has there been so much Jewish content in a "regular" TV series, so it's worth binge-watching when you can.

The first episode (free for all online) is good, but some Jewish details are confused (like calling the break-the-fast dinner "Yom Kippur dinner"). Forgive the creator, **AMY SHERMAN-PALLADINO**, 51 (*Gilmore Girls*). Her mother wasn't Jewish and she was raised "Jewish light" and gets some "Jewish stuff" a bit wrong – mostly in the first show.

Maisel begins in 1958. The central character is Miriam "Midge" Maisel (Rachel Brosnahan). Midge is a 26-year-old affluent Jewish woman with a nice Jewish husband, two young kids and a great Manhattan apartment. She's beautiful, funny and smart (Bryn Mawr grad), but its 1958 and she's genuinely content with being a housewife/mother. Marriage troubles put her on her improbable journey to becoming a stand-up comedian. An NPR reviewer captured why the series works so well: most dramas about a stand-up comedian build them up before they take the stage. A let-down follows when the fictional comedian isn't as funny or fresh as you're led to believe they will be. *Maisel* doesn't disappoint. She is shocking, smart and very funny on stage. She is, to a large degree, a marvelous fantasy. One

wishes that in 1958 there was a Jewish woman comedian who could say – and did say – the things Maisel does.

MICHAEL ZEGEN, 38, plays Joel, Midge's husband. **ALEX BORSTEIN**, 46, plays Suzie, Midge's agent. The famous real-life comedian **LENNY BRUCE** (1925-1966) is a secondary, but important character.

Getting to Know Timothée Chalamet Six months ago, he was a virtual unknown. But, in December, *Vanity Fair* called **TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET**, 21, the "breakout" star of the year.

In November, he had a big supporting role as a high school student in *Lady Bird*, an acclaimed coming-of-age story (starring Saoirse Ronan, it co-stars **BEANIE FELDSTEIN**, 24, and **ODEYA RUSH**, 20).

In December, he became a likely Oscar nominee following the limited release of *Call Me By Your Name* (opens wide this month). Set in Italy, Chalamet plays Elio, the 17-year-old son of an American Jewish professor (**MICHAEL STUHLBARG**, 49) and an Italian Jewish mother. Armie Hammer plays Oliver, an American Jewish college student who comes to the professor's home to help him with academic paperwork. Oliver and Elio are drawn to each other, partially because they're both Jewish. A brief romance ensues. *Lady Bird* won the New York Critics Association "film of the year" award in December, and the same week, *Call Me* won the L.A. Critics best 2017 film award.

Chalamet, who was raised in Man-

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.

hattan, is the son of a French journalist father and an American Jewish mother. His mother's brother, **RODMAN FLENDER**, 55, is a busy producer/TV director. His maternal grandfather, **HAROLD FLENDER**, was a TV writer. Chalamet stars in *A Rainy Day in New York*, a **WOODY ALLEN** film to be released sometime this year, and he recently said that Allen, 82, told him he worked with Harold in the '50s. Chalamet also has a big role in the Western *Hostiles*, which will be widely released this month.

In an interview released in December, Chalamet described himself as Jewish. His mother has posted Instagram photos of the family celebrating Chanukah and of their Seder table. "Clues" point to his father not being Jewish.

Sorting Them Out

Even *The New York Times* and *USA Today* fell for widespread Internet misinformation that Meghan Markle, now the fiancée of Prince Harry, has a Jewish father. *The Times* corrected itself (No-

vember 28) the same day as they made the mistake. Markle's correct religious background, as related in *The Times'* correction, is this: born Protestant (but not baptized), she went to a Catholic girls' school and intends to be baptized into the Church of England before marrying Harry. Her father is of varied European ancestry, including German and Irish (but not Jewish). Her mother is African-American.

I suspect the "Jewish story" originated in the fact that her ex-husband, **TREVOR ENGELSON**, is Jewish and their wedding, reports said, contained "Jewish elements" (usually means a chuppah and/or stepping on a glass.)

Readers wonder, I know, so here's the background of just a few of the celebs recently fired or suspended for sexual harassment: Charlie Rose isn't Jewish; *New York Times* reporter **GLENN THRUSH** is; and **MATT LAUER** is the son of a Jewish father/non-Jewish mother. He wasn't raised in any faith. ▲



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Once upon a time – the Hebrew language yesterday and today

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

The Story of Hebrew, by Lewis Glinert. Princeton University Press. 296 pages. Hardcover \$27.95.

Lewis Glinert, Professor of Hebrew Studies at Dartmouth College, has made a complicated and challenging story line as accessible as possible without oversimplifying the facts and the issues. His goal is well-served by choosing the word “story” rather than “history” for his title. This decision creates a mild and friendly kind of personification – “Hebrew” becomes a character in a lively narrative. This character is multidimensional, like any protagonist worth reading about. He (let’s say “he” for convenience) has his ups and downs.

Though he’s been around for a long time, and hasn’t always aged well, he has had spectacular periods of rejuvenation. There are times, however, when his friends can hardly recognize him.

Prof. Glinert, after a concise introduction, traces his character’s life in eight meaty chapters, usually offering subsections in each to help focus issues and underscore turning points. These subsections provide necessary breaks that even the most ardent followers will welcome.

Early on, the author reminds us of the unique situation of Hebrew: for much of Jewish history, “Hebrew was not a mother tongue to be spoken naturally. Rather, Jews kept it alive by raising their young men to study and ponder Hebrew texts.” How could it survive without being part of an everyday exchange among members of a civilization?

Among the many partial answers to

that question is the recognition that the Jewish Bible had literary flexibility and richness. It contained law, stories, poetry and wisdom: tools for life and for living together. While its status as a divine gift urged attention and dependence, the text was rewarding for simply providing stimulation and pleasure. And it wasn’t all in Hebrew!

Prof. Gilbert traces the ways in which Hebrew worked, or sometimes didn’t work, to maintain and sustain a population scattered and scorned. He regularly provides insights into key characteristics of the language, both its unique and shared features. These examples enliven the story, but they are subordinate to the grand discovery and appreciation of Hebrew’s journey through time.

Each reader will make a personal decision about which parts of the story are most intriguing. One of these is certain to be “Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome,” notable for its vivid presentation of a long developing clash of civilizations that birthed unending consequences. Within this chapter is a sketch of Ezra, perhaps the most indispensable figure in the story of the Jewish people. It was he who “led a new wave of Jewish returnees from Babylonia” and helped to re-establish a vibrant Jewish life in Hebrew’s home territory. This “charismatic scholar-priest... orchestrated a religious revival and strove to bring the Torah to the masses.”

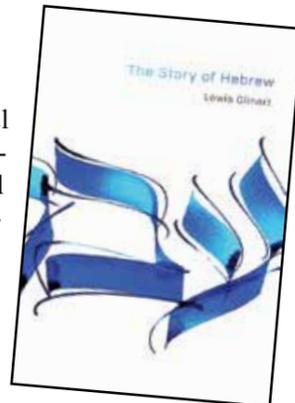
This same chapter stresses the centrality of the Mishnah in organizing Jewish life and the planting of seeds that would, over time, grow into the standard Hebrew prayer book.

The dazzling middle chapters of *The Story of Hebrew* balance an exploration of “The Sephardic Classical Age” against “Medieval Ashkenaz and Italy.” The first epoch, beginning around the year 900 and continuing for 600 years (until the Spanish Inquisition), was a period

of the highest cultural achievement. This process included “a renewal of a biblical Hebrew aesthetic and a reigning-in of the rabbinic mode.” The region of Andalusia fostered a “golden age of Hebrew poetry and linguistics.” Great minds were at work contesting the question of Hebrew language purity. What was required for the conveyance of knowledge, whether new or old? For Jonah ibn Janah, the mastery of grammatical understanding was indispensable.

What version or refinement of Hebrew will best serve the Jewish imagination?

The chapter on “Hebrew in the Christian Imagination” opens a world that most Jewish individuals, even the most culturally and linguistically sophisticated, rarely enter. Prof. Glinert traces the fate of Hebrew in the early stages of the Christian theological revolution and in later periods as well. He examines Christian churchmen’s need to engage Hebrew as the best way to find authority for Christian dogma. Such a mastery could also be a powerful conversion tool. The Renaissance and Enlightenment periods in Christian Europe featured a dynamic interest in Hebrew among Christians, an interest that had waned by the early nineteenth century.



By the later nineteenth century, the Zionist enterprise was in full swing, and Prof. Glinert gives the movement’s effect on Hebrew detailed, engaging attention. Similar is given to the Hasidic enterprise.

The author’s treatment of the more recent periods, most importantly the connection between the founding of the modern State of Israel and the state’s commitment to Hebrew as a (essentially “the”) national language, is likely to be the chapter that will attract reading, re-reading and discussion in contemporary Jewish circles. This discussion is full of excitement and wonder about the melding of a people, a language and a homeland.

Prof. Glinert provides generous chapter notes, suggestions for further reading, and a highly useful index.

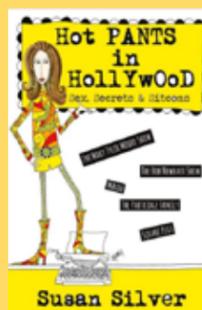
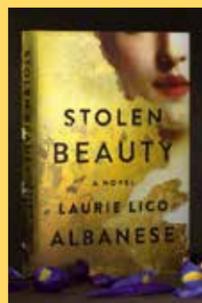
This book is a masterpiece that is likely to hold sway over the important and fascinating issues it discusses for many years to come. Jewish readers who enter this challenging space will find their understanding of Jewish identity mightily expanded.▲

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.



■ Phil Jason

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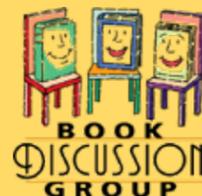
Wednesday, February 21
Alliance for the Arts Event
“Stolen Beauty”
by Laurie Lico Albanese

Tuesday, March 13
“Hot Pants in Hollywood”
by Susan Silver
Women’s Philanthropy Event

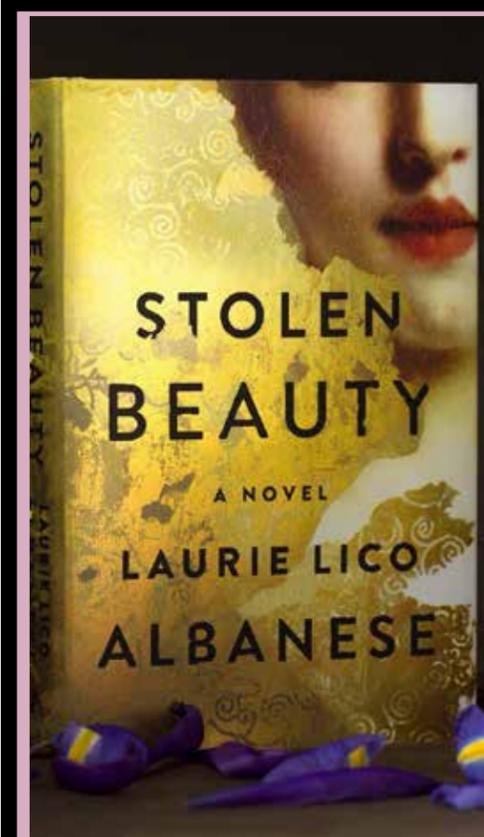
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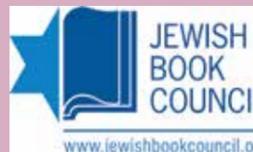
Wednesday, February 21 at 7:00 p.m.

Co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties
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At the Alliance for the Arts, 10091 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers

Ms. Albanese will do a book signing
after her talk. Copies of her books
will be available for purchase.

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Seating is limited.



2017's Dish of the Year: Shakshuka - recipe by Dalia Hemed

I recently discovered that one of the most popular Jewish/Israeli food trends of the year in the U.S. was shakshuka.

Shakshuka has been pretty trendy, and celebrity chefs from fancy restaurants all over the U.S. are dreaming up beautiful, mouth-watering, not-so-traditional versions of their own with Israeli flavors that we can't get enough of!

Traditionally, shakshuka is a Sephardic North African dish of stewed tomatoes, garlic and onions with poached eggs, usually served with fresh pita for dipping.

In Israel, it's commonly enjoyed at breakfast. With more and more Israeli chefs opening restaurants in New York City in recent years, shakshuka quickly became the "it" brunch food. You can find it in many fancy Mediterranean and Israeli restaurants throughout U.S.

In honor of this dish's popularity, I would like to share my recipe for shakshuka again with some new twists that are a must to try.

Not long ago when I would say the word 'shakshuka,' people often gave me a strange look. I get excited when I see that look. It means they don't know what shakshuka is, and that they have no idea what they're missing out on.

Shakshuka, like many Middle Eastern dishes, has roots in the Otto-

man Empire. Originally a meat and vegetable stew known as *saksuka*, it evolved to an egg-centric dish in North Africa. From Tunisia and Morocco, the dish spread throughout the Middle East. Jewish North African immigrants brought it to Israel, where it became very popular. It has been said to challenge hummus and falafel as a national favorite, especially in the winter and all year long.

If you aren't familiar with shakshuka, I'm thrilled to introduce the concept to you! It's one of my favorite dishes which I enjoyed throughout my childhood in Israel. I always have the ingredients for shakshuka on hand, and it never fails to make people say "yum!"

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 medium onion, peeled and diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cans ripe diced tomatoes (14 oz each)
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp hot paprika
- 1 tsp sweet paprika
- 1 tsp cumin
- Pinch of cayenne pepper (or more to taste - spicy!)
- Pinch of sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 5-6 eggs
- 1/2 tbsp fresh chopped parsley, for

- garnish
- ▶ Heat a deep, large skillet or sauté pan on medium. Slowly warm olive oil in the pan. Add chopped onion, sauté for a few minutes until the onion begins to soften. Add garlic and continue to sauté till mixture is fragrant.
- ▶ Add tomatoes and tomato paste to pan, stir till blended. Add spices and sugar, stir well, and allow mixture to simmer over medium heat for 5-7 minutes till it starts to reduce. At this point, you can taste the mixture and spice it according to your preferences. Add salt and pepper to taste, more sugar for a sweeter sauce, or more cayenne pepper for a spicier shakshuka.
- ▶ Crack the eggs, one at a time, directly over the tomato mixture, making sure to space them evenly over the sauce. I usually place 4-5 eggs around the outer edge and 1 in the center. The eggs will cook "over easy" style on top of the tomato sauce.
- ▶ Cover the pan. Allow mixture to simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the eggs are cooked and the sauce has slightly reduced. Keep an eye on the skillet to make sure that the sauce doesn't reduce too much, which can lead to burning.
- ▶ Some people prefer their shakshuka eggs more runny. If this is your preference, let the sauce reduce for a few minutes before cracking the eggs on top, then, cover the pan and cook the eggs to taste.
- ▶ Garnish with the chopped parsley, if desired.

Chef Tip:
I love making a simple, classic North African-Israeli style shakshuka on a



Personal Chef Dalia Hemed can be reached at daliahemed@msn.com.

busy weeknight for dinner or while entertaining for Sunday brunch. But if sometimes you just want something different you must try some of my favorite ways to eat shakshuka.

Shakshuka Hummus:
Put some shakshuka on your hummus, and you have it all: creamy chickpea goodness topped with smoky tomato sauce and a perfectly poached egg.

Matbucha Sauce Shakshuka:
A Moroccan spicy salad of roasted tomatoes, peppers and garlic. I use matbucha for hot and spicy flavor and as a short cut as well.

Latkes Shakshuka:
Latkes (potato pancakes) with shakshuka on top. This version is cooked in a spicy Moroccan tomato sauce and topped with Bulgarian feta cheese, with a side of Israeli salad.▲

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

For a continuously updated calendar of events, visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org.



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A tribute to Leonard Bernstein in his centennial year

By Arlene Stolnitz

Writing about this prolific composer is a challenge! Those of us who grew up in the '50s remember the wonderful television programs in which Leonard Bernstein was the "ultimate" teacher of classical music with the New York Philharmonic's Young People's Concerts. I can clearly remember making a beeline for the TV set on a Saturday afternoon so I would not miss his outstanding talks on "what music means." (One can still see the videos online, which are as informative and stimulating today as when they were produced.)

Bernstein was born on August 25, 1918, making this his Centennial Year. He died on October 20, 1990, and left a legacy that is admired and respected by music aficionados the world over.

One cannot talk about his accomplishments as a musical genius without recognizing his expertise and virtuosity. From Broadway theater to classical music, his limitless talent as a pianist, composer, conductor, teacher, poet and author places him in the music world as "musician extraordinaire."

We all know of his famous *West Side Story*, *On the Town*, *Candide* and many symphonic creations as well as ballet music.

And yet despite his diversified interest in all areas of music, Bernstein never forgot his Judaic background, having grown up in Lawrence, Massachusetts, the son of Samuel and Jennie Reznick Bernstein, who had emigrated from Russia. His father wanted him to go into the beauty supply business, but Bernstein

wanted no part of that! It created a rift that was finally reconciled when his "Pop," as he was called by Lenny, realized his son's enormous talent.

Three works that speak to his Jewish background are "Jeremiah," "Kaddish" and "Chichester Psalms."

"Jeremiah," a 25-minute three-movement symphony, established Bernstein as a major American symphonist. He had started to work on it shortly after graduating from Harvard, only to put it aside upon entering Curtis Institute to study conducting. It was several years later that he returned to his "Hebrew song." Calling it "Jeremiah," it premiered with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 1944. Dealing with the prophet's pleas to his people Israel against the pagan influences and corruption of the time, the symphony offers only consolation rather than solution. Bernstein wrote, "The work I have been writing about all my life is about the struggle born of the crisis of our century, the crisis of faith."

"Kaddish," which premiered in 1963, was dedicated to the memory of John F. Kennedy, who had been assassinated just weeks before. It was a vehicle for Bernstein to express his personal faith. Once again it is his crisis of faith in which he asks, "What can we believe in when man has the capability and desire to destroy itself?" The dissonance of the piece suggests that peace continues to elude us. However, the voices of children in this and many of his other compositions represent the hope for humanity.

In "Chichester Psalms," which premiered in 1965 in Philharmonic Hall, New York, Bernstein married a unique blend of the Christian choral tradition with Biblical Hebrew verse. Jazzy and contemporary in feeling, Bernstein

required the text to be sung entirely in Hebrew. This year, the Venice Chorale will sing this work in Hebrew at its Sunday, April 8 concert at 3:30 p.m. at the Venice Performing Arts Center. Based on selected verses from the Psalms, the piece was his plea for peace during a turbulent time in Israel's history.

According to Jack Gottlieb, Bernstein's lifelong confidant and assistant, works such as these were testament to Bernstein's religious upbringing, which had been "deeply infused" with synagogue music and Hebrew studies.

One interesting anecdote about Bernstein was that he disliked his name being pronounced "Bernsteen." Instead, he preferred the true German pronunciation "Bernstine," just as he disliked

being called "Lenny," preferring the more dignified "Leonard."

This year, the SILL (Sarasota Institute of Lifetime Learning) lecture program will host his daughter, Jamie Bernstein. It will be a rare treat, in his Centennial Year, to hear her speak about this wonderfully brilliant man who was her father. ▲

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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de Falla: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*
Mozart: *Concerto for Two Pianos*
Tchaikovsky: *Piano Concerto No. 1*

SMALL STAGE SYMPHONIES

FOR THE LOVE OF BEETHOVEN

JAN 10-12 | 7:30PM

Nir Kabaretti, conductor

Beethoven: *Coriolan Overture*
Beethoven: *Symphony No. 1*
Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No. 5 "The Emperor"*

JAN 10 | BIG ARTS, Sanibel

JAN 11 | The Village Church at Shell Point

JAN 12 | Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center

POPS 2

HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONETM IN CONCERT

JAN 20 | 1:30PM & 7:30PM

Justin Freer, conductor

MASTERWORKS 3

MOZART REQUIEM

FEB 3 | 7:30PM PRE-CONCERT LECTURE 6:30

Nir Kabaretti, conductor

Mozart: *Ave Verum Corpus*
Mahler: *Adagietto from Symphony No. 5*
Mozart: *Requiem*

All Masterworks, Pops & Special Engagements are held at Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall at FSU.

POPS 3

BROADWAY BOYS

FEB 17 | 7:30PM

Leif Bjaland, conductor

MASTERWORKS 4

ROMANTIC AND BEYOND

MAR 3 | 7:30PM PRE-CONCERT LECTURE 6:30

Nir Kabaretti, conductor

Rouse: *The Infernal Machine*
Sibelius: *Violin Concerto*
Brahms: *Symphony No. 1*

SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT

BRAHMS v. RADIOHEAD MASHUP

MAR 4 | 7:30PM

Steve Hackman, conductor

A symphonic mashup of Brahms's First Symphony (1887) & Radiohead's OK Computer (1997)

SMALL STAGE SYMPHONIES

FROM COPLAND TO CLASSICS

MAR 7 & 8 | 7:30PM

Nir Kabaretti, conductor

Stamitz: *Viola Concerto*
Copland: *Quiet City*
Mozart: *Symphony No. 29*

MAR 7 | BIG ARTS, Sanibel

MAR 8 | The Village Church at Shell Point

MASTERWORKS 5

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LEONARD BERNSTEIN

APR 14 | 7:30PM PRE-CONCERT LECTURE 6:30

Nir Kabaretti, conductor

Leonard Bernstein: *Three Dance Episodes from Fancy Free*
Elmer Bernstein: *Guitar Concerto*
Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5*

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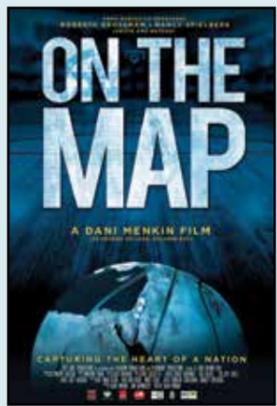
All films will be screened at the Regal Belltower Stadium 20.

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.

Sponsorship opportunities are available that include reserved seating. See the form on page 15.

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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.

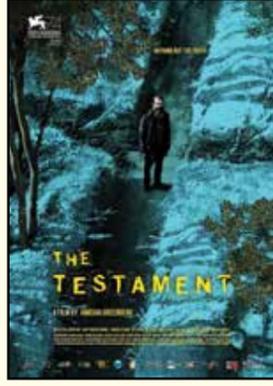


THE WEDDING PLAN

Michal is a 32-year-old Orthodox woman in Jerusalem whose fiancée announces he doesn't love her. Crushed, yet determined to get married anyway, the lonely Michal decides to keep her planned wedding date which is just 22 days away, on the eighth night of Hanukkah. She pays the owner of the banquet hall already reserved, sends out wedding invitations and puts her faith in God that a suitable groom will appear in time. The *Wedding Plan* is more than a romantic comedy, it is a tale of belief, endurance, family and belonging.

Language: Hebrew w/English subtitles Running Time: 1 hr. 50 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.

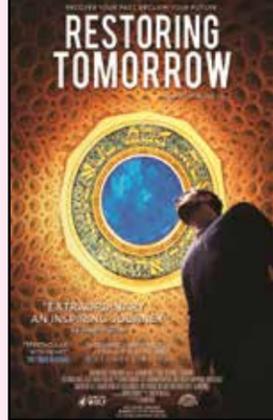


AN ACT OF DEFIANCE

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.

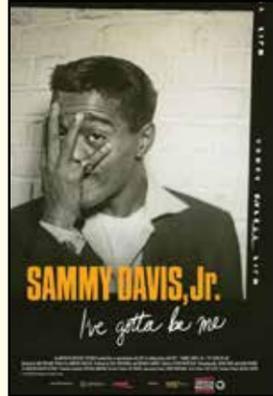


RESTORING TOMORROW

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 20th 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 Wedding Plan.....1/30/18
 - _____ The Testament.....2/1/18
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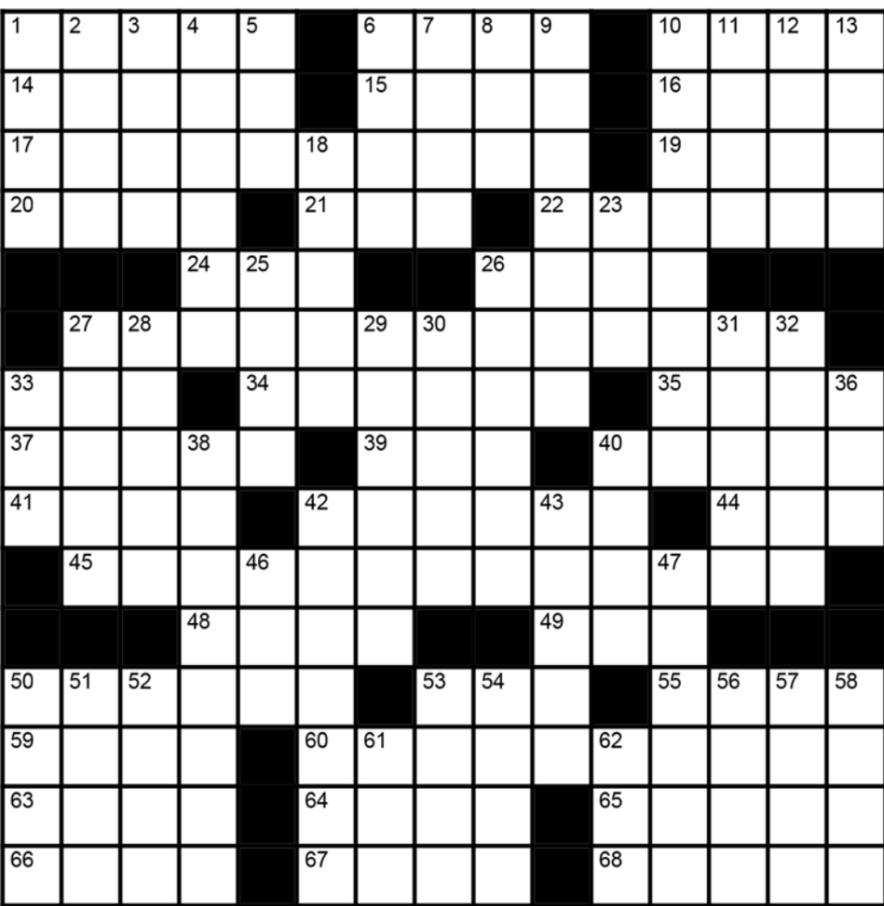
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Jerusalem Post Crossword Puzzle

“On A Diet” By: Yoni Glatt

Difficulty Level: Easy



Editor: Yoni Glatt, koshercrosswords@gmail.com

Solution on page 22

Across

- 1. Clark in Selznick’s “Gone With the Wind”
- 6. Kind of collar
- 10. The skinny
- 14. J.J. Abrams TV hit before “Lost”
- 15. Campus military org.
- 16. “America” singer Diamond
- 17. Miami locale where a lot of Jews go on vacation in January
- 19. Tennis player Dudi
- 20. Fringe benefit
- 21. Protectors of Isr.
- 22. ___ zarah (idol worship)
- 24. “Yikes!”
- 26. Fictional Reaper
- 27. One might happen before Passover?
- 33. Sacrificial animal
- 34. Added Jewish month
- 35. “Aladdin” parrot voiced by Gilbert

Down

- 1. Sound astonished
- 2. Ahava ingredient
- 3. ___ Chametz (burning)
- 4. Chanukah food
- 5. It’s a flame
- 6. Savage of “The Wonder Years”
- 7. Challah unit
- 8. Like Seinfeld’s “yada yada yada”: Abbr
- 9. Parshat ___ Mot
- 10. It keeps you up
- 11. Food or shelter, e.g.
- 12. Reebok or Naot alternative
- 13. Kind of korban
- 18. Rode around HaYarkon Park
- 23. Routing word
- 25. Ben Gurion data, briefly
- 26. Hang ___
- 27. Connection device
- 28. In the know
- 29. Famously funny Gilda
- 30. A boy getting his bris, e.g.
- 31. Chip dip
- 32. Ehud killed him
- 33. Skull ___ (keph)
- 36. C.I.A. predecessor
- 38. “Dirty” Dead Sea treatments
- 40. Burger Ranch listing
- 42. Worked hard at
- 43. Ahmed who owns American Pharoah
- 46. Suffix with cash, cloth or hotel
- 47. Late writer Nora
- 50. Genesis creator?
- 51. ___-Ra (Egyptian god)
- 52. “Weapon” of Yuri Foreman or Floyd Mayweather
- 53. Got gray
- 54. Some Shekel coins
- 56. Puts on YES or NBC
- 57. Actor Billy of “Titanic”
- 58. An Israeli online news source
- 61. Actress Green of “Casino Royale”
- 62. Blood-typing system

- 63. “Holy cow!”
- 64. Like the numbers 18 and 36
- 65. Matt Damon’s action franchise character
- 66. Paul Rudd’s tiny friends in the Marvel Universe
- 67. Danny Tanner and Phil Dunphy, on TV
- 68. Genesis, e.g.

- 26. Hang ___
- 27. Connection device
- 28. In the know
- 29. Famously funny Gilda
- 30. A boy getting his bris, e.g.
- 31. Chip dip
- 32. Ehud killed him
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- 61. Actress Green of “Casino Royale”
- 62. Blood-typing system

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- Condiments*
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- Canned vegetables and fruits*
- Canned meats*
- Toiletries for adults & children*

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.

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- ▶ Community Directory
- ▶ Synagogue news
- ▶ Local Organization news
- ▶ Jewish Federation updates
- ▶ Community Calendar
- ▶ Holocaust Museum news
- ▶ Candle Lighting Times
- ▶ Business Directory
- ▶ Rabbinical Reflections
- ▶ Israel updates
- ▶ Photos of recent events
- ▶ and much more

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Reach our affluent, informed, health-conscious, and savvy readers who are looking for new and better ways to enrich their lives and those of their loved ones. L'CHAYIM – the monthly newspaper published by the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties – is mailed to 5,000 residents in the area. Additional copies are available at the Jewish Federation office.

Life-Enriching Information

Each month, readers of L'CHAYIM get news and updates on all Jewish-related local events including the Jewish Film Festival, Jewish author programs, holiday celebrations, concerts, food festivals, book study groups, timely lectures, mah jongg and much more. They also get updates from the area’s synagogues and numerous local Jewish organizations. It’s the place they turn to for community news, the community calendar, candle lighting times, and a business directory.

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For more information or to place an ad in L'CHAYIM:
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Over 60 FIDF leaders from across U.S. visit Israel for exclusive look into Israeli soldiers' lives

NEW YORK, November 19 – More than 60 leaders and supporters of Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) from all walks of life and from across the United States traveled to Israel last week as part of the FIDF National Leadership Mission, getting an exclusive look into the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and showing their solidarity with and appreciation for Israel's brave soldiers.

The mission, November 10-17, brought members of FIDF's 20 chapters

modest means; toured pivotal military installations, such as the Ramat David Air Force Base, to get a comprehensive look into the cutting-edge technology Israel employs to protect its skies and borders; and heard firsthand from IDF combat soldiers serving on Israel's front lines.

Leading the FIDF National Leadership Mission were FIDF National President and Mission Chairman Peter Weintraub and FIDF National Director and CEO Maj. Gen. (Res.) Meir Klifi-Amir.

"This National Leadership Mission allowed our supporters and the brave men and women of the IDF to forge even deeper bonds of friendship," said Klifi-Amir. "These young soldiers risk their lives every day serving the State of Israel and protecting Jews around the world. This mission allowed our supporters to see the life-changing

impact their contributions make. It also offered our supporters a rare opportunity to personally thank IDF soldiers for their service, and to learn more about how we can support their well-being even more."

He added: "For Israeli soldiers, the chance to meet the men and women who support FIDF, while the soldiers are serving, and right on their own army bases, gives them a powerful morale boost and helps them see the critical role they play in the lives of Jews everywhere."

"For one incredible week, we brought American FIDF supporters to Israel to visit the IDF's brave and

devoted soldiers and tell them, in one unified voice, how much we appreciate and support them," said Weintraub. "We had unprecedented access to their daily lives, visiting them on their bases across Israel and hearing their stories firsthand."

grams 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



Israel Border Police Commander Maj. Gen. Yaakov (Kobi) Shabtai with FIDF National Director and CEO Maj. Gen. (Res.) Meir Klifi-Amir and FIDF National President and Mission Chairman Peter Weintraub at a Border Police base on November 12



The delegation of American FIDF supporters in front of an F-16 fighter jet at Ramat David Air Force Base near Haifa, Israel, on November 15 (Photo credits: Shahar Azran)

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 pro-

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.

For daily news stories related to Israel & the Jewish world, visit the Federation's website at www.JewishFederationLCC.org.

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Top 7 reasons Israeli TV shows are smash hits abroad

As Israel's hit TV show *Fauda* prepares to launch its second season, we take a look at why Israeli TV producers have such a magic touch for shows that transcend international boundaries.

By Abigail Klein Leichman, ISRAEL21c, www.israel21c.org, November 27, 2017

What makes Israeli television formats like *In Treatment*, *Homeland* and *Fauda* so enthusiastically embraced in translation by global viewers? Why are Israeli-originated series such as *Greenhouse Academy*, *Hostages* and *The A Word* instant hits in countries from Finland to Thailand?



Cast of *Greenhouse Academy*, a Netflix show shot on location in Israel (photo by Ronen Akerman)

According to the Israeli Export Institute, global TV and film sales from Israel tallied \$268 million in 2016. Netflix online video service offers a dozen Hebrew-language shows to subscribers. Last September, buyers and producers from a whopping 28 countries came to Tel Aviv for the second international TV Formats Conference.

Israeli TV formats are varied, from nail-biting dramas like *Prisoners of War* to fun quiz shows like *Still Standing*. And the reasons for their popularity are just as varied.

1. They're character-driven

"It's the compelling characters that draw you," says Adam Berkowitz, co-head of the television department at Creative Artists Agency (CAA) in Los Angeles and president of the international TV

Formats Conference.

"These are characters who deal with complex issues, and because Israel is a Western society those issues resonate with American viewers.

The focus on characters results in part from a lack of big money in Israeli TV production to do expensive action or adventure shows. Which leads us to the second reason Israeli TV formats are popular abroad...

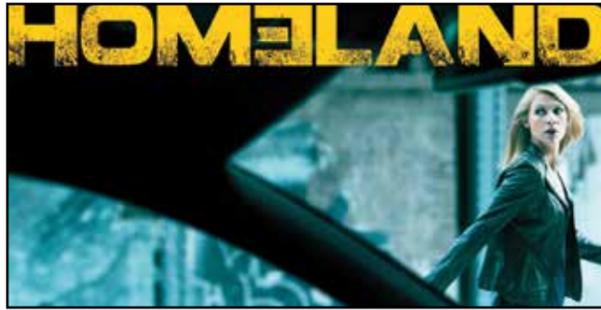
2. They're low-budget

Israeli shows are attractive to studios because, relatively speaking, they don't take pots of cash to produce.

Avi Armoza, CEO of Armoza Formats, which has sold 60 Israeli TV formats abroad, told *Haaretz*

that Israelis have "gained the experience and knowledge on how to be creative with our solutions and produce cost-effective shows that still have the appearance of big-budget productions, making them more accessible and attractive to other territories."

Homeland, one of the most expensive Israeli TV formats, was made in



Claire Danes in the award-winning American version of *Homeland* on Showtime

Berlin in 2015 for a reported \$45 million for 12 episodes, while American *Homeland* episodes each cost Showtime \$3 million to produce. That's more than the average \$2 million for cable shows made that year but much less than *Game of Thrones* episodes that clocked in at \$6 million apiece and now cost \$15 million.

3. They're not afraid to take risks

Just as Israelis in general comfortably embrace risk-taking and uncertainty, the Israeli TV formats industry doesn't hesitate to take a chance on innovative and unusual ideas, in contrast to traditionally conservative production industries elsewhere that are more likely to reject a new idea that's not a sure bet. Once it's been proven in Israel, an out-of-the-box show format is an easier sell abroad.

A case in point is *The A Word*, which portrays a family with an autistic child. It's based on the Israeli series *Yellow Peppers*.

4. They have international appeal

Aside from creating characters anyone can relate to, Israeli producers (like Israeli high-tech entrepreneurs) think internationally in their business models due to Israel's small domestic market.

One example is Keshet, Israel's biggest production house, which has opened branches in Los Angeles, London, Hong Kong and Mexico City to sell shows, help create foreign adaptations and produce original programming overseas.

5. They feature compelling storylines

Walter Iuzzolino, head of British streaming ser-

vice Walter Presents, recently told *Bloomberg Business Week* that Israeli TV formats are "emotionally poignant, three-dimensional and never boring." That could be thanks to the next two reasons.

6. They depict the melting pot of Israeli society

In an age when global viewers are eager to drill deeper into the psychology of foreign cultures, Israeli shows are just what the doctor ordered. Concentrated into a very small space, Israelis comprise Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze natives and immigrants from across the world, many of them from North African/Middle Eastern nations and the former Soviet Union. How everyone gets along (or doesn't) is endlessly entertaining.

7. They reflect the daily drama of Israeli life

The underlying themes of war, terror, religious and political conflicts – and the everyday challenge of getting along with neighbors of different cultures (see No. 6) – provide rich fodder for Israeli producers.

The sometimes chaotic reality of Israeli life is reflected in the title of one of the biggest hits overseas, *Fauda*, which means "chaos" in Arabic. Action, humor, suspense, melodrama – our TV shows have it all. ▲

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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Visit the Museums in Israel Portal at <http://www.museums.gov.il/en/>. (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

**NEW EILAT AIRPORT
TO OPEN IN 2018**

Eilat's Ilan and Assaf Ramon International Airport is set to open in April 2018.

The first civilian airport built since Israel was founded is located 19 km. north of Eilat in the Timna Valley and will replace the current airport located within the city itself. (Anna Ahronheim, *Jerusalem Post*)

**WHY A GROWING
NUMBER OF RELIGIOUS
WOMEN WANT TO SERVE
IN THE ISRAELI MILITARY**

All Israelis are drafted into the military at age 18, with a few exceptions.

Religiously observant women, known in Israel as modern Orthodox, traditionally have opted to enroll in national service, volunteering in schools or the community for a year or two, instead of the military.

But since 2010, the number of religious women who want to serve has jumped from 935 in 2010 to 2,499 in 2016.

They are increasingly choosing to serve out of a sense of duty to defend Israel, military officials and soldiers say.

Women make up roughly a third of Israel's military, compared with about 14% in the U.S. armed forces. The IDF says that today around 90% of all military jobs are open to women.

Brig.-Gen. Sharon Nir, the adviser on gender affairs to the IDF chief of

staff, said, "These women have realized the army is a very important component of feeling part of Israeli society, and they want to contribute to the state. They are religious Zionists – their brothers serve, and now they want to, too." (Ruth Eglash, *Washington Post*)

**231 IMMIGRANTS FROM
TWO "LOST TRIBES"
ARRIVE IN ISRAEL**

Members of two "lost tribes" – 162 people from India's Bnei Menashe and 69 from Ethiopia, reputedly descendants of the Tribe of Dan – arrived in Israel Thursday, November 16, to reunite with family members and make new lives in the country.

Some 1,700 Bnei Menashe have settled in Israel over the past 15 years, with a further 7,000 waiting to immigrate. (*Times of Israel*)

**ISRAELI AID TO SYRIANS:
WARM CLOTHING,
HEATING OIL AND A
MATERNITY HOSPITAL**

The IDF has facilitated the opening of a maternity hospital on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights – part of a significant expansion of Operation Good Neighbor, which provides Israeli assistance to war-ravaged Syrian villages near the Israeli border.

Lt.-Col. E., commander of the operation, explained, "You can't stand from the side and see your neighbor dying and living in hard conditions and

know that you can help them and not do so." The hospital opened in November in Bariqa in the Quneitra region. It is staffed entirely by Syrian doctors, while the incubators, beds and ultrasound equipment come from Israel.

The operation is expanding and reaching villages as far as 20 km. from the border in an area with 200,000 people. "We are...literally every day saving people's lives," Lt.-Col. E. said.

In preparation for winter, the IDF has provided 30 tons of warm clothing and a mass supply of diesel fuel so villagers can heat their houses. IDF supplies of flour have brought the price of bread down by at least half in the assisted villages. Lt.-Col. E. said, "The flour is free, the diesel is free, the vehicle [for transportation] is free. They just have to pay for the worker in the bakery." (Ben Lynfield, *Jerusalem Post*)

**ISRAEL HAS HIGHEST
FERTILITY RATE IN OECD**

Among the 35 developed countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), women in Israel have the highest birthrate, with 3.1 children. On average, a baby is born in Israel every three minutes.

Mexico placed a distant second with 2.2, and the fertility rate for France, the U.S., Britain, the Netherlands and Spain is less than 2. (Maytal Yasur Beit-Or, *Israel Hayom*)

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ISRAEL AS A STRATEGIC ASSET OF THE WEST

◆ In 1938, the Jews in what was then Mandatory Palestine established the village of Hanita, on the Lebanese border, against the wishes of the ruling British. Two years later, in 1940, the very same British authorities asked the Jews of Hanita for help as they planned to invade Syria to prevent the Vichy French government there from allowing a German army to build up there. Bridges over the Litani River were vital for the operation, and the

Jews were asked to capture and hold those bridges to prevent their destruction by the Vichy forces.

◆ Fifty young Jewish farmers from Hanita held the bridges for seven hours and repulsed ten mass attacks before regular Australian troops arrived. This was the operation in which Moshe Dayan lost his left eye, and his forces suffered over 50% casualties. The Israeli pioneers proved to be a vital strategic asset to Great Britain, as did the Jewish Legion of the British Army, which helped defeat the

Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Megiddo in 1918.

◆ In World War II the British Eighth Army included 30,000 Jewish volunteers, many of whom carried out extraordinary acts of heroism and devotion to duty in the face of horrific adversity.

◆ Moreover, the Jews of Palestine contributed much more to the Allied war effort than all of the Arab nations combined. The British army was supported in Palestine by 200,000 Jewish industrial workers and farmers and thousands more doctors, dentists and nurses. 7,000 factories and vast acres of agricultural land were placed at the disposal of British Empire Forces.

◆ In 1981, an Israeli strike destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor under construction in Baghdad, an attack that was condemned at the time but was later recognized as being an important factor in enabling the U.S.-led coalition to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait. In 2007, the Israeli Air Force destroyed the Syrian nuclear reactor in Deir ez-Zor region, preventing the Assad regime from acquiring atomic weapons or transferring nuclear material to Hizbullah and Iran.

◆ After 9/11, Western nations found themselves increasingly dependent on Israel's vast operational and counterterrorism experience, incomparable intelligence resources and highly developed technological sophistication. (Col. Richard Kemp, Commander of British Forces in Afghanistan, *Jewish Political Studies Review*)

POLL: MOST ISRAELI ARABS SAY THEY FEEL PART OF ISRAELI SOCIETY

54% of Israeli Arabs say they feel part of Israeli society, but 67% say Israel had no right to be defined as the national home of the Jewish people, according to a survey released by the Israel Democracy Institute.

69% of Jews and 74% of Arabs report that they have been employed where Jews and Arabs work together, and that 90% of Jews and 95% of Arabs defined the relationship between the employees as good or very good. (Prof. Tamar Hermann, Israel Democracy Institute)

POLL: 60% OF ISRAELI ARABS ARE "PROUD" TO BE ISRAELI

73% of Israeli Arabs feel a sense of

belonging and 60% are proud to be Israelis, according to a new poll commissioned by *Israel Hayom* that was released Tuesday, November 21.

46% identified as Israeli Arabs and 42% identified as Palestinian Arabs.

82% said they had no desire to live under Palestinian rule. (Baruch Ron, *Israel Hayom*)

ISRAELI SOCCER STAR NAMED CHINA'S PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Israeli soccer star Eran Zahavi, 30, was recently named the most valuable player in the Chinese Super League after finishing the season as the top goal scorer. His 27 goals for the season were one short of tying the league record of 28.

Zahavi has a \$7 million a year contract with the Guangzhou R&F club until 2020. (*Times of Israel*)

DEVELOPMENT OF ISRAEL'S LEVIATHAN GAS FIELD IS 30 PERCENT COMPLETE

Currently, the offshore Tamar gas field supplies Israel with 65% of its power needs.

Opening the larger Leviathan field will put Israel in a position as an energy exporter, said Binyamin A. Zomer, Noble Energy's vice president for regional affairs, which operates the two fields.

Noble Energy and its Israeli partners are investing \$3.75 billion in developing Leviathan off the Haifa coast, which is almost 30% complete.

The Leviathan production platform is being constructed at a shipyard in Corpus Christi, Texas. (Maayan Hoffman, *Jerusalem Post*)

ZUBIN MEHTA, FROM INDIA TO ISRAEL, MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC

Zubin Mehta, 81, an Indian Zoroastrian, has been the musical director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra for more than 50 years. "It started by chance," he says. "A great conductor, Eugene Ormandy, fell ill and couldn't do a series of concerts with the Israel Philharmonic in 1961. I was a jobless conductor in Vienna...and they called me to cover as a substitute."

He recalls there was "an immediate good feeling between me and the orchestra. We hit it off, musically and spiritually. And I felt very at home in Israel... Their temperament is very much like India. They all talk at the same time. They're very opinionated, very argumentative, very hospitable." (Tunku Varadarajan, *Wall Street Journal*)

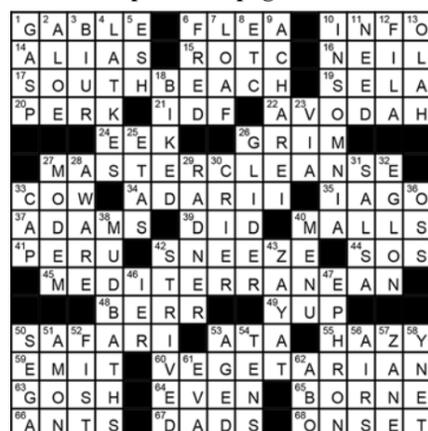
HOOPS IN THE HOLY LAND: AFRICAN-AMERICAN BASKETBALL PLAYERS EMBRACE ISRAEL

In the last 40 years, more than 800 African-Americans have relocated to Israel to play in the Israeli Basketball Premier League. David Goldstein, chief operating officer for USports, the governing body for university sports in

continued on next page

Jerusalem Post Crossword Puzzle

Solution to puzzle on page 18



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Briefs...continued from previous page

Canada, has written a new book about these players, *Alley-Oop to Aliyah*.

Many of these American players went to Israel begrudgingly, if only to showcase themselves for a bigger contract elsewhere. But many have stayed, living as culturally Jewish, while more than 20 eventually converted to Judaism. (Myles Dichter, CBC Sports)

NUMBER OF WOMEN IN IDF COMBAT ROLES REACHES RECORD HIGH

In 2017, 2,700 women were recruited into the IDF's four mixed-gender battalions and to the Home Front Command's Rescue Division, up from 600 in 2012.

Commander of the Rescue Division Col. Yair Barkat said that the young women's motivation to serve was exceedingly high, as was their quality.

The drop-out rate among female recruits was no higher than their male counterparts. (Yossi Yehoshua, *Ynet News*)

WITH IRAN ON ITS DOORSTEP, ISRAEL QUIETLY READIES GAME-CHANGING AIR POWER

Israel is making clear to Iran and its agents that it has no intention of allowing them to proceed with their plans to create a military outpost in Syria.

Israel's new aerial strike capabilities might well surpass any display of air power seen in military history thus far.

The Israel Air Force, together with the Military Intelligence Directorate of the IDF, has been quietly developing the ability to use precise intelligence, combined with precision-guided weaponry, to destroy up to several thousand targets in just a matter of hours.

As ISIS crumbles and the remainder of the Syrian Sunni rebels face defeat in Syria, Iran, which runs Assad's ground war, will be free to shift the focus of its Syrian presence toward Israel. (Yaakov Lappin, BESA Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University)

ISRAEL JOINS U.S. TO BRING SOLAR POWER TO AFRICA

Israel will join the U.S. Agency for International Development's Power Africa program, connecting millions of people to electricity with renewable

energy projects.

Israeli companies will now be eligible to receive USAID grants to penetrate the African market.

Israeli companies will be able to negotiate contracts in countries where there is no official Israeli presence, advancing major clean-energy projects and counterbalancing Chinese solar companies.

Two out of three people in sub-Saharan Africa lack reliable electricity. (Max Schindler, *Jerusalem Post*)

ISRAEL NAVY DEPLOYS SHIP-BASED IRON DOME

The Israeli military has declared operational capability of a ship-based version of the Iron Dome air defense system following a live-fire test that destroyed multiple incoming targets at sea. The system was deployed onboard the INS Lahav, a Sa'ar-5 corvette.

"Officially, from today, we added another operational layer to defend Israeli assets in the Mediterranean Sea," said Brig.-Gen. Zvika Haimovich, commander of the Air Force's Aerial Defense Division.

Iron Dome has been credited with more than 1,700 successful intercepts since it was first deployed in 2011. (Barbara Opall-Rome, *Defense News*)

ISRAEL'S ETERNAL CAPITAL GETS LONG OVERDUE RECOGNITION

Since Jerusalem was reunited 50 years ago, three of the world's major religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – have thrived in the city. Today, in one square kilometer, more functioning churches, mosques and synagogues exist in the Old City of Jerusalem than anywhere else in the world. And Jerusalemites have respected freedom of religion, freedom of movement and freedom of expression for all the city's residents. These values are what distinguish us from our enemies. These are not just Israeli values – they are values that we share with our strongest ally, the United States.

President Trump's bold decision brings us one step closer to peace. The certainty provided by the official U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the eternal and indivisible capital of Israel will enhance, not weaken, the peace process. (Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, *Jerusalem Post*) ▲

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COMMENTARY BRIEFS**WHY TRUMP IS RIGHT IN RECOGNIZING JERUSALEM AS ISRAEL'S CAPITAL**

President Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital is a perfect response to President Obama's decision to change American policy by engineering the UN Security Council resolution declaring Judaism's holiest places in Jerusalem to be occupied territory, handing the Palestinians enormous leverage in future negotiations and disincentivizing them from making a compromised peace.

The Security Council resolution changed the status quo by declaring Israel's presence at Jewish holy sites to be a "flagrant violation under international law." President Trump's decision to officially recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital helps to restore the appropriate balance.

Since virtually everyone in the international community acknowledges that any reasonable peace would recognize Israel's legitimate claims in Jerusalem, there is no reason for allowing the UN resolution to make criminals out of every Jew or Israeli who sets foot in these historically Jewish areas. President Trump was right to undo the damage wrought by his predecessor. (Alan M. Dershowitz, *The Hill*)

WORLD DOESN'T END AFTER TRUMP RECOGNIZES JERUSALEM

After decades of threats intimidated Trump's predecessors and other world leaders to pretend Jerusalem is not Israel's capital, it turned out that even the Palestinians couldn't manage much fury. The demonstrations in Jerusalem were more severe after Israel installed metal detectors at the entrance to the Temple Mount in July.

While some people may still hate Jews and wish Israel would disappear, most have accepted that after 70 years Israel is here to stay. Apart from Iran and radical Muslim terror groups such as Hamas and Hizbullah, no one is interested in waging war against Israel. For decades now, the Arab states have done little more than pay lip service to the Palestinian cause. They will vote with them at the UN, which costs nothing, but they have grown tired of financing their corrupt leaders.

Other nations should follow America's example. This will do more for peace because it will disabuse the Palestinians of the delusion that they will get a state along the '67 lines with Jerusalem as their capital. (Dr. Mitchell Bard, *Times of Israel*) ▲



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Endings and beginnings

On a typical evening, most of us eat dinner, maybe watch TV or read, brush our teeth and are asleep by midnight. On New Year's Eve however, many of us will put on party clothes, drink champagne, stay up late, and welcome in the new year 2018. Our secular celebration of the new year is precisely that – a celebration of the new year. We don't so much mark the end of the year, as count down to the beginning of a new one. Our new year's celebrations are full of joy and revelry, encouraging us to look forward, rather than help us understand or make meaning of the past.

In contrast, we approach the end of the book of Genesis, read on the last Shabbat in 2017, in a Jewish way. Whenever we reach the end of a book of Torah, we recite the special phrase "Chazak, chazak, v'nitchazek." "Be strong, be strong, may we be strengthened." The origins of the phrase come from a very significant end in Jewish history – the death of Moses. Moses, God's prophet, is gone, and Joshua is meant to lead the people. How does it feel to follow in Moses's footsteps? God immediately reassures Joshua, saying "chazak v'ematz: Be strong and resolute, do not be terrified or dismayed, for Adonai your God is with you wherever you go." We read this is



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

in the book of Joshua, the book immediately following Deuteronomy, which ends with the death of Moses. In the first nine verses of Joshua, God tells him three times "chazak v'ematz," be strong and resolute.

This is how we as Jews mark an ending: We say *chazak* first for the past. We ask God to help us be strong, *chazak*, in letting go, in saying goodbye. It takes strength to acknowledge the past, reflect upon it and feel ready to move on. We say *chazak* second for the future. We ask God to make us strong, *chazak*, in entering the unknown. We need strength to enter a new beginning, to welcome a new life, to readjust and learn new ways.

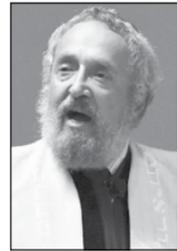
Finally, we repeat *chazak* a third time, saying *v'nitchazek*, meaning "may we be strengthened." Endings and beginnings are part of the human condition. We remind ourselves that we are not alone, that we are part of a community with rituals that guide us, people who support us, and a God who comforts us.

So no matter the ending we experience – watching our children develop, completing medical treatment, entering into a new year or completing a book of Torah – we say "*chazak, chazak v'nitchazek*" – may we be strong in letting go of the past, may we be strong in welcoming the future, and may we find strength in each one another and in God.▲

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

Support in our community

Starting a secular new year is a natural time for reminiscences and taking stock of the changes in ourselves and in all that is around us. It is also a time for measuring what we've lost.



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

Thinking about it, over the decades I've witnessed quite a few changes in our Jewish community, almost all for the better.

I've seen several rabbis come and go, and had the solemn honor of presiding over the funerals of two of them, my dear friend Rabbi Simon Friedemann of Temple Beth El, and Community Rabbi Albert Cohen of Cape Coral and Lehigh. I've especially enjoyed watching newly-arrived rabbis trying to put down roots and do their best to impress their unique visions upon their congregations, always with the hope of moving things forward.

I am equally impressed with the ever-expanding level of human services the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties provides to our community. The Federation leadership – both volunteer and professional – is really on the right track and deserves the community's gratitude and support.

Of course, there is the Food Pantry and the holiday gift bag delivery, but there is also a great deal more behind-the-scenes direct support the Jewish Federation provides to those in crisis, especially through the Indigent Fund.

It should go without saying that the Pantry and the Fund always need more donations, and I know you'll want to do your fair share.

One really outstanding extension of the Jewish Federation's human services is its monthly Senior Lunch held in revolving synagogues in our area. The Federation's free Senior Lunches are more than just meals. They are an important means for regular Jewish companionship for people who often are too isolated. Moreover, these lunches are used as a creative outreach tool to find and keep track of aging members of our community, ready to offer a lifeline whenever needed. We've already hosted three of these luncheons at The Community Free Synagogue, and always look forward to the next one!

These Senior Lunches happen each month at different synagogues and are open to all at no charge. Don't miss the next one at noon on Thursday, January 18 at Temple Beth El, 16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers. Just call Jodi Cohen at the Federation at 239.481.4449 x6 to let her know you're coming.

It is often observed that the measure of a community is how it cares for its most vulnerable. Thanks to inspired leaders and volunteers, our little Jewish community is certainly coming of age and is on a wonderful trajectory. As they say in Hebrew: "*Yaylkhu mehayil 'el hayil* – May they go from one heroic act to the next!"▲

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

A 30th anniversary, Soviet Jews, and the making of history

By David Harris, AJC CEO, November 29, 2017

On December 6, 1987, 30 years ago, more than 250,000 people gathered in Washington to call on the Kremlin to open the gates and let Soviet Jews emigrate. Freedom Sunday, as it came to be known, was the largest Jewish-organized gathering in American history.

The timing was not random.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was scheduled to meet with U.S. President Ronald Reagan in the White House the very next day. It was to be the Soviet leader's first official visit to the U.S. since he assumed office in 1985, following the death of Konstantin Chernenko.

In 1987, the number of Jews allowed to leave the USSR was pitifully low. Many Soviet Jews continued to languish in the Gulag for their activism, while some refusenik families had been living in limbo behind the Iron Curtain for years, if not longer.

I had the privilege of serving as the national coordinator of Freedom Sunday. It was an indescribably exhilarating and inspiring experience, but there were challenges aplenty.

First, we had barely five weeks' notice of Gorbachev's arrival date to plan the event. The myriad details, big and small, made it a 24/7 job for the dedicated team in charge of assembling the pieces.

Second, the previous record attendance for a Jewish rally in Washington was 12-13,000 people. That was to support Israel in a defining time of war – June 1967.

What would our number look like against that unimpressive backdrop, especially in the dead of winter? Could a poor turnout actually damage the Soviet Jewry cause by signaling to the Kremlin a low level of interest in the issue?

And third, despite the impression of a united Soviet Jewry movement, there were deep fissures between the

so-called, if misnamed, "establishment" and the "activists." (Having been detained twice by Soviet authorities, expelled from the country once, denied entry to the USSR because of my "past political history," and involved in clandestinely sending thousands of Jewish books and other items to Soviet Jews, was I disqualified from being an "activist" because I was connected to an "establishment" organization, the American Jewish Committee?) Would everyone put aside their perceived differences and stand together as one for this single day?

Much credit goes to Natan Sharansky, the legendary prisoner of conscience who spent nine years in the Soviet camps before being released in 1986, for setting the organizers' sights high. He insisted that there must be a mass rally, and set the goal at 250,000 participants. Frankly, no one had a clue how we might attain the number, but Sharansky, given his personal history of staring down the KGB, was not easy to dissuade.

It was extraordinary to watch those 35 days of preparation unfold. Most striking was to see the response of Jewish communities across the United States, in Canada and in other countries. Reports would trickle in of, first, one bus or planeload from a given city or college campus, then an updated report of two, or three, or four, or five.

Anecdotally, the organizers also began hearing about those planning to show up who said they had never before attended a protest rally, but felt this was history in the making and wanted to be a part of it.

It was especially noteworthy to see how many times people referred to the Holocaust, citing the ineffectiveness of the Jewish community here during the Second World War and saying that American Jews needed to learn the lessons of their own history and speak out.

In the end, more than 250,000 people participated, including, it should be noted, a sizable number of non-Jews. The weather was brisk but sunny. There was no shortage of prominent speakers, among them U.S. Vice President George H.W. Bush. Indeed, one of the biggest challenges, in the end, turned out to be trying to manage the large number of political and civic leaders, former Soviet Jewish prisoners and refuseniks, and other notable figures who wanted to speak – and, more often than not, ignored the strict time limit we put on each speech!

Media coverage was extensive. Perhaps most significantly, Voice of America broadcast the rally to Soviet listeners, which, we later learned, was a huge morale boost for Jews sitting by their radios.

And, as has been documented, when Reagan and Gorbachev met in the Oval Office the next day, the American leader cited the rally as an unmistakable expression of public opinion and urged his Soviet counterpart to heed the message.

The rest, as they say, is history. The gates began to open and Soviet Jews started to leave in large numbers. Eventually, more than a million Russian-speaking Jews settled in Israel,

profoundly transforming the country and revitalizing the Zionist spirit.

Unexpectedly, Germany became the fastest-growing Diaspora community in the world, with tens of thousands of new arrivals from the Soviet space. And the U.S. drew hundreds of thousands, to the point where more than ten percent of the Jewish community hails from the Soviet Union – or now, in one of my favorite sets of initials, the FSU.

Not only is this whole story important in and of itself, but it can also serve as a case study in what is possible, against all the odds, if only the Jewish people stand together, persevere and join forces with others of good will. Yet, disappointingly, the event seems largely to have faded from view, rarely cited in synagogues, schools or communal discussion.

December 6 is a date worth remembering and celebrating for what it achieved – and, above all, as a telling reminder of what is potentially within our grasp.▲

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

What do you think?

L'CHAYIM wants to know!

Send your letters and comments to Ted Epstein, L'CHAYIM Editor, at LChayim36@gmail.com.

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Letters must include the writer's full name, full address and daytime phone. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. We reserve the right to edit for length and/or accuracy. Letters do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of L'CHAYIM nor its advertisers. We cannot acknowledge or publish every letter received.

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The feminist leaning of the Bible

Often, people say how biased Jewish tradition is against women beginning with the Hebrew Bible. A closer look at biblical stories presents the opposite viewpoint.

Over and over again in the Bible it is the woman who gets it and the man who is clueless. Eve has been maligned for generations for the so-called fall of man, but really she is the heroine of the elevation of humanity. It was she, not her husband, who perceived that life in Eden – while idyllic – was sterile and essentially without meaning. It was she who saw (Genesis 3:6), «ליכשהל צנה דמהנו» (*va-nechmad ha-etz l'has-keel*), the tree of knowledge was desirable as a source of wisdom; she took of its fruit and ate.

Other examples abound. Rebecca understands God's plan, but her husband Isaac is literally and figuratively, in the dark. Judah evolves from the man who sold his brother away as a slave to the man who would not leave this other brother behind through the tutelage of his daughter-in-law Tamar.

Hannah is savvy and aware. Her husband Elkanah, and Eli, the high priest of Israel, just don't get it. Rahab, Vashti, Esther, Ruth, Deborah and Yael... the list of female heroes is long, and their influence is substantial.

“What could we do better?”

There's a group of regulars at the gym at 5:45 a.m. with whom I exchange pleasantries before I begin my workout. One woman – who's walking out the door when I first get there! – has engaged me in conversation from time to time. One day she asked me what I did for a living. When I told her, she said, “Oh, I grew up in a Jewish family but now, I guess, I'm Messianic,” showing me her Magen David and her cross. I kept my smile but felt a deep pain. Another Jew has left our people. A couple of days later, I tried to give her my card, but she avoided me. She wasn't interested in coming back.

And she was not the only one. I had two other recent encounters with people who, when they learned that I was a rabbi, said that they had grown up in Jewish families but were no longer Jewish. I feel a stab of pain every time I hear this. I wonder, “Where did we fail this family? What spiritual need did we not fulfill? How was it so easy to walk out the door of Judaism and the Jewish people?”

These are not new Jewish questions. Throughout our history, whenever we've lived in a society that is open, some of us have left the Jewish people. The late Arthur Hertzberg wrote about American Jews, that three generations after each wave of Jewish immigration to this country, roughly one-third has left the Jewish community.

I know that this is not the whole picture. I regularly get calls from people who are interested in becoming Jewish. At my congregation, Jews-by-choice are active in all areas of synagogue life. All branches of the Jewish community have people embracing Judaism and the Jewish people. This in-

Moses is unquestionably the Bible's most important figure, but he owes his entire career to the vital intervention of no fewer than six women: Shifrah, Puah, Miriam, Yocheved, Pharaoh's daughter and his wife Zipporah. Without them, Moses never would have become our liberator, lawgiver and leader. Through their stories and commentaries, the rabbis of the Talmud and Midrash embellish each of their roles. (For more on the six women who saved Moses' life, see chapter X, “Six Women Heroes: Where Would We Be without Them,” in *What's in It for Me? Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives*, available on amazon.com)

In our day, only the complete and unquestioned equality of women and men is the acceptable goal. We have made great progress, but we still have a long way to go.

The task of our generation is twofold:

1. To interpret the Bible to all of those who will hear our voices and/or read our words so that women receive the enormous credit they are due for the roles they play, and credit they do not receive in traditional circles.

2. To continue the forward progress in women's rights begun by the Sages of the Mishnah until women and men are held in completely equal regard.▲ *Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs serves at Bat Yam Temple of the Islands on Sanibel Island.*

flux of people searching for a religious home, some not coming with a Jewish partner, gives me joy.

But even with the good news of people joining us, every person who walks away hurts. While I believe that synagogues must keep their doors wide open to anyone who walks in, I don't know if we can get many of these people back. I do think there are things we can do to improve our product. Here are two:

◆ Jewish education must be excellent. It must teach children to read Hebrew – and even comprehend some Hebrew – and to be very comfortable with the siddur. The late Neil Gillman, the dean of the Rabbinical School at JTS during my years there, told us this: “Your congregants will be highly accomplished professionals in their everyday lives. They won't walk into the synagogue if they cannot follow the service and feel uncomfortable every time they do.” I have never forgotten that.

◆ No one should be denied access to Jewish life because of money. We in synagogue life certainly know that it is hard work to raise the money to keep our lights on and our programs going. We need everyone to contribute whatever they can. But we also want Jewish life to be open to everyone who wants to participate.

We in organized Jewish life must constantly ask ourselves, “What can we do better?” All healthy communities must ask that question. Every time I hear someone say, “I grew up in a Jewish family,” I wonder what went wrong. The vitality of our people necessitates our asking how we can improve what we do, to make it much harder to walk out the Jewish door.▲ *Rabbi Marc Sack serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers.*

Man is likened to a tree in the field

The holiday of Tu B'shevat is celebrated this year on January 31. Tu B'shevat is the New Year for Trees. A New Year for Trees, in and of itself, might not seem like a very important holiday to celebrate or even acknowledge. And yet it is celebrated in various ways with different customs all over the world.

It would be appropriate to mention a few thoughts about the significance of trees in Judaism. We are told, for instance, that if one is planting a tree and is informed that Moshiach has arrived, he must first finish planting the tree before he goes on to anything else.

Whenever the Jews were involved in a war, they were enjoined never to cut down a fruit-bearing tree, so precious are they considered.



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

The Sabbath paused and poised

How often do we receive advice? Welcome it? Ignore it? Often even resent it?

“Look before you leap!” “Stop, look and listen!” “Think ahead!” “You only have one chance to make a good first impression!”

But typically, what do we often do?



■ Rabbi Devora Buchen

We plunge ahead. We ignore all the warning signs and flashing lights. And what happens? We wind up a bull in a china shop; breaking rules of polite entry; asking stupid questions; persuading all there that we lack

forethought and don't know what we are doing. Awkward mumbled apologies or oops do nothing to hide the impression that you are now perceived as questionable or damaged goods.

But why then do we do it again and again? And in many different settings: work, social gatherings, meetings, public events, private life, etc.

There are many explanations. A basic one is that we have not been educated to value pause. Instead, we have created a culture that binds success to speed. We generated an expectation that there is not enough to go around for everyone except for risk takers and short cutters. The net result is a convergence of the short term and the abandonment of the big picture. We get there faster but it may not be where we want to be. And in the process, we emerge smaller, more humbled and diminished.

What can pause do? It is the culture of creative hesitation. Is it an occasional or even a one-time intervention? If we step back and view the basic stages of all operations, we find the following recurrent sequence: Before, During and After. Two additional matching sets of more familiar equivalents might be added: Past, Present and Future; or

In addition, there are various laws and customs concerning eating fruit from new trees and cross-breeding different types of fruit-bearing trees.

Man is likened to a tree in the field. If a seed or seedling is planted in rich, well-dug soil, given proper care, sun and water, it will grow strong, deep roots and produce beautiful, healthy fruit.

An infant or young child, placed in an environment rich in Judaism, given a well-thought-out education, proper care and other necessities, will grow strong deep roots in his own heritage and produce accomplishments and achievements that are beautiful and healthy.

May we all merit to raise our own children, to help others raise their children, or to raise the “child within” to be beautiful, healthy and “fruit-bearing.”▲ *Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida.*

Forethought, Action and Reflection.

This vocabulary of equivalents serves as the critical context for an analysis of the role of pause:

1. Stop

This first step of pause is absolute. No movement back or forward, up or down. Total stasis. Completely inert. Pause is a state of zero, the ultimate state of receptivity. In a condition of stop, you are opened to movements not of your own making or control.

2. Look

Stop not only changes time but also space. Perspective expands incrementally. The near becomes far, the range stretches easily to the horizon, and inexplicably, an awareness of an interior space equal in size emerges simultaneously. Everything is magnified, enlarged to almost global proportions. Initially, overwhelming and unusable, the state of look suggests beginnings; a beginning almost of the order and scale of original creation.

3. Listen

Total silence. There is no sound. All is totally still. But suddenly the silence is broken by of all things my breathing. To be sure, it is now somewhat more labored and anxious by the recent changes in stop and listen. But it soon calms down as it takes over and slowly adjust its tempo, depth and focus.

Almost magically the initially distant landscape of stop and the frozen state of time and of listen become less hostile and oppositional as the breathing deepens and softens the edges of contrasts. All begin to merge into one aligned vision in which stop, look and listen are integrated and made one.

And then the final gift of pause appears; the first-time perception of ourselves in the rare state not of always becoming but of Being – and then of being welcomed into the embracing world of the Sabbath as if we always belonged there, all the time.▲ *Rabbi Devora Buchen serves at Temple Beth Shalom in Cape Coral.*

For a continuously updated calendar of events, visit www.JewishFederationLCC.org.

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March 6
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"Celebrating Passover"
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

April 26
Temple Judea
"Fun on Lag B'Omer"
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

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.



RSVP to Leni at lenibsack@jfedlcc.org or 239-481-4449 Ext. 3

TEMPLE JUDEA SCHOOLS
Fort Myers

Temple Judea Religious School
Liz Singer
Dir. of Congregational Learning
In December we celebrated our 3rd graders who recently began their B'nai Mitzvah journey with the addition of Hebrew School to their weekly schedule. They join older students who have



already been displaying their commitment by attending Hebrew School. The students received their very own siddur and kippah, both of which are personalized and will be used as they move

The Spirit of Shabbat

Join your teachers and favorite teens at the **Madrichim Shabbat**.
Friday, January 19th, 2018 at 6:15 PM
The teens are adding their own twist to the service so don't miss out!

forward in their learning. We wrapped up our monthly value of "B'tselem Elohim – Being Made in God's Image," and began learning about the new value "Gvurah – Strength," which intentionally coincided with learning about Hanukkah and, more specifically, the story of the Maccabees. Meanwhile, our various *chugim* (clubs) have also been very busy. The music *chug* has everyone greeting "Boker Tov, Boker Tov, Boker tov, tov, tov." The cooking *chug* has been making knishes and rugelach, all while learning about the history of the foods. The media *chug* has been busy working on a project where they have been documenting on film various community members' stories of their Jewish journey. So everyone has been very busy and learning the entire scope of the Jewish experience.

On January 19 we will be handing over the Friday night services, which will be tailored for our congregation by our very own *Madrichim* (teen helpers). They will put a contemporary spin on our traditional service with readings and new spins on familiar prayers. As always, our services are open to the public, and this is definitely one not to miss. On January 28, the Religious School will be hosting our first *Yom Limud* (Day of Learning). We invite students of all ages to come to the synagogue so that it may be a school for all. Both children and adults on this day will be focusing their learning on the holiday of Tu B'Shevat. Hopefully, this will be the beginning of a long holiday tradition at Temple Judea.

TEMPLE BETH EL SCHOOLS
Fort Myers

Temple Beth El Religious School
Dale M. Cohen, R.J.E., MA.Ed.
Religious School is ready to forge into the year 2018. Time is going by too quickly and it seems like we just finished celebrating Rosh Hashanah (not really, but it sounds good). I hope that everyone had a wonderful Chanukah, winter break, and a great New Year's celebration, and are ready to get back into the swing of things. Religious School will officially resume Sunday, January 7 (this is a makeup day from Hurricane Irma) and Wednesday, January 10.

We have some wonderful additions to our current curriculum. Isaac Osin (who is currently baking our delicious challahs for Shabbat) will be baking with our Religious School students, and my husband Nir will be cooking some Israeli specialties with our students as well.

Thank you to our students, parents and congregants who participated in our World's Finest Chocolate fundraiser. It grossed approximately \$900 to help fund our many Religious School activities and programs. Mazel tov to Aliza Litvak, winner of the raffle. I am sure that she and her family will be enjoying that 5-pound chocolate bar for weeks to come, Grimaldi's, gelt for the movie, and movie tickets, so thought-

fully donated by our own Suzanne Orkin. We had a wonderful Chanukah celebration this year. *Todah rabah* to our incredible Vice President for Education, Vanessa Sax, and our outstanding Karen Kagan for always going above and beyond the call of duty. We have equally incredible volunteers who always step up to the plate. *Todah rabah* to my husband Nir and the latke crew, the entire Sax family and many others for your unwavering support of our scrumptious latkes. Karen, Evan and Abby Kagan have been awesome at always helping me out. I am eternally grateful for that. Our next Junior Congregation will be held on Saturday, January 20. Please note that this is a mandatory part of our curriculum for students in grades 4 through 7. This is a wonderful opportunity to be introduced to the Saturday morning liturgy. Parents, you are encouraged to attend with your children.

Our Tu B'Shevat celebration will be held on Sunday, January 28 during Religious School. The Torah praises seven fruits, particularly grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates. We will have a special Tu B'Shevat seder and will plant seedlings, decorate pots and sample many species of fruit during the seder.

Please note, there will be no Religious School on Sunday, January 14 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

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**JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA****(239) 566-1771****2018 Florida Jewish History Month***Marina Berkovich*

It is now practically a given that there will be many organizations and institutions offering a variety of choices to honor this month in Southwest Florida. Hard to imagine that just a few years ago this was not an event on anyone's agenda.

The Jewish Historical Society of SWFL likes to think we helped it along by introducing many fascinating stories of our Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers. We put on programs, like the Southwest Florida Jewish History Master Classes, and interview eyewitnesses of the fairly young local Jewish history. Many of you have already discovered our expanding Virtual Museum of Southwest Florida Jewish History and explored excerpts from the interviews and clips from the films we produce.

We hear from some of our "stars" that they are pleased to see that their stories were presented with warmth,

love and care, as if by family members. And that's the way it is – each oral-visual history participant becomes a

JHSSWF "family."

As for me, after all the time I personally researched Abraham Myers' life, I am pretty proud to have him as my Southern "ancestor" along with all his troubles. If you attended our 2017 Master Classes, you learned about some of his failures and trials, and his marriage, which effectively ended the Jewish line of his name, while immortalizing it as Fort Myers.

"The Timeline of Southwest Florida Jewish History" is a presentation that will be added to our Virtual Museum and taken on the road in 2018, with the help and support of our members and volunteers.

JHSSWF membership is on the increase, and we encourage you to begin this month by renewing yours, subscribing to our lists, and attending our 2018 Florida Jewish History Month Celebration with Murray Hendel at the Hilton Naples on Sunday, January 21 at 11:00 a.m.

The sixth film in the *Southwest*

Florida Jewish Pioneers Film Series, *Murray's Mile* will premiere at this event, which is expected to sell out. The Honorary Chairman is Naples Mayor Bill Barnett. Collier County Sheriff Kevin Rambosk and U.S. Representative and former U.S. Ambassador Francis Rooney headline the long list of dignitaries.

Individual tickets are \$85 and may be purchased by check or online at <https://jhsmurrayhendel.eventbrite.com>, or email office@jhsswf.org.

To advertise in the event program, purchase a table or become an event sponsor or a Society member, please email jhsswf@gmail.com.

It is customary to summarize the outgoing year and make resolutions for the coming year just about now, so I will say that following in Murray's footsteps for a part of 2017 has shown me that nothing is impossible if one wants to break barriers, create new paths, leave a lasting positive impression rooted in dignified honesty and integrity, even when at times, opinions and goals may clash or collide, and adversaries may be numerous and relentless. Murray's determination to make a meaningful impact on this commu-

nity is a lesson many of us will benefit from. My resolution for 2018 is to make certain all our Southwest Florida Jewish Pioneers get their stories captured. May 2018 bring to the Jewish Historical Society of SWFL and to all Jews, unbroken peace and mazel in the year of Chai.

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

**ZIONIST ORG. of AMERICA
Southwest Florida Chapter****(914) 329-1024****ZOA presents****Dr. Asaf Romirowsky***Jerrold L. Sobel*

On May 14, 1948 (5 Iyar 5708 in the Jewish calendar), David Ben-Gurion, the Executive Head of the World Zionist Organization and the Chairman of Jewish Agency for Palestine, proclaimed the Declaration of Israeli Independence. No doubt the seminal moment in modern Jewish history due to events just prior.

Concluding the Declaration in the second to last paragraph, Ben-Gurion stated, "We extend our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish

bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared

to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East."

The very next day, a day the Palestinians would come to regret, five Arab armies descended upon the nascent Jewish state with the expressed intent of genocide. They failed to achieve this goal and, for all intents and purposes, the Arab/Israeli conflict of 1948 has not yet ended. As a consequence of this war, Islamists throughout the world have ruefully commemorated May 15, 1948, as the "Day of Disaster," or "Nakba" in Arabic.

There are many foundational pillars which have festered this generational conflict: potential borders of a

proposed Palestinian state, Jerusalem, lack of recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, and other seemingly irreconcilable problems, but none greater than the Nakba.

Disputing the realities of war, sources sympathetic to the Arab viewpoint have since claimed the events of 1948 as a fulfillment of a long dreamed-of Zionist plan to rid Palestine of its Arab population, expelling them from their homes, and transforming Palestine into a Jewish state. As a holy grail to this argument, Palestinians are insistent that not only those displaced by the war be allowed the right of return but their progeny as well.

Jewish historians vehemently dispute this claim and offer that the Arabs in Palestine were asked to stay and live as citizens in the Jewish state. Instead, they chose to leave, either because they were unwilling to live with the Jews, or

because they expected an Arab military victory which would annihilate the Zionists. They thought they could leave temporarily and return at their leisure. Later, an additional claim was put forth, namely that the Palestinians were ordered to leave, with radio broadcasts instructing them to quit their homes.

On Wednesday January 10, world-renowned Middle East researcher Dr. Asaf Romirowsky will return to our area and speak at Chabad Jewish Center of Naples (1789 Mandarin Rd.). His topic of discussion will be "Nakba: The Source of Arab Israeli 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 at jerrysobel@aol.com or 914.329.1024.

**HUMANISTIC JEWISH HAVURAH
of Southwest Florida****(239) 495-8484****A look at anti-Semitism
and Islamophobia***Paula Creed*

Are you interested in hearing an intelligent voice from the Muslim community address the prejudice and racist chaos going on in America? Samar Jarrah, a Kuwait-born Palestinian-American, will be our presenter at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 21 in the David G. Willens Community Room at the Federation office. To make your reservation, contact Dena Sklaroff at

denas27@aol.com or 239.591.0101.

Samar lived in Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan before moving to the U.S. in 1989. She worked as a TV editor and reporter in Jordan. She holds a master's degree in International Relations and served as a political science instructor at the University of South Florida Tampa. Samar co-hosts a weekly live radio show called "True Talk" on WMNF 88.5 FM in Tampa. The show addresses Arab Muslim issues.

If one were to take a course on world religions, one would expect to learn about the differences among reli-

gions, but sometimes the most important differences can be found within a religious tradition. There are no more than 15 million Jews in the world, yet this small group contains tremendous diversity. Differences of religious observance divide ultra-Orthodox and secular Jews – for example, in the adherence to kosher dietary laws.

Often people are aware of the differences within their own groups but assume other groups to be homogeneous. This, unfortunately, seems to be true of the way many Americans perceive Muslims. If we think about the diversity among 15 million Jews worldwide, or among more than 300 million people of Christian heritage in North America, how much more diversity is found among the one billion Muslims around the world? A glance at diversity of the Muslim world reveals that in the United States, about 35% are South Asian, 33% are Middle Eastern and 25% are African American. There are also significant numbers of converts to Islam from diverse ethnic traditions.

There are also similarities between Judaism and Islam and, of course, all good people. Amir Hussain, professor in the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University, at a 2007 Colloquium titled "Jews and the Muslim World: Solving the Puzzle" held at the Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills, Michigan, described three things: "First is the love of learning. Second is the idea of social justice, and third is the notion of exile, a theme that runs throughout the Jewish tradition." Muslims who have immigrated to the United States and Canada, often

to escape oppression, are modern-day exiles.

Currently, Muslims in America are experiencing Islamophobia. Though nothing like the Holocaust, it bears a remarkable similarity to the anti-Semitism Jews experienced throughout their long history. We remember what it was like being persecuted as a foreign ethnic religious minority. As Jews we could understand the issues facing Blacks who were discriminated against, and now Muslims are seeking that same understanding from us. The question to consider is whether as Americans we are ready to stand with Muslims during their plight?

But Muslims in America are not alone. There is the growing trend of hating all minorities, especially Muslims and Jews. As a community that knows prejudice and racism, might we be able to unite and help other communities? Is this the time for Americans to think outside the narrow prism of the Arab-Israeli conflict and unite as a community with Muslims to help other minorities like Hispanics, refugees and new immigrants?

As Jewish humanists we believe the freedom and dignity of the Jewish people must go hand in hand with the freedom and dignity of every human being.

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

Mellow Mah Jongg

Each Tuesday afternoon, an open session of Mah Jongg is held at the Jewish Federation.

Players must be at least advanced beginners, as no lessons are given.

DAY: Tuesdays, 12:30~3:30 P.M.
FEE: \$1 per week



for more information call
Rona Strausberg at 239.949.9003



SHALOM LIFE CENTER

Fort Myers

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Lawrence & Robin Dermer

The Talmud states: "I did not find the world desolate when I entered it. My parents planted for me before I was born, so do I plant for all those who will come after me."

The family has always been central to Jewish life and culture. For our Jewish community to be vital and strong, we should embrace who we are today, realizing we no longer live in the 20th century or in the time of Abraham. Today, we come from many different and diverse backgrounds and continue to redefine what it means to be a family. We live in the 21st century, and face the challenges of life in a rapidly changing world. The times may change but what remains constant for us is the tradition

of building our families on love, nurturing, trust, stability and joy.

Why is it that before the Torah gives us any laws and commandments it describes the blessings and challenges of being part of a family? Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca – their lives, like ours, were not simple or straightforward. Children fought and made up, couples connected and broke up, there was love, loyalty and happiness as well as lying, deceit and jealousy. The full range of emotions existed, and through those familial bonds and challenges the Jewish people were born.

Family is the foundation upon which our Torah rests and is at the core of who we are as a Jewish people. G-d's promise to Abraham, "your children shall be as numerous as stars in the sky," was not in vain. Despite tre-

mendous odds, the power of love and togetherness prevailed, and the first families of Judaism birthed the twelve tribes of Israel. The Jewish people as a whole are described as "B'nei Yisrael – The Children of Israel," not descendants of the land, but of our patriarch Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. All the children of Israel, all of us, are part of one connected extended family. We are all *mishpacha*, we are all family, and family is the foundation upon which Shalom Life Center was built. Each one of us has a unique story, a tale of the ties that bind us together as one family.

One such story is that of Max Rabinovitsj, conductor of the Naples Orchestra & Chorus, violinist and Holocaust survivor. It is nothing short of a miracle that Max is alive today to share the magnificence of his music and his personal stories of his youth spent being hidden from the Nazis. Thanks to a

violinist who was hiding with him during World War II and his father's foresight, young Max had his first violin lessons. He survived while his teacher was caught and executed by the Nazis. Max went on to play with fellow soloists such as Isaac Stern and with composers such as Aaron Copland and Igor Stravinsky. Please join us on Friday, January 19 at 7:30 p.m., when we welcome our esteemed and talented special guest speaker and performer, Max Rabinovitsj.

Mark your calendar for our next big concert event on Saturday, January 13 at 7:30 p.m. Join us for "Captain Fantastic and the Kosher Cowboy," a musical journey through the decades of Elton John hits and country music favorites. For more information and to RSVP, call 239.218.3433, email info@shalomlifecenter.org, or visit our website at www.shalomlifecenter.org.

HADASSAH

Collier/Lee Chapter

(239) 370-6220

Karen Cohn

It is always a good time to remind everyone that your donation makes a difference, no matter how small or how large it is. In case you are not aware, Hadassah has many ways to donate.

Chai Society is a perfect way to begin the journey of giving. \$15 a month is all you need to begin. When you are a member of Chai Society, Hadassah can count on you every month. Email Luba Rotsztain at luba.laufer.rotsztain@gmail.com for more information.

The next level of giving is Keeper of the Gate and that begins with a yearly donation of \$1,000.

This donation will enable the extraordinary work of Hadassah to continue and grow in Israel and around the world. Saving lives through Hadassah

Medical Organization insures a vibrant Jewish future through Young Judaea, and educating Israel's leaders of tomorrow through Youth Aliyah and Hadassah College. Chair Ellen Harris can be reached at ehjh@comcast.net.

Major Gifts is another level which helped build the Sarah Davidson Wetman 19-story tower in Jerusalem.

A Perpetual Yahrzeit, which is one time donation of \$1,000, makes it possible to have Kaddish said at the designated date of a loved one's passing in the Fannie and Maxwell Abbell Synagogue located in the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center at Ein Kerem, Jerusalem. This is where the Marc Chagall glass windows are located, and the sound of the Kaddish being said is breath taking. Contact Chair Gale Lazarus at galedoll@aol.com.

Hadassah has a robust Designated Giving and Estates Program. If you

have a business that does matching, the Institutional Foundation/Corporate Giving Program is another matching way to give. For more information, contact Yael Shmookler, Director of Development North, Central Florida, and Southeast, at 443.824.9499.

What you get back is the knowledge that you made a difference in Israel. What you get back here in the United States is being a member of a terrific organization that advances the health and well-being of individuals, families and people around the world. Hadassah also advocates for issues impacting women, our society and health. To everyone who has already sent in donations, I personally say "Thank You."

This is my last L'CHAYIM article for Hadassah and I would like to thank co-President Gayle Dorio and my fabulous board, without whom we would be nothing. They put in a lot of hard work to make the programs fun, inter-

esting and educational. Lynn Weiner and Shelley Skelton are taking over on January 30, so come and be a part of the next generation of leaders.

Hadassah is an organization, as you know, that is the "Power of Women Who Do."

Upcoming events:

- Tuesday, January 30: Hadassah Installation Luncheon at the Vineyards CC, Carol Finn, carolthompson@mylegaledge.com
- Sunday, February 4: New Member Brunch, location TBA, Donna Goldblatt, mom443@aol.com
- Monday, February 5: Board Meeting at Temple Shalom
- Monday, February 12: Mah Jong / Card Party, Sandy Diamond, sandydiamond1@earthlink.net
- Sunday, February 25: Hadassah Fundraiser Brunch, Israel's 70th Birthday at the Hilton Naples, Lee Henson, lhenson13@gmail.com.

**GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

(239) 963-9347

Special GenShoah program emphasizes that survivors' stories must be preserved

Ida Margolis

Recently, I read that a Holocaust survivor dies every 45 minutes, more than a thousand Holocaust survivors pass away each month, and the average age of Holocaust survivors is 85. In our Southwest Florida community, while we had only a small number of survivors, some of them were willing to talk to students about their experiences. While we still have a few wonderful survivors in our community, their number is dwindling.

In Naples, we are very fortunate to have the Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida and our GenShoah SWFL, an affinity group of the Museum. This allows GenShoah to present numerous programs each season that are consistent with our mission of: promotion of Holocaust education and human rights, preservation of the history and memories of the Holocaust, connection of the Second Generation with one another, and support of the Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida.

The January GenShoah program is one of the most important that we have ever presented in that it is aimed specifically to accomplish our mission. Sandy Lessig is a Second Generation Holocaust educator, has served as co-chair of "The Generations After" of Houston, serves on the Board of Advisors of Holocaust Museum Houston, and

has been a docent there for many years. Sandy has developed "Through Their Eyes: A Survivor's Story," a unique program

that has been presented to Second Generation groups throughout the U.S. and internationally. The program showcases her late father's story by featuring segments of his oral testimony along with her live commentary.

"This interactive program pioneers a way to authentically share both the survivor's experience and the important lessons they teach after the survivors are no longer able to do so. The number of eloquent survivors is few and far between," said Michael Zank, the director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies at Boston University, who was mentored by Wiesel himself. "It puts the responsibility on us, the next generation, the children of survivors, and the grandchildren of survivors, to become as articulate as we can be in maintaining these memories and the mandate that comes with it."

Lessig is scheduled to present her program at the Holocaust Museum twice. The first presentation will be on Sunday, January 21 at 5:00 p.m.; the second will be on Monday, January 22 at 10:00 a.m. Lessig has agreed to present the same program twice to accommodate as many Second and Third Generation as possible. Space is very limited and reservations must be made by sending a check for \$18 per person to the Holocaust Museum (HMEC) at 4760 Tamiami Trail North, Suite 7, Naples, FL 34103. Please include your phone number and email address, and be sure to in-

dicate which session you will be attending.

Another program of special note will be held at the South Regional Library (8065 Lely Cultural Parkway, Naples) on Tuesday, January 16 at 2:00 p.m. In honor of Jewish History Month in Florida, the Academy Award-winning documentary *The Long Way Home* will be screened, followed by a Q&A facilitated by Steve Brazina. The film is a staggeringly powerful examination of

the critical post-World War II period and the plight of tens of thousands of refugees who survived the Holocaust "but whom most of the world left to fend for themselves." This event is free but reservations are required at <http://collierlibrary.org/programs>.

Information about future programs is listed below and in the GenShoah e-newsletter. For more information or to receive the e-newsletter, please email me at genshoahswfl@gmail.com.

**HAZAK 55+ CHAPTER
at Temple Judea**

(239) 433-0201

Joyce Rosinger

Join HAZAK on Sunday, January 21 at 4:00 p.m. to hear our guest speaker, Cynthia Williams. Cynthia will treat us to a visual presentation entitled "The Hidden History of Fort Myers." Dinner after the program will be at Saigon Paris Bistro in Fort Myers. For additional information, please call Jan Klein at 239.482.6073.

On Thursday, February 15, HAZAK will visit the Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida in Naples. The Museum will provide a docent. If needed, car pools will be formed at 9:00 a.m. in Temple Judea's parking lot. Contact Freda Confeld at 612.801.3758 if you wish to carpool. The group will have lunch at Brio Tuscan Grill in the Waterside Shops in Naples. RSVP is required for this program. For additional information and to RSVP, call Lynda Maslow at 239.703.7273.

December is when HAZAK began its membership drive, so if you haven't paid for or renewed your membership

yet, please do. We look forward to growing again this year. The new/renewal membership forms are available at Temple Judea. If you joined HAZAK within the last three months of 2017, your dues for 2018 are included.

Temple Judea's active HAZAK Chapter is a chartered member of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. 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 USCJ 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

Temple Beth El Sisterhood is sponsoring a Doo-Wop Motown show on Sunday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza in the Bell Tower Shops with music performed by Uptown Express. Tickets are \$35 for general seating and \$40 for priority seating (first five rows). To purchase tickets, call TBE at 239.433.0018 or go to templebethel.com. This will be an evening of fun and dancing. Get your tickets early. No tickets will be sold at the door. For more information, contact Bernice Turner at btcansing@hotmail.com.

Temple Beth El congregants are

stepping up to provide continuity for services and study. Prior to beginning her maternity leave, Rabbi Luna and Cantor Bessman set up programs in which congregants would volunteer to participate as lay leaders to assist the cantor during our Friday evening services. Each volunteer was required to prepare an original *D'Var Torah* pertaining to that week's Torah portion, if possible. A similar program, intended to continue the rabbi's stimulating Saturday morning Torah study classes, has been instituted. Several Friday night lay leaders also volunteered to act as facilitators on Saturday mornings for the duration of the rabbi's maternity leave. While we will miss Rabbi Luna's presence as she bonds with baby Iris Luna-Bord, we

are confident that these lay leader volunteers will provide enjoyable and interesting *D'Var Torah* discussions and the fellowship that develops through Torah study. Our sincere thanks to Cantor Bessman for his able and willing assistance. To each and every leader/participant: a hearty *yasher koach!*

In partnership with OneBlood and The Big Red Bus, Temple Beth El's recent blood drive resulted in donations of eight pints of blood. Each donation potentially saves three lives, so twenty-four patients could benefit from the lifesaving efforts of Temple Beth El blood donors. The Mitzvah Committee thanks all those who shared their power to save lives.

Jewish tradition knows quite a bit about loss and mourning. While the State of Florida was devastated by hurricanes in 2017, areas of Northern Cal-

ifornia were experiencing horrific fires. One such area was Santa Rosa, where thirty members of Congregation Shomrei Torah lost their homes and everything they owned, including *mezuzot*, menorahs and Shabbat candlesticks. Judaism offers actions to take, and while people are in mourning over all they have lost and feeling isolated, our tradition, in its wisdom, teaches that this is precisely the time to be in community. We are grateful to those who purchased and donated items of Judaica from our TBE Gift Gallery during our Hanukkah Bazaar on December 3. Three cartons of Judaica items were shipped to Congregation Shomrei Torah from Temple Beth El. Rabbi Luna offered to use money from her discretionary fund to pay for shipping to Santa Rosa with a note of support and friendship from Temple Beth El.

TEMPLE JUDEA
Fort Myers**(239) 433-0201**
www.tjswfl.org

The date of Temple Judea Sisterhood's Dairy Potluck Brunch was changed from December 3 to January 7. The Chaverot Membership Brunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. will be at the home of Lisa Bendetowicz. Along with their dairy or parve potluck dishes, members will bring personal stories of the journeys that led them to Fort Myers and Temple Judea. Call the synagogue office for more information and to reserve a space.

Dr. Ron Toll will be the guest speaker at the Shabbat dinner follow-

ing services on Friday evening, January 12. Dr. Toll's topic will be "Hurricanes: A Bit of a Different Spin." Dr. Toll holds a doctoral degree in Biological Oceanography from the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science of the University of Miami. Reservations for dinner are a must; call the synagogue office. Nonmembers are welcome to attend.

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 Sunday evenings: December 31, January 14 and 28. 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 monthly Torah study session 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 Thursday, January 11. (Please note change of schedule for the January Torah study from the usual first Thursday of each month.)

Hazak, Temple Judea's 55+ group, will sponsor the Shabbat service on December 30. In addition to members

of the group helping to lead morning services, Zohar ben Hamu, Temple Judea's shlichah, will be the guest speaker. Hazak will hold a monthly meeting on Sunday, January 21 at 4:00 p.m. at the synagogue.

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. The next Torah study is on January 11 (change of schedule this month only).
- Morning minyan every Monday at 9:00 a.m.

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 & 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 Labkowski
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

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM
Cape Coral

(239) 772-4555

www.templebethshalomcc.org

A hearty welcome back to the snowbirds. You were missed! Temple Beth Shalom has a lot of activities lined up to get you back in the swing of things, starting with our honoree banquet on Saturday, January 13. We will honor Stuart Berman and Marcia Strumwater for their dedication to the temple. Join us for a fun evening of good food, music and dancing. We will also get groups together to see some of the Jewish Film Festival offerings, including *I've Got To Be Me* about Sammy Davis Jr., and *Dreaming of a Jewish Christmas* about Christmas songs written by Jewish composers.

If you weren't here in December, you missed an incredibly busy and fun-filled month. Temple Beth Shalom had a packed Chanukah party with chicken soup and matzo balls for everyone, candle lighting, activities for the children,

and a beautiful Chanukah service for children of all ages. Loads of food were collected to donate to charity. Sisterhood's gift exchange was full of surprises, fun and good

food. Workday at TBS brought volunteers together to tackle the many chores necessary to maintain the synagogue and its grounds. On top of all of that, Temple Beth Shalom welcomed back the Jewish Federation's Lunch Bunch for a delightful gathering of seniors looking for good conversation, new friends and an afternoon out.

While we always talk about the fun activities going on, Temple Beth Shalom also has a serious spiritual and intellectual life going on all of the time. Join us for services at 7:30 p.m. every Friday, and Torah study at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday mornings. Brown bag lunches, where current events are discussed and diverse opinions are welcomed, are held every other Wednesday. *Rosh Hodesh* topics bring together women of varied backgrounds for evenings of lively discussion, learning,

bonding and, of course, food.

Nonmembers and guests are welcomed with open arms. For more information or tickets to any event, call the temple office at 239.772.4555.

* * *

A Little Goes a Long Way

An outstanding group of TBS congregants went to work on Sunday, December 10, a cold, cold, Florida day. These were the Building and Grounds helpers who worked all morning to put some things right at the temple. They painted the Holocaust memorial, patched the driveway and asphalted the scullery drain. They trimmed bushes, repaired *siddur* dedication labels, and cleaned the sound system amplifier. Finally, the two biggest jobs may have been



accomplished by the ladies who cleaned all the blue chairs, and the ladies who moved the whole library – books and shelves – into the small classroom.



BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS
Sanibel

(773) 251-8862

www.batyam.org

As you read this article and peruse the *L'CHAYIM* newspaper, it is now 2018. According to the Kabbalistic system of *gematria*, the letters of the Hebrew word "chai" add up to 18. For this reason, 18 is a spiritual number in Judaism. *Gematria*, from the Greek word for geometry, is a Kabbalistic method of interpreting the Hebrew Scriptures by computing the numerical value of words. May the "18" in 2018 portend life, *mazel* and peace for the Jewish community around the world.

On Friday, January 5, Temple Bat Yam will celebrate and have a formal installation of its new rabbi and cantor. Other area clergy will join with Rabbi Stephen Fuchs and Cantor Murray Simon to mark this special occasion. Rabbi Paul Citrin from New Mexico will officiate.

The 2018 Shared Scholar Lecture will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 14 at the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ.

The Shared Scholar Committee of Sanibel and Captiva selected the Rev. Dr. J. Clinton McCann for 2018. Dr. McCann is Evangelical Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Eden Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He earned a PhD from Duke University. He is especially interested in the intersection of religion and culture, and is committed to the importance of multicultural education. At this free lecture, he will speak about the Psalms as a bridge to interfaith cooperation. A reception will follow the lecture. On Tuesday, January 16 at 10:00 a.m., Dr. McCann, with assistance from composer and musician Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, will offer a workshop on music in the life of religious congregations. The lecture and workshop are free and open to the public.

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.

"Jews in Entertainment" is the focus of the congregant portion of Saturday morning Adult Education classes in January. Edina Lessack will provide an overview on January 6. She convinced SWFL Symphony Orchestra Maestro Nir Kabaretti to speak on January 13. He is Israeli born and has been conducting in SWFL since 2014. On January 20, Barry Fulmer will discuss Aaron Copland, a major American composer. Bat Yam Cantor Murray Simon will talk about other famous cantors on January 27.

The first weekend of each month, the Social Action Committee, chaired by Garry Weiss, will be collecting paper products to be donated to Sanibel F.I.S.H., the food pantry on Sanibel.

Clearly marked containers will be set up for Friday evening Shabbat and Saturday morning Adult Education attendees. A group of volunteers will be needed to go to the Harry Chapin Food Bank in Fort Myers on the third Wednesday of each month to sort and pack food for those in need. Carpooling will be arranged. Contact Garry at gsw211@gmail.com for more information.

Mark your calendar for the Sanibel-Captiva Heart Walk on Sunday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m. This year the festivities will be at the Community House on Periwinkle Way. Rabbi Fuchs will be a featured speaker prior to the walk. Team Bat Yam should be well represented.

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.

COMMUNITY FREE SYNAGOGUE
Fort Myers

(239) 466-6671

www.fortmyerssynagogue.com

Mazel Tov to Dr. Joe Bord and Rabbi Nicole Luna on the birth of their daughter, Iris Luna-Bord, who already adds luster to our world!

Congratulations to Brian Berger, son of C.F.S.ers Miriam and Marvin Berger, who was awarded a Meritorious Citizen Citation from the Town of Hempstead, New York, for his committed service to Temple Hillel in North Woodmere.

Mazel Tov to Joanne Cristea, who celebrated her new home with a *mezzuzah*-setting ceremony and luncheon at the end of November!

Deepest sympathies to the family of Aleksander Israelevich Tszeybak, who passed at the age of 99 in November. Mr. Tszeybak was a much-decorated combat officer at the siege of Stalingrad in World War II.

Once again C.F.S. is grateful to Natalie Fulton and her volunteers for organizing the very popular Community Free Latke Dinner on Friday, December 15; to our C.F.S. singers Traci Pavel, Susan Block and David Pincus for leading the Hanukah sing-along; and to FGCU pianist Angelita Berdialis for providing the musical accompaniment. The synagogue is once again indebted to Donelle Sullivan and his people at Fort Myers Memorial Gar-

dens for underwriting the cost of the dinner that night!

Heartfelt thanks to C.F.S. Auxiliary Rabbi Terri Goldberg and Thomas Meese for their generous gift of the Davkewriter 7 Hebrew word-processing software. C.F.S. creates its own Sabbath and Festival Siddur, High Holiday Mahzor, Passover Haggadah, Shiva booklets, and a beautiful 18"x24" Ketuba, and makes them available for free downloading on its website at www.fortmyerssynagogue.com. The rabbi's gift will expedite new and expanded editions of C.F.S.'s public domain Jewish prayer books.

The first C.F.S. 2018 Israel Pilgrimage informational meeting is on Sunday, January 7 from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the Community Hall. This meeting is for both those who have already signed up and those who would like to find out more about the June 4-15 trip. Learn more about the C.F.S. Israel Pilgrimage by visiting the synagogue's website.

The next Community Free "Brown Bag Movie Night" is at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 11 in the synagogue's Community Hall, and features the acclaimed Israeli comedy *The Women's Balcony* (see the item elsewhere in this issue for details). C.F.S.' "Brown Bag Movie Nights" have been a year-round monthly community favorite for several years, featuring both new and classic films of Jewish inter-

est. Audience members are encouraged to pack a dinner. Admission and soft drinks are always free.

The Community Free Synagogue's adult education program continues with a 3-week series on American anti-Semitism between the wars, taught by professor and C.F.S.er Jessica Evers. Evers, a scholar of modern Jewish history who serves as associate director of FGCU's Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, will focus on the institutionalized and "normalized" anti-Jewish sentiment in the United States, much of which eventually promoted by the 3rd Reich, permeated the very highest levels of American government, industry and society. The classes are from 10:30 to noon on Sundays, January 28, February 4 and 11 in the synagogue's Community Hall, and are free and open to all.

Each Friday evening 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 cof-

fee hour follows worship.

Every Saturday morning 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 13th year, The Community Free Synagogue is a not-for-profit open community religious resource. All of its events and programs, including youth and adult Jewish education, are open to all and always free.

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 www.fortmyerssynagogue.com.

C.F.S.' founder and leader Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D., this year celebrating the 40th year since ordination at The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, marks his 20th year in Fort Myers.

There's a new minyan at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida, 5620 Winkler Road, Fort Myers. Please join us on Sundays at 8:00 a.m., and Mondays and Thursdays at 7:00 a.m.



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