



## Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte Raising Funds for Israel Emergency Campaign

As we live through one of the darkest moments of Israel's history, Jewish Federations across North America are working together to collectively raise \$500 million to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs in Israel as well as the longer term rebuilding and rehabilitation needs in the months and years ahead. Locally, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is doing its part through its local Israel Emergency Campaign by committing to raise \$2.5 million toward the collective goal. These numbers are unprecedented in the long history of the Federation system and we call on all to be a part of this historic moment.

100% of your donation will go toward supporting victims of terror and addressing the unprecedented levels of trauma caused by the horrific attacks in Israel.

Donations to the Israel Emergency Campaign will have double the impact thanks to a \$500,000 matching gift from Howard and Julie Levine and Lori and Eric Sklut. You can make your donation at [jewishcharlotte.org](http://jewishcharlotte.org).

"I was in Israel when Hamas attacked," said Jewish Federations of North America president and CEO, Eric Fingerhut. "Their cruelty was shocking, and the images of their crimes against Jews — the worst since the Holocaust — will stay with me forever. But I have also been privileged to see Israelis pull together as one nation like never before, volunteering their time, organizing relief efforts, and getting the truth of what happened to the world. This moment requires our support, and Jewish Federations will provide it both financially and by mobilizing our communities to sustain backing for Israel in the weeks and months ahead."

"For over 100 years, even before Israel's independence, Jewish Federations have been a pillar of support for the Jewish State. We helped build her communities, strengthen her society, and have always been there to support her during her most difficult hours. And we will do so now, during this darkest of moments," said Jewish Federations of North America chair, Julie Platt.

The message is clear: Israel must have the support it needs to eradicate the terrorist threat and return safety and security to its people, however long that takes and however difficult that may be. We will all work together to make sure this support does not

flag.

Israel is facing a crisis on a scale never before seen — and in times of crisis, we stand together. Now more than ever, Israel needs you. *Please make your donation to this vital effort at [jewishcharlotte.org](http://jewishcharlotte.org).*



## Community Unites in Solidarity



Rabbi Michael Wolk, Temple Israel; Rabbi Yossi Groner, Congregation OhHaTorah; Rabbi Asher Knight, Temple Beth El

By Arden McLaughlin

In an extraordinary display of unity and solidarity, nearly 1,000 people came together at Shalom Park on Monday, Oct. 9, in response to the devastating attacks on Israel just two days earlier. Throughout the evening, rabbis, cantors, and community members shared prayers for protection and peace in a vigil with the shared purpose of supporting one another and the State of Israel.

Rabbi Groner from Congregation Ohr HaTorah, in his opening remarks, stated, "The call of the

hour is unity." Standing shoulder to shoulder with Rabbis Michael Wolk from Temple Israel and Asher Knight from Temple Beth El, he continued, "Our sages have taught that disunity within our people creates a gap in the protective wall of Israel, allowing the enemy to penetrate."

The vigil brought together Jews of various levels of observance, from non-practicing to Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. It was a testament to the unity that arises not only from shared faith but from the com-

mon bond of Jewish identity and an unwavering commitment to Israel's security.

This display of unity extended beyond the Jewish community to include support from non-Jewish allies who came as individuals, representing different faiths and branches of government. Joe Clifford, the senior pastor of Myers Park Presbyterian, expressed his condolences and support, stating, "We are heartbroken over the tragic loss of life in Israel at

(Continued on page 3)

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# From the Editor

## Grief Is Not a Competition



Shira Firestone, Editor CJA

This month's column has proven to be one of the most challenging ones I've undertaken. Words, often my friends, seemed to abandon me. My monthly writer's block felt insurmountable. I spent the better part of the week staring at a blank screen, save for the blinking cursor that challenged me to find the right words to express myself in the wake of the unspeakable attacks on Israel on October 7. Even more than my doubt that I had anything of value to share was my doubt that I had a "right" to be sharing anything at all. The doubt about my "right" to be sharing was more deeply rooted

in my unspoken assessment as I compared myself to those around me who, I had decided, had a much greater claim to their experiences of shock, grief, outrage, and fear.

On Monday, October 9, two days after the initial attacks that shocked and appalled the world, I joined almost 1,000 of my friends, neighbors, and colleagues for a vigil where we came together to grieve, support one another, and support Israel. I watched as friends of mine solemnly walked to the front of the room to light candles for those they had lost. I listened as organizers, even as they stood at a podium to speak, worried about family still in and out of bomb shelters. In the days that followed, I sat at tables with friends to the right and to the left of me who still didn't have word about missing loved ones or who had sons or brothers who were returning to Israel to fight.

I couldn't help but question the legitimacy of my own right to grieve. I've never traveled to Israel; I have no friends or

family there. Was my reaction — were my feelings — an insult to those who had what I judged to be stronger connections? I wondered if my reaction and feelings somehow detracted from what I thought to be the more justifiable pain experienced by others.

Indeed, this kind of thinking often compels us to navigate through life constantly apologizing for our emotions. How many times has someone told us to "be grateful," because someone else always has it worse. As if our experience is to be defined by its comparison to someone else.

Shock is shock. Grief is grief. Outrage is outrage. Fear is fear. They defy quantification and are a universal inheritance by virtue of being human, freely available to all, without the need for auditions or justifications to lay claim to them. In my comparison, I inadvertently deny the validity of my own experience and emotions, and by extension the significance and experience of the emotions of others.

This conclusion had not yet dawned on me when, while still staring at the dancing cursor, tears rolled down my face. I didn't hear my boss as she entered the room and

Feelings or emotions are the universal language and are to be honored. They are the authentic expression of who you are at the deepest place.

*Judith Wright*

caught me in my moment of vulnerability. She had sought us out individually to check on our well-being. Each of us. She didn't base her attention on an arbitrary hierarchy of who needed care the most, placing the "most Jewish" individuals at the top and the "least Jewish" lower down. Her empathy and care for us, despite her own understandable demands, broke through the remaining thread that had been holding me together all week, and I began to unravel. In a moment where employer and employee momentarily dissolved, she offered me an embrace. Though I don't remember her exact words, her message was clear: my tears needed no justification.

Shortly afterward, someone else came into my office. It was a non-Jewish member of our community who works here at Shalom Park. In fact,

she had only recently begun learning about Judaism so that she could better serve others in her capacity here. She entered my office crying. She expressed embarrassment at her own reactions. Who was she, she asked, to have such a strong reaction? That sounded familiar to my ears. But as she described the pain she felt, her fears for her own safety, and her empathy for others, the authenticity of her experience was undeniable. It hadn't occurred to me to question her response; why had I questioned my own? Instead, I stood and offered an embrace to her, as it had so generously been offered to me.

In the midst of our deepest sorrows, we have an opportunity to remember that grief is not a competition. There is no calculation to quantify our emotions and responses, not only to the events specific to the first weeks of October, but to any day or any situation. Instead of comparing, we have an opportunity to honor each person's unique journey — even ... especially ... our own.

Wishing us all comfort and peace in days ahead,

*Shira*

### Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

November 3 — 6:09 p.m.  
November 10 — 5:03 p.m.  
November 17 — 4:58 p.m.  
November 24 — 4:55 p.m.

The Charlotte  
JEWISH NEWS

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## Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

## Community Vigil

(Continued from front page)

the hands of Hamas." He also mentioned their efforts to educate their congregation about the complex history of the region.

Charlotte's Mayor Vi Lyles added her support the following day, echoing the condemnation of the attacks by Hamas on Israel. "Like many worldwide, I fervently hope for peace, and I echo our federal government in condemning the attacks by Hamas on Israel. I want to assure the Jewish community in Charlotte of our support."

Their support represents an outpouring from the non-Jewish community, which serves as a powerful reminder that unity extends beyond religious boundaries, transcending difference to combat the growing wave of antisemitism.

During the vigil, Rabbis Lexi Erdheim and Beth Nichols from Temple Beth El lit ten candles on behalf of the community, with each candle representing 100 Israelis killed in the attack, the best estimate at the time and a number that continued to grow as news from the attack unfolded. Individuals were invited to light candles in honor of loved ones who were killed or whose fates



Rabbi Lexi Erdheim

remained unknown. The number of participants who made their way solemnly to the table underscored Rabbi Knight's observation that the Jewish community was closely connected, with most either directly impacted by the attacks or having close ties to someone affected.

The evening concluded with Tair Giudice, Federation chief

impact officer and Israeli native, delivering heartfelt words and a call to action, emphasizing the resilience of the Jewish people in the face of adversity. "I know we must get up and face the daunting weeks ahead, even with distracted minds, heavy hearts, and tired eyes. But I also know that what gets me up every morning is the faith in our people and in

our resilience. It is the resilience that our people have demonstrated over and over again, including right now by the residents of the south of Israel, that is a model for all of us."

In the final moments, Giudice led the community in singing Hatikvah, Israel's National Anthem. The voices were quiet at first, for just a moment, but grew in strength as the melody filled the room, becoming one voice. In the spirit of unity, the Charlotte Jewish community and its allies demonstrated their commitment to not only supporting one another but also to sending a clear and resounding message that they stand with Israel, unwavering and strong.

As the war continues to unfold in the coming days, weeks,

and months, the community has pledged to continue to educate themselves and others, advocate for the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and donate to support those affected. The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte joined the Jewish Federations of North America in an emergency campaign on behalf of Israel, aiming to raise \$500 million, with Charlotte committing \$2.5 million. *For information, resources, and to donate, you can visit [www.jewishcharlotte.org](http://www.jewishcharlotte.org).*

## Charlotte Educators Return from TALMA Summer Experience in Israel

The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is committed to provide our community with multiple opportunities to engage with and learn about Israel. As such, Federation invests in programs and agencies that offer high-impact Israel engagement and education. Through our overseas allocations, Federation not only demonstrates its global responsibility of Jewish people, meeting the needs of Jews worldwide, but also connects our Charlotte community to Israel and her people.

One such program is TALMA, an English immersion program for low-income Israeli elementary schoolchildren and a fellowship for teachers looking to gain teaching experience abroad and to get to know Israel and its people. Federation has been supporting TALMA with a grant for the past two years. TALMA provides teachers an opportunity to co-teach English in high-need schools in Israel and attend learning and leadership workshops.

"The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is proud to partner with TALMA to support this special opportunity for Charlotte area teachers to be immersed in Israeli culture and history and build tools and relationships in a diverse educator

community," said Tair Giudice, chief impact officer at the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. "Programs like TALMA are key to strengthening connections between communities in the U.S. and Israel, and the benefits for both participating teachers and students are invaluable."

Two of the Charlotte-area educators who participated in the TALMA Summer Fellowship include Leslee Melgar, a 6th grade English Language Arts teacher, and Rashida Freeman, a TESOL teacher for a virtual high school and an adjunct ESL professor at a local community college.

Though neither Melgar nor Freeman is Jewish, they saw TALMA as an opportunity to grow as educators and gain insight and perspective into teaching in unfamiliar environments.

"This past summer I experienced being in a classroom in which I was teaching English but didn't speak the students' native language," said Melgar. "The students were very sweet and tried teaching me words in Hebrew. This experience gave me some insight on how it feels to not understand or be able to speak a language when everyone else does."

"I learned that classroom management looks different across cultures," said Freeman.

"With that in mind, I was able to relinquish some of my control and allow students to learn the way that is best for them. I also noticed that allowing the students to teach me was rapport building, and they were eager to learn because they were also given the opportunity to teach."

Creating this type of environment where both teachers and students can learn to embrace their cultural differences and learn from each other is an essential part of TALMA's mission.

"Inclusivity is one of our core values; we serve Israeli students of all religious and ethnic backgrounds, and our teachers are diverse as well," said T'heleh Be-Dan, TALMA's deputy director of North America and a Charlotte resident. "By including educators who may not have religious or familial connections to Judaism, we offer them an opportunity to get to know Israel and her people firsthand. This can help to push back against falsehoods and misconceptions that people can have about Israel and/or Jews, helping to create allies in the fight against antisemitism."

For more information on TALMA, please visit [www.talmaisrael.com](http://www.talmaisrael.com).

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# Preserving Jewish Identity Through Overnight Camps

By Shira Firestone

Jewish overnight camps have played a vital role in the American Jewish experience for over a century. They emerged in response to concerns that early 20th-century European immigrants might assimilate too deeply into American culture, jeopardizing their Jewish heritage. However, it was after World War II that these camps truly flourished. Today, these concerns persist. As Holocaust survivors age, the number of unaffiliated Jews grows, and antisemitism rises, the need to foster lasting connections to Jewish traditions and heritage among teens is more crucial than ever. Recognizing the profound impact of overnight camps on Jewish identity, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC) is committed to making them affordable for families. This commitment is a priority under the Federation's Jewish Identity initiative, which aims to provide camp subsidies to support this goal.

Research has consistently shown that Jewish camps, particularly overnight camps, are

instrumental in creating lasting connections to the Jewish community. Adults who attended Jewish camp as children are more likely to engage in Jewish traditions. They are 37% more likely to regularly light Shabbat candles, 55% more likely to feel deeply connected to Israel, and 45% more likely to attend synagogues at least once a month. 92% of families report that overnight camp made their child feel part of the larger Jewish community. (*Foundation for Jewish Camp, "Camp Works, the Long Term Impact of Overnight Camp," 2011*)

But it is difficult to measure the value of the Jewish camp experience in numbers and charts. How do you quantify a child's smile when they show their mother the clay menorah they made, or the warmth of Shabbat candles lit by a recently returning teenager, or the personal growth that can occur in a short time? As Charlotte resident Becca Stern said of her daughter, Natalie, "She came home wiser and more mature than the kid we dropped off three weeks earlier."



Photo credit: Noah Gallagher

Becca, whose family has been deeply connected and involved with the Charlotte Jewish community since moving here from Chicago, explains why she felt it was important for Natalie to have a camp experience: "We feel very fortunate to send Natalie to a good private school in Charlotte. However, there are very few Jewish kids at Natalie's school. We want her to feel proud of her identity and choose to be Jewish. While we may be the minority in most places, at camp everyone is Jewish. We want her

to discover for herself the beauty of Judaism."

While the benefits of Jewish overnight camps are undeniable, the costs have been steadily increasing, making camp unaffordable for many families. One opportunity for financial support through the JFGC is the Jewish Experience Fund, which provides needs-based subsidies to local Jewish teens to attend camp. Another opportunity, through the JFGC and in partnership with PJ Library, is a one-time, first-time grant called

"PJ Goes to Camp." Generously supported by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and its partners, this initiative helps families make their child's first overnight camp experiences a reality. "As a single mom, overnight camp is a high price to pay for one kid. The PJ Library grant eased the financial burden and helped make this year feasible," says Becca.

In a rapidly changing world, preserving Jewish identity and heritage is of utmost importance. Overnight camps, with the support of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, play a vital role in achieving this goal. They create lasting connections, foster a deep sense of community, and ensure that Jewish traditions thrive for generations to come. With continued commitment and support, we can make these transformative experiences accessible to all who seek them.

For more information and applications, call (704) 944-6757 or email [info@jewishcharlotte.org](mailto:info@jewishcharlotte.org).

## LIGHT UP THE SUMMER



The Jewish Federation provides need based subsidies for local Jewish youth attending camp and/or Jewish programs.

For more information and applications, call 704-944-6757 or email [info@jewishcharlotte.org](mailto:info@jewishcharlotte.org)



**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Charlotte



# Sue's Bookshelf



By Sue Littauer

Highly anticipated books by two of my favorite authors were published recently: "The Invisible Hour" by Alice Hoffman and "The Breakaway" by Jennifer Weiner. As different as the books are, surprisingly similar themes resonate throughout both.

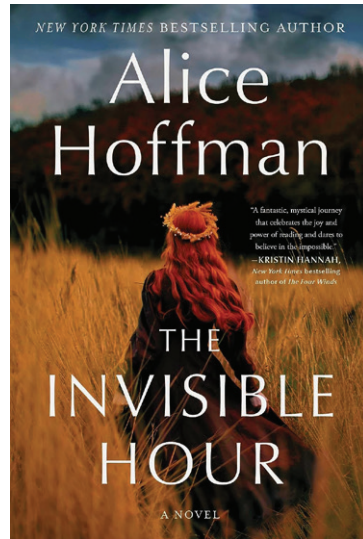
The first half of "The Invisible Hour" is beautifully written, has an engrossing and interesting storyline, and offers well-drawn characters. Ivy, a young teenager, becomes a runaway when she finds herself pregnant and lacking parental support. She finds refuge in the Community, a cult-like commune in western Massachusetts. It is run by Joel Davis, a religious zealot who harshly shames and punishes women, forbids contact with the outside world, hangs letters around the necks of sinners, and brands them ... hmm ... starting to sound familiar?

Ivy reluctantly married Joel when she became part of the Community, but realized her

mistake as Joel cruelly controlled her life and that of her daughter, Mia. Prior to leaving home, Ivy was a voracious reader and wanted to instill her love of reading in her daughter. But in the Community, books were considered evil. Ivy violated the rules when she encouraged Mia to visit the local library and sneak in forbidden books. The library becomes Mia's safe haven and she finds a friend in Sarah, the librarian. When Ivy dies, Mia escapes from the Community, aided and sheltered by Sarah and her partner, Constance, putting them all in grave danger.

As all Alice Hoffman fans know, magical realism is her trademark. And it is through time travel that the present and past are linked in "The Invisible Hour." When Mia finds a first edition copy of "The Scarlet Letter" hidden on a top shelf in the library, she is shocked to find it was personally inscribed "to Mia" by the author Nathaniel Hawthorne nearly 200 years ago. It is this mysterious inscription that inspires the remainder of the novel.

"The Breakaway" by Jennifer Weiner is a fun and compulsively readable story about finding your own path and believing in your own worth. It is the story of 33-year-old Abby Stern, an avid cyclist who finds herself leading a 12-day bicycle trip from New York to Niagara Falls. She plans to use the time to clear her head about whether to accept a marriage proposal from "the perfect man" — a handsome



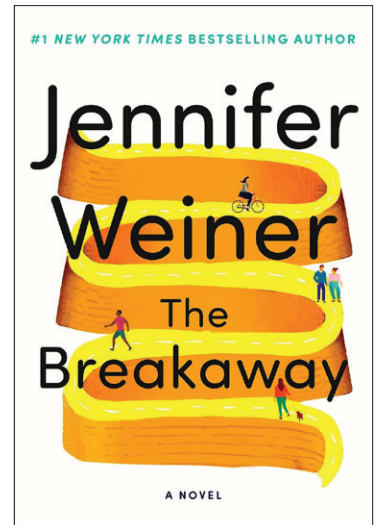
Jewish doctor she first met at fat camp when she was a teenager. But her trip is complicated by the problems that arise from the disjointed group of riders which, to her surprise, include an old love interest as well as her mother, who had fat-shamed Abby throughout her lifetime.

On the surface, these two books don't seem to have any-

thing in common; however, the strength exhibited by Ivy, Mia, and Abby is to be admired. Each woman learns to believe and trust in herself and to fight for the right of women to have control of their own bodies. And in both books, we see unlikely relationships form which provide confidence and security for our main characters.

If you are looking for a wonderfully delightful read, be sure to try Jennifer Weiner's "The Breakaway," but clear your calendar; I read the 400-page book in one day — it's hard to put down! If you love, love Alice Hoffman's books, I recommend "The Invisible Hour" and I do think it would make for an interesting book club discussion.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone!!



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For inquiries email  
[library@jewishcharlotte.org](mailto:library@jewishcharlotte.org)



**Jewish Federation**  
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# Miss Debby's Best-Loved Children's Books

Teaching Kids About Emotion



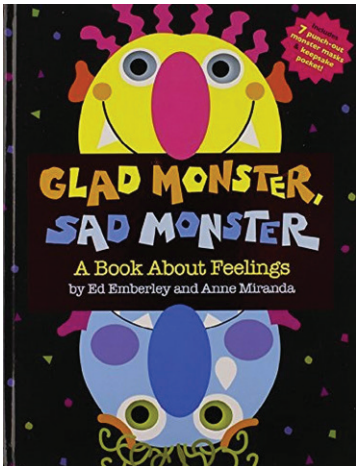
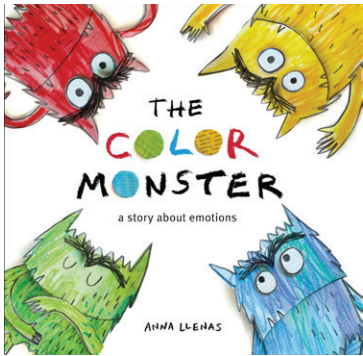
By Debby Block

It is essential for children of all ages to recognize emotions. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others. The development of emotional intelligence in children enhances self-awareness as well as empathy. Here are some wonderful children's books that aid in educating children about emotions.

For babies and toddlers, I recommend books that identify facial expressions. The PJ Library book "My Face Book" is a delightful book for encouraging social-emotional development

in babies and toddlers. Happily, this board book is also available in Hebrew. "Baby's Feelings: A First Book of Emotions" (published by Little Hippo Books) has a large variety of multicultural photos of babies and each page identifies a different emotion. Both of these books would be perfect for children ages birth-2 years.

"Glad Monster, Sad Monster: A Book About Feelings" by the popular authors Ed Emberley and Anne Miranda makes children laugh every time I read it! Each page identifies a different emotion and each page is accompanied by a colorful, comical



monster mask to peak through that demonstrates the feeling. I recommend this charming, interactive book for children ages 2-4.

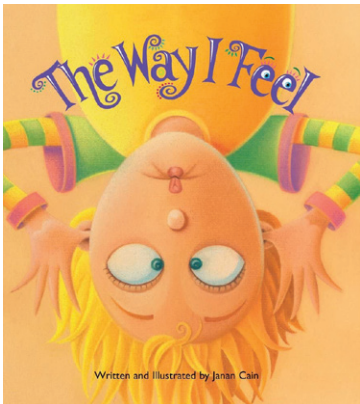
"The Color Monster: A Story about Emotions" tells the story of a cute monster that has all his emotions jumbled up. A little girl shows the monster many different feelings with each emotion represented by a distinct color. Author Anna Llenas is an art therapist who specializes in art and emotional education. She has completely succeeded in this book that I recommend for

children ages 2-5.

"The Way I Feel" by Janan Cain is one of my favorite books about emotions. Each beautifully illustrated page has rhyming text and at the end of the page, your child can try to guess how the child in the book is feeling. The book ends like this: "Feelings come and feelings go. I never know what they'll be. Silly or angry, happy or sad —They're all a part of me!" Highly recommended for children ages 3-6.

An all-time classic about anger and frustration is Judith Viorst's book "Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day." As you can guess, everything goes wrong for elementary school student Alexander, from gum in his hair, to being too crowded in the car on the way to school, to lima beans for supper. Alexander decides he wants to move to Australia. This book is a great way to teach children that it is okay to have bad days. Children in kindergarten-3rd grade will love this perennial favorite.

For readers ages 8-11, I have just discovered a series by Free Spirit Publishing, which helps



deal with emotions. "How to Take the Grrrr Out of Anger" by Elizabeth Verdick and Marjorie Lisovskis provides practical steps to solving anger problems in a humorous and easy-to-read format. This series also includes the books "How to Take the Ache Out of Mistakes" and "Stress Can Really Get on Your Nerves." I wish I had books like these when I was growing up!



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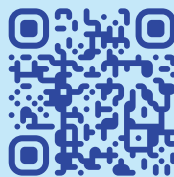
# #BlueRibbonsforIsrael

#BlueRibbonsforIsrael is a global solidarity campaign. The blue ribbon symbolizes support and solidarity for the safe return of the hostages taken by Hamas terrorists in Israel. It symbolizes solidarity with the hostages, their families, and all who care about their safety.

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Date: Wednesday, November 15th (2 sessions - choose 1) - AM 9:00-10:30 or PM 7:00-8:30  
Location: AM Levine Social Hall at Temple Beth El, PM The Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts

**Conversations with CMS Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**  
Date: Wednesday, December 6th - 7:00-8:30 PM  
Location: Gorelick Hall

**Conversation with UCPS Office of the Superintendent**  
Date: Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 - 7:00-8:30 PM  
Location: The Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts

All locations are at Shalom Park  
5007 Providence Rd, Charlotte NC 28226

Register at [jewishcharlotte.org](https://jewishcharlotte.org)

For questions contact Douglas Greene ,  
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Religious Life

# Miracles of Light: Nissim Black's Extraordinary Journey From Darkness to Faith

By Rabbi Levi Cohen

Join us in celebrating an extraordinary journey from adversity to faith at Chabad of Charlotte's upcoming event, "Miracles of Light: A Chanukah Concert with Nissim Black." While Nissim's music has captured hearts worldwide, his path to becoming a musician and Orthodox Jew is a story of resilience and transformation.

## A Glimpse into Nissim Black's Early Life

Nissim Black's life began in a challenging environment, growing up in a rough neighborhood in Seattle. His parents were involved in drug dealing, and the FBI raided their home when he was just eight years old. His grandfather, a significant presence in his life, ended up in prison.

"I didn't grow up on the streets," Nissim recalls. "The streets grew up in my house."

His early years were tumultuous, marked by regular pot smoking by the age of 12 and expulsion from school. But at the age of 13, Nissim was offered a lifeline — an after-school hip-hop program owned by a Christian organization. For the first time, he experienced a sense of normalcy and safety, which kept him away from trouble.

## A Journey to Judaism

Nissim's spiritual journey eventually led him to explore Judaism. After two years in a Messianic congregation, Nissim and his high school sweetheart, Adina, decided to convert to Judaism. They began their journey by studying under a local Sephardic rabbi, Rabbi Simon Benzaquen. The Sephardic

community felt culturally close and welcoming, allowing them to grow and thrive.

However, Nissim's spiritual journey was far from over. His fascination with Chassidic Judaism led him to immerse himself further in Torah study and spirituality. The teachings of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov resonated deeply with him, emphasizing personal prayer and building a close relationship with G-d. This connection to Chassidic Judaism became a driving force in Nissim's life.

## Chabad of Charlotte's Journey to "Miracles of Light"

Chabad of Charlotte's path to this grand event is a testament to its dedication to bringing the spirit of Chanukah to the community. It all started with creative ice, Lego, and coin chanukiot designed to capture attention and inspire the ideals of giving. Over the years, the event has grown steadily, evolving from a modest gathering of a few hundred people at indoor events at SouthPark Mall into a breathtaking spectacle.

In 2020, faced with the need to limit in-person gatherings, a novel idea emerged: a parking lot gathering with families in their cars, collectively tuned in to a broadcast on the radio as they watched the lighting of a giant menorah built from nine scissor lifts. Approximately 500 people attended this unique celebration.

The following year, nearly 800 participants enjoyed a joyful concert by 8th Day. In 2022, a stunning 1,000 attendees joined the "Unite with Light Chanukah Festival" at Symphony Park. Now, in 2023, Chabad of Charlotte aims to set a new milestone by bringing the sensa-



Nissim Black to perform at Chabad of Charlotte's "Miracles of Light" Chanukah concert

tional Chassidic rapper, Nissim Black, to Uptown Charlotte at Le Méridien for what promises to be the biggest Chanukah event yet.

## An Ambassador of Faith and Inspiration

Today, Nissim Black and his family of nine live in Beit Shemesh, Israel, and are an integral part of the Hasidic com-

munity. Despite their unique background, they have been embraced and loved by the Orthodox Jewish community. Nissim's music career has soared, with over 32,000 monthly listeners on Spotify and millions of views on YouTube.

(Continued on page 9)

## McEwen Funeral Service Pineville Chapel



704-544-1412  
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## Havurat Tikvah To Host In-Person Community Shabbat Services

Havurat Tikvah will hold a Community Shabbat Service on Nov. 18, 10 a.m., at Avondale Presbyterian Church, 2821 Park Rd., in a newly-marked classroom (see signs on door). Following services a social will be held

along with kiddush, challah and blessings.

Havurat Tikvah is a warm, supportive, and nurturing Jewish Reconstructionist congregation with Shabbat services and a full spectrum of holiday observances, as well as religious educational options for both families and single adults. We are a diverse group of families, singles, and Jewish and interfaith couples who participate in projects that promote social justice.

We value and depend upon member participation and leadership for our religious services, spiritual growth, and governance.

Havurat Tikvah is an affiliate of Reconstructing Judaism. For more information on upcoming services, programs, membership or other queries, call (980) 225-5330, write to Havurat Tikvah, P.O. Box 12684, Charlotte, NC 28220, email [membership@havurattikvah.org](mailto:membership@havurattikvah.org) or visit [havurattikvah.org](http://havurattikvah.org). Havurat Tikvah is also on Facebook at [facebook.com/groups/havurattikvah/](https://facebook.com/groups/havurattikvah/).

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Religious Life

# Aleeza ben Shalom's Inspiring Evening of Jewish Matchmaking

By Rabbi Motti Groner

Uptown Chabad, Chabad of Charlotte, and Ballantyne Jewish Center had the privilege of hosting a remarkable evening on September 6th. The community gathered to meet and learn from none other than Aleeza ben Shalom, the star of Netflix's hit show "Jewish Matchmaking." With over 300 attendees, the event was a resounding success, combining entertainment, personal anecdotes, and a live matchmaking segment that left a lasting impact.

Renowned for her expertise in the world of Jewish matchmaking, Aleeza ben Shalom brought her charisma and wisdom to the Charlotte Jewish community. Attendees were treated to an evening filled with insights into Aleeza's life journey and the fascinating behind-the-scenes details of her popular Netflix show.

The highlight of the event was a live matchmaking demonstration where Aleeza showcased her matchmaking prowess. She invited four single volunteers



Live Matchmaking Segment with (L-R) David Zilber, Seth Abrams, Amy Fine, and Wendy Levenson

onto the stage and encouraged the audience to ask questions, providing a glimpse into the art of matchmaking. This interactive segment not only entertained but also educated attendees about the intricacies of forming meaningful connections within the Jewish community.

Aleeza ben Shalom's warm and engaging presence resonated with those in attendance, creating an atmosphere of excitement and inspiration. Her personal journey, from her early experiences to her rise to fame as a matchmaking expert and television personality, left a lasting impression on those

eager to learn from her.

The high holidays at Uptown Chabad kicked off with a memorable Rosh HaShanah evening service and catered dinner at the Embassy Suites in Uptown Charlotte, with over 70 attendees participating.

Uptown Chabad also held Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services in uptown, with an estimated 40 attendees per service. These services provided an opportunity for prayer, reflection, and religious observance during these significant Jewish holidays.



## Nissim Black

(Continued from page 8)

Nissim's music is a reflection of his personal growth and spirituality. His songs convey messages of unity, tolerance, and faith, making them suitable for audiences of all backgrounds. His latest release, "Victory," is an emotional and upbeat tribute to Chanukah and the Jewish people's resilience.

**Join Us for "Miracles of Light"**

As we look forward to "Miracles of Light: A Chanukah Concert with Nissim Black," let Nissim's story serve as a beacon of hope and a reminder that change

is possible, even in the face of adversity. Join us on December 10, 2023, at Le Méridien Charlotte, as we celebrate Chanukah, unity, and the remarkable journey of Nissim Black.

For more information and tickets, visit Chabad of Charlotte's website or purchase tickets at the door. Be part of this historic event and experience the pride of being a part of an incredible community celebration.



# Thank You LEGACY DONORS



Our gratitude and thanks to our precious Legacy Donors who have made a commitment to ensure the continued and expanded growth of our educational and enriching programs which are vital to the quality of Jewish life in the greater Charlotte region. The donors listed below have given permission to publicize their names with the hope of encouraging you to join them. We invite you to be part of this great heritage legacy. Please contact Rabbi Shlomo Cohen at 704-366-3984.

With thanks and appreciation, Lubavitch of North Carolina and Congregation Ohr HaTorah

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## Religious Life

# Temple Beth El Embarks on “Our Temple, Our Future” Listening Campaign

By Jonathan Friedman, COO

As the High Holy Days ushered in a season of reflection and renewal, Temple Beth El came together in the transformative moment to begin its comprehensive strategic planning effort with a series of congregational listening sessions. The initiative, aptly named “Our Temple, Our Future,” aims to reach at least 300 congregants through a series of listening sessions over the next two months.

In his Rosh Hashanah sermon, Rabbi Knight emphasized the importance of community, stating, “The essence of community is not found in agreement but in a covenant of mutual respect and

support.” This philosophy serves as the cornerstone of the listening campaign. It’s an endeavor not merely to collect opinions but to forge a shared vision that respects the diverse needs and aspirations of the congregation.

The campaign is guided by a Strategic Planning Committee, co-chaired by Robin Leavitt and Lisa Shpritz, and includes congregational leaders Ivy Berman, Eliza Carney, Jenn Clark, David Crane, Zoe Kronovet, Alan Kronovet, Liz Ren, Ron Townsend, and Bob Wolf. The committee is working closely with Andi Stevenson of Stevenson Wallace, a seasoned non-profit consultant, to ensure the campaign aligns

with best practices in organizational development.

Temple Beth El has a history of successful community engagement. A previous listening campaign led to the creation of the TriBEs small-group program, which, with support from the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, has engaged more than 600 members in meaningful relationships over the past five years.

The listening sessions are expected to conclude in late November, after which the Strategic Planning Committee will engage in a deliberative planning process throughout the winter and spring. The ul-

timate goal is to develop a dynamic set of guiding principles and pillars that will steer Temple Beth El into a future filled with promise and purpose.

As Rabbi Knight eloquently reminded the congregation, “We are the authors of our own story.” The “Our Temple, Our Future” initiative is an opportunity for the Temple Beth El community to come together and write an inspiring new chapter in its collective journey.



Temple Beth El congregants gather on Yom Kippur to collaborate and strategize

## Temple Kol Ami Welcomes Back Joe Buchanan

By Bonnie Shaw

Joe Buchanan will be joining Temple Kol Ami for his Americana Shabbat service on Friday, December 8 at 7 p.m. This event is open to the public and free of charge. On Sunday, Joe will also be spending time with our Religious School students as he shares his unique perspective on Judaism as well as sharing his beautiful voice with our children. Joe has been a longtime friend of Temple Kol Ami and we

are so happy to have him back with us. His storytelling voice recalls a blend of folk, country and old school Americana music. He blends this with the beauty of Jewish music and creates a unique sound that is easily identifiable as Joe. From the moment many of our congregants heard him perform several years ago in Charlotte, with The Ruach, they knew he was something special. We knew that he had to be part of our congregation. Having him

bring his Americana Shabbat to us will be a special treat. Now more than ever we need to come together as a community to celebrate Judaism and remember that song is at the core of who we are as a people. Song can unite. Joe Buchanan does that from the first note.

Please join us to pray and remember what makes us, as a Jewish people, so strong. We hope to see you all for Joe’s Americana Shabbat!



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## Religious Life

# Temple Solel: It Was a Very Good Year

By Steve Yaffe, President

Temple Solel has had a very good year indeed! We are enjoying the first anniversary in our new home and our partnership with Grace Presbyterian Church in Fort Mill. It's easy to tell that this is our new home by the signage outside (the first physical sign presence of a temple in northern South Carolina) and the mezuzah just inside. (A church with a mezuzah on its doorpost may be a world first — and it was their idea!)

Our partnership with Grace means just that. Grace. We have created an extended family of both congregations. Temple Solel members have worked all year to support our new partner. We have shared a Passover Seder and we were there to help clean up when the church kitchen flooded right before their Christmas Eve service. We volunteered at their Pumpkin Patch (the Grace project that funds their youth activities) and we helped supplement their team of volunteers that provide hands-on preparation and serving of meals for the less fortunate. We ran their bake sale, a part of their huge annual yard sale that is Grace's main fundraiser. We



Joe Buchanan to perform at Temple Solel's Annual Chanukah Party

joined with them to start a Widowed Folks Support Group and we detailed their newly-donated (but not new) church van. We were side-by-side with them at the Rock Hill Pride Festival and we were part of their Graceful Threads, a quilting group that makes quilts for those who are ailing. We donated a picnic table for their new outdoor pavilion and we even have a congregant playing banjo with their band, The Joyful Noise.

In return, Grace has welcomed us with open arms. In addition to the mezuzah on their doorpost

and the sign outside ("And Home of Temple Solel"), they continue to support us in a variety of ways. They were fine with us displaying a 10-foot outdoor menorah during Chanukah (everyone wanted to take a selfie!). They continue to invite us to join them at their monthly dinners and join their social clubs. They are with us as we do our social outreach projects, just as we were with them. Some have come to our regular and High Holy Day services just to see what we are all about. One of their congregants was our shofar blower (and it

was their shofar). They even make up more than half of the class we just started, Beginning Hebrew for Adults!

Other good things have also happened this year. Our tiny congregation is not so tiny. After a busy year, we have grown almost 50 % over the year before, including young families with kids. Attendance has increased at all of our services, which we either Zoom or stream on our YouTube channel for those who can't attend. Our list of social outreach programs is growing. These are mostly hands-on opportunities to help others. We even have a few members of other congregations who join us in these activities, just because they enjoy helping others and we are their entry point.

Looking ahead, we have our annual Chanukah concert on Saturday, Dec. 10. This year we are pulling out all the stops and hosting a concert by Joe Buchanan, the internationally known Americana singer-songwriter from Houston, Texas. Upon converting to Judaism, he found his voice, values, and history in the Torah of the Jewish people. This unique concert promises to be an unforgettable event, and he told

us he has written some new Chanukah songs he will debut for us. We invite other congregations to join us.

If Temple Solel sounds like a Jewish temple you might find attractive, come by and meet us. We offer the opportunity to Pray Together, Learn Together, and Do Together. We welcome the presence, enthusiasm, talents, and involvement of all members and guests. We grow with friendship, learning, doing good, and having fun. We are a Reform Jewish congregation that has eliminated the barrier of annual membership dues. While we gladly accept donations, active participation is much more important. We meet at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Friday of every month at the Grace Presbyterian Church at 2955 W. Highway 160 in Fort Mill. For more information about our services and other events, please visit [templesolelsc.org](http://templesolelsc.org) or call (803) 610-1707. We'd love to meet you.



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## Annual Hanukkah Concert

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Joe Buchanan's roots and Americana-based songs gave us reflective and meaningful insights into Judaism and our religious journeys.”

— Edward Queen, Director of Ethics and Servant Leadership at Emory University

*Suggested donation of \$10 per adult*



**Saturday, December 9 | 7 PM**

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# With Gratitude, Jewish Family Services

By Julie Loftis, JFS Marketing Specialist

Thanksgiving is a time for reflection and gratitude, an opportunity to pause and appreciate the blessings in our lives, even in the face of life's challenges. In the various ways we come together with friends and family, Thanksgiving remains a cherished occasion to express our thanks.

Throughout the past year, members of our community have shown tremendous support for Jewish Family Services (JFS) through various means, including volunteering their time and contributing funds and resources. Our supporters come from diverse backgrounds, encompassing individuals of all ages, service-oriented groups, and those who quietly make a difference year-round.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the students who thoughtfully designated JFS as recipients of Tzedakah funds. Gratitude is also due to the numerous food drives organized by our community for the JFS Food Pantry, as well as to the volunteers and organizations that generously offer their time and resources to provide meals, produce, and food.

We express our deep appreciation for the dedicated volunteers who consistently show up multiple times each week to sort and fulfill pantry orders. Moreover, our volunteers who deliver food, holiday bags, and birthday packages to seniors in our community each month play a crucial role in our mission. We are especial-

ly thankful for those volunteers who visit our homebound seniors and invest their time in mentoring community members who have faced difficult times and are striving to rebuild their lives.

We extend our gratitude to our generous supporters who contribute the funds that enable us to carry out our vital work within our community. Your collective efforts make a significant and positive impact on the lives of those we serve. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to JFS. Our services are the sum of every individual that contributes to the greater whole of the organization. As such, it is nearly impossible to put into words all the wonderful ways you, our community members, help us serve the community. Every individual act is appreciated and makes a difference.

One heartwarming example of dedicated volunteers who quietly donate their time and resources every month is found in the story of Tara and Oren Hubara. Tara, who has been involved with JFS as a volunteer, on and off, since 2015, has been a role model for acts of service. Her son, Oren, began his own volunteering journey approximately two years ago, inspired by his mother's commitment.

Oren took on the role of the exclusive birthday gift delivery driver for seniors in the Charlotte area. Starting at the age of 16, Oren willingly devoted a substantial amount of time, often driving up to 60 miles and

spending about 10 hours on this endeavor per month. He used his own funds for transportation to ensure that these meaningful gifts were personally delivered to community members. What sets Oren apart is not just the delivery of gifts, but also the genuine connections he forms. Often, he stays to listen to the stories shared by the recipients or simply spends quality time with them.

Tara, reflecting on her son's commitment, shared, "He has found the mitzvah to be so rewarding that he has even decided to write his college application essay on his experience." As Oren turns 18 and prepares to embark on his college journey next year, the staff and board, along with the grateful recipients of Oren's kind acts, would like to express their heartfelt recognition and gratitude. They also extend their best wishes to Oren for success in his future endeavors, knowing that his compassion and dedication will continue to make a positive impact in the lives of others.

At JFS, we continue to be so grateful for our staff, volunteers, board members, supporters, and collaborative partners. Our volunteers, staff, and board members are in the process of planning and implementing programs and services, from Thanksgiving meals, to Dreidel Drive packages, to Family to Family outreach and donations. Without them, our ability to respond to the many needs of the community would

be impossible. Every day JFS meets a wide range of needs, from individuals and families in crisis, to those in need of a little support, to enhance the quality of life in the greater

community. With much to be grateful for, all of us at JFS wish you a safe, joyous, and meaningful Thanksgiving.



## Jewish Family Services Tributes September 2023

**For a Speedy Recovery of Ron Strumwasser**  
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**Happy Anniversary Jill and Ed Newman**  
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**Happy Birthday Ruth Melnicoff**  
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## Jewish Family Services Volunteers & Donors September 2023

**Volunteers:** Jessica Alfandary, Marcia Arnholt, Mike Arnholt, Daniel Benjamin, Andrew Bernstein, Suzy Catenazzo, Harvey Chesler, Dan Coblentz, Jonathan Collman, Andrea Cronson, Julie Dermack, Joni Deutsch, Sheryl Effen, Terri Fishman, Rachel Friedman, Robert Friedman, Meredith Gartner, Richard Goldsmith, Jennifer Golynsky, Gail Halverson, Rebecca Hockfield, Oren Hubara, Tara Hubara, Dawn Hubbs, Bob Jacobson, Mike Kaplan, Rikki Kinitsky, Etti Krausse, Jennifer Koss, Elliot and Stephanie Kreitman, Marcia Lampert, Eric Lerner, Adina Loewensteiner, Matt Luftglass, Gene Marx, Frada Mozenter, Wendy Petricoff, Barbara Rein, Nina Rose, Marilyn Schuster, Janice Shubin, Cindy Siesel, Louis Sinkoe, Harry Sparks, Lorin Steifel, Steve Teich, Beth Thrope, Amalia Warshenbrot, Nancy Wielunski, Amanda Zaidman

Harry Sparks, Claire Putterman, Janice Shubin, Lauren Stark, Amalia Warshenbrot, Charlotte Jewish Day School, LJCC Cares

**Special Thanks:** Men's Club of Temple Israel for donation of challah, Shai Fargian and Yafo Kitchen for donation of Rosh HaShanah meals, Ron Nadal and Golden Grains Bakery for donation of challah

**Hadassah Meal Preppies:** Audrey Herman, June Hirschmann, Judy Kaufmann, Penny Krieger, Elissa Vining

**Shalom Green:** Thank to all Shalom Green volunteers for providing fresh produce to our pantry clients

**Food Pantry Donations:** Thank you to our generous community for continuing to donate to the food pantry. We continue to collect donations every other Wednesday at the portico entrance to the Blumenthal Center for Jewish Education Building at Shalom Park.

**Food Drives:** Temple Israel, Barclay SouthPark

**Special Thanks:** Helping with Rosh HaShanah bags for our senior community: Suzy Catenazzo, Beth Thrope, Suzanne Lamorey (for making rugelach), Wendy Petricoff, Jodie Joseph, Marcia Lampert, Gail Baron, Alison Lerner, Jessica Alfandary, Wendy Levenson, Matt Luftglass, Richard Goldsmith, Rosenberger Family,





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# Recognizing the Mental Health Impact on Family Caregivers

By Howard Olshansky,  
JFS Executive Director

Typically in November, I would address the mental health stress associated with the upcoming holiday season or the need to give thanks during Thanksgiving. However, November is also designated as National Family Caregivers Month. Family caregivers represent a segment of our society that faces significant stress and deserves recognition.

According to the National Alliance for Caregiving, over the past year, an estimated 65.7 million Americans, which accounts for 29 % of the U.S. adult population, have served as family caregivers for ill or disabled relatives. This estimate may even be conservative, as many individuals who provide care do not necessarily identify as caregivers, even when they are actively managing the well-being of a loved one who may not reside in the same household. Consider, for instance, the number of seniors living in assisted living facilities who rely on caregiver sons or daughters to oversee their finances and healthcare.

Additionally, it's important to

note that caregivers often experience a range of emotional challenges, including fatigue, stress, withdrawal, anxiety, and depression. This collection of symptoms is commonly referred to as "caregiver burnout," a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that can arise when individuals dedicate substantial time and energy to managing the health and safety of someone else, often at the expense of their own well-being. Caregiver burnout is a serious issue that deserves attention and support.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, the signs and symptoms of caregiver burnout are similar to those of stress and depression. They include:

- Emotional and physical exhaustion
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and other loved ones
- Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed
- Feeling hopeless and helpless
- Changes in appetite and/or weight
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Unable to concentrate
- Getting sick more often

- Irritability, frustration, or anger toward others

Everyone's experience with burnout is different. Caregiver burnout may cause the following feelings:

- Anxiety or fear: If you do something wrong, it will harm someone within your care.

- Anger or frustration: The person within your care doesn't accept, want, or appreciate the care you're providing.

- Denial: The severity of the person's condition you're caring for isn't that bad.

- Guilt: Spending time taking care of yourself is less important than the person within your care. You might feel bad doing things to care for yourself because they benefit you and not others.

- Negativity: Your caregiving journey started positively but now feels like a dark cloud is following you. Your feelings toward your responsibility are passive or you don't have the desire to do your job well.

- Secluded or alone: You feel like you don't have support, no one wants to help, or asking for help is a sign of weakness.

Here are some ways to prevent

caregiver burnout:

- Find someone you trust. It helps to talk about your feelings and frustrations. It can be a friend, family member, or mental health professional. Organizations like JFS also offer caregivers support groups.

- Set realistic goals. It's important to accept that you may need assistance with caregiving, especially if you are trying to balance other responsibilities. Assess what you can manage and reach out for assistance, if necessary.

- Learn more. You may feel more comfortable providing care when you have the knowledge and understanding of the situation. This is especially true if you are dealing with illnesses such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's diseases. The more you understand the better you will be able to assess needed future services.

- Take care of yourself. It's the age-old adage, you cannot take care of someone else if you are not well. Make sure your needs are met first so you are actually able to support your loved one. This includes both physical and mental health time. This also

includes eating well and getting adequate sleep.

- Accept your feelings. Having frustrated or negative feelings about your caregiving responsibilities is normal. It does not mean you are a bad person and you should not feel guilty or bad. If these feelings become overwhelming reach out for help.

Remember almost one out of every three people are caregivers-even if they don't realize it! Their mental health may just depend on your support. And while you're acknowledging what you are grateful for at your Thanksgiving table, give a shout-out to the caregivers in your family.

Jewish Family Services provides support and resources for caregivers. To learn more contact JFS at 704-364-6594 or [info@jfscharlotte.org](mailto:info@jfscharlotte.org)



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**Everyone copes differently. If you need someone to talk to, if you're struggling with the emotional impact of the Israeli war or this has triggered previous trauma, JFS is here to help.**





# Experience Auschwitz Without Leaving Charlotte

By Mary Eshet

Auschwitz was the largest center of human extermination in the history of mankind. As record numbers of visitors explore this historic site in Poland today, a new opportunity has emerged to bring the historical and societal repercussions of Auschwitz to the world. “Seeing Auschwitz” is the world’s first touring photographic exhibit that provides us with the opportunity to bear witness to this history at a local level. The Stan Greenspon Holocaust and Social Justice Education Center at Queens University is proud to host this world-renowned exhibit on its North American debut from Jan. 26 to April 15, 2024, at the VAPA Center in uptown Charlotte.

The largest and most lethal of all of the extermination and concentration camps established by Nazi Germany, Auschwitz was central to the Nazi plan to eradicate all the Jews in Europe, as well as to persecute other victim groups. Between 1940 and 1945, at least 1,100,000 people were killed in Auschwitz through a process of systematic and industrialized mass murder. Boys and girls, women and men, most of them Jewish of different nationalities, were deported there, numbered, dehumanized, humiliated, and murdered. Other groups of victims included Poles, Roma and

Sinti, Soviet POWs, and minorities of other backgrounds.

“Seeing Auschwitz” comprises a collection of 100 photographs of the camp that have survived to the present day, with an audio guide that includes testimonies from survivors. The 60 to 75-minute experience consists of images captured by perpetrators, victims, and liberators, which are presented not just as proof of the mass genocide but as a startling glimpse into the human lives lost.

The photographs come from an album discovered by a Holocaust survivor in the aftermath of World War II. The Auschwitz Album contained 193 images documenting the arrival of people at the death camp, and the selection of those to be sent to the gas chambers. The pictures were taken over a three-month period in 1944, when about 400,000 people, almost all Jews, were killed at Auschwitz. In total, 1.1 million people were murdered there.

The photographers, most likely SS men Ernst Hofmann and Bernhard Walter, were open about their role, sometimes standing in an elevated position such as the roof of a train, for better composition and perspective. “There’s nothing clandestine about these images,” said Paul Salmons, chief curator of the exhibit. “What we’re seeing in these images is the gaze of the killer. When we see people ar-

iving or being sorted, what we’re seeing is what they want us to see – an efficient process, something they’re proud of.”

The exhibit came to be as part of the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, which was established by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/7, with a simple and stark aim: to “mobilize civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education, in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide.” The “Seeing Auschwitz” exhibition was originally developed for the United Nations’ observance of the International Day of Commemoration in 2020 in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

The “Seeing Auschwitz” exhibit is an original creation by Musealia, a Spanish organization dedicated to exploring powerful stories through exhibitions, in collaboration with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, the United Nations, and UNESCO. A panel of curators of renowned experts in the history of the camp and education of the Holocaust was brought together to prepare it.

Most recently, the exhibit has been in South Africa. Catherine Boyd, head of education for the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre (JHGC), finds the exhibit essential for schools, not only in terms of the historical

content but also because of how it leads the visitor to critically analyze the photographs and compare them with other available resources. ““Seeing Auschwitz” really is about letting the learners make the connections and come up with their own responses to learning about the Holocaust,” she said.

The Greenspon Center plans to make the exhibit available to all Charlotte area students in grades 7–12 for free. “The exhibit will offer an incredible learning experience for students, and provide an impactful resource for teachers as they fulfill the requirement of the new North Carolina mandate to teach about the Holocaust,” said Judy La Pietra, associate director of the Greenspon Center.

One 13-year-old visitor to the London exhibit spoke of its impact: “Thank you for helping me to discover a part of myself I never knew I had. I leave this space a young educated black woman who wants to change the world into a better place. More people need to be taught about this because it’s a part of us and not knowing is like not knowing yourself.”

The exhibit will ask visitors to make connections between multiple histories and between the past and contemporary human rights, urging visitors to understand the consequences of prejudice, “othering,” and indifference to prevent the recurrence of mass atrocities and genocide in all its forms. An adult visitor said, “It was really the most thought-provoking and movingly simple exhibition I have ever been to. Consisting of ‘no more’ than photographs and a few sketches, it brought home, as no other exhibition on the subject has, the enormity of man’s inhumanity to man and the extraordinary resilience of the human spirit.”

Exhibit hours will be Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m., Thursday, 10 a.m.- 7 p.m., and Sunday 12 p.m.- 5 p.m. from Jan. 26–April 15. Tickets will be available for purchase. The audio guide is free of charge and accessible from your mobile phone. Parking at the VAPA Center is free to the public.



Stan Greenspon  
Holocaust and Social Justice  
Education Center

 The Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center

## Board of Directors 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting *Please Join Us*

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023 • 7pm**  
**Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts**

**Election of Officers and Directors and Staff Recognition**

**Nominating Committee**

Raizel Kahn, Chair • Lauren Fine • Jeff Goldsmith • Steven Rogelberg • Helena Scott • Gary Starr • Brian Sterling

**Article VI of the bylaws of the Sandra & Leon Levine Jewish Community Center, Inc. states:** Section 1.D.2 - Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee shall select, and present to the Board for approval, a slate of candidates to fill Director and/or Officer positions currently occupied by Directors and/or Officers in the final year of their term(s) as a Director and/or Officer. The immediate Past President (or, if the current immediate Past President is not able/willing to serve, a previous Past President of the Board selected by the Executive Committee) shall serve as the Chair of the Nominating Committee (the “Chair of the Nominating Committee”). The Nominating Committee shall consist of: the Chair of the Nominating Committee, three (3) members of the Board selected by the Chair of the Nominating Committee, none of whom may be in their final year of their term as a Director and/or Officer; and three (3) additional Members of the LJCC selected by the Chair of the Nominating Committee, none of whom may be members of the Board. Within ten (10) business days after the Chair of the Nominating Committee appoints the members of the Nominating Committee, the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall cause the names of the members of the Nominating Committee to be publicized to the Membership in order to afford the Membership an opportunity to make recommendations to the Nominating Committee for membership on the Board as a Director and/or as an Officer. The President shall not serve on the Nominating Committee.



# NC Holocaust Foundation

By Mitch Rifkin

The North Carolina Holocaust Foundation supports many exciting programs.

This fall semester we saw the rollout of a new Holocaust curriculum distributed to every middle and high school in the state. The curriculum, written by the Holocaust Foundation and Holocaust Council, is designed to teach the lessons learned from the Holocaust including the values of inclusion, democracy, plurality, and anti-bullying. Visit <https://nc-holocaust-council-workshops.org/nc-holocaust-curriculum/>

The passage of the Gizella Abramson Holocaust Education Act made North Carolina one of 17 states to have mandatory teaching of the Holocaust. The Holocaust Foundation led the lobbying for this legislation.

We have increased our traveling exhibits, speaker visits, plays, and book purchase programs this school year.

If you'd like to sponsor a gift of books to a public school (such

a great mitzvah!), please let us know. Each grade is assigned a book title. A classroom set comprises 30 books, with the average cost of a book to be \$10.

The Holocaust Foundation will sponsor an excellent program led by the Anti-Defamation League which teaches middle and high school students how to effectively defend themselves from verbal and demonstrative acts of antisemitism. Stay tuned for more details!

If there is more you'd like to know about the North Carolina Holocaust Foundation, please contact me at [rif121@carolina.rr.com](mailto:rif121@carolina.rr.com) or (704) 607-3936.





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# Sukkot: A Reminder That We Were Once Refugees

by Amy Lefkof

Afghanistan, Belarus, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burma, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Guatemala, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Moldova, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Ukraine, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Refugees from these 29 countries

of origin received the 150 totes full of fresh vegetables, fruits, and kitchen staples assembled by 22 members of the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative (JCRI) on October 3 as part of JCRI's 4th Annual Drive Through Sukkah for Refugees, undertaken in partnership with Refugee Support Services (RSS), a nonprofit post-resettlement organization that helps newly arrived refugees

make Charlotte their new home. Temple Beth El's Associate Rabbi Lexi Erdheim joined the volunteers at the Poliakoff Athletic Pavilion and connected the harvest holiday of Sukkot to the Drive Through Sukkah for Refugees, noting how food insecurity in some communities compels those of us who have an abundance to share our bounty.

JCRI co-chair Elizabeth Weinstein praised community partners that contributed to the success of the program: "Publix once again donated the reusable totes and Amelie's Bakery generously donated a loaf of sourdough bread for each refugee family. The logistical help from Emily Russell, Butterfly Project administrator at the Levine Jewish Community Center was invaluable." Ruth Pordes and Maddy Baer served as JCRI's head buyers for fruits and vegetables. Other volunteers, such as Jackie Fishman from Temple Beth El and Heidi Rotberg from Temple Israel, served on the assembly line, bought and schlepped supplies, drove carloads of filled totes to RSS, or made a monetary contribution to JCRI.

#### Refugee Support Services

This year RSS has worked directly alongside 940 program participants from 30 countries of origin, enlisted 191 volunteers, and its staff numbers 14. RSS onboards volunteers on a rolling basis a couple of times a month and volunteer



JCRI volunteers with some of the 150 totes they filled with food for local refugees

needs shift as needs in the community shift. RSS is recruiting more volunteers for its Fruitful Friends program to be matched in one-to-one friendships with program participants as well as volunteers for their Help Desk program to assist with things like community navigation and ESL enrollment. Anyone interested in volunteering can find more information about the process and fill out a volunteer application at [www.refugeesupportservices.org/get-involved/volunteer-application-process/](http://www.refugeesupportservices.org/get-involved/volunteer-application-process/)

#### Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency

JCRI also partners with the Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRRA), the local affiliate of HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), one of 10 primarily faith-based organizations partnering with the federal government to help refugees start their lives in safety in the United States. CRRRA has had a strong year supporting refugees and parolees from more than 15 different countries. In the past year, the agency has served 300 new refugee arrivals, 280 Ukrainian parolees and assisted many Cuban/Haitian parolees. Parole is a discretionary grant of temporary permission to enter the United States for urgent humanitarian reasons. Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte, the other resettlement organization in Charlotte, resettled 250 refugees this calendar year to date, and served over 300 Afghan, Ukrainian, and Cuban Parolees.

Interested in volunteering with newly resettled refugees? Community volunteers are always needed by CRRRA for refugee appointment transportation needs, apartment set-ups and assisting with cultural orientation and financial literacy classes. CRRRA always welcomes gently used furniture and household items as well as cleaning supplies, toiletries, and winter coats. CRRRA's

volunteer and donation coordinator can be contacted at: [Annslley.banks@carolinarefugee.org](mailto:Annslley.banks@carolinarefugee.org)

Catholic Charities' biggest donation needs are winter coats, furnishings (new and used), and gift cards for food and home supplies.

#### We, too, have been refugees

Welcoming the stranger is a core principle of Judaism as the Torah instructs us 36 times to care for the stranger. Unfortunately, in 2023, resettlement is possible for less than one percent of the 110 million people worldwide who have been forced to flee their homelands due to persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Historically, the United States has been among the world's leaders in refugee resettlement. Since the passage of the Refugee Act in 1980 (which passed by a unanimous vote in the Senate and strong bipartisan support in the House), the United States has admitted over three million refugees. Recently, on September 29, 2023, President Biden signed the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2024, setting the refugee admissions target (the refugee ceiling) at 125,000 for this upcoming fiscal year.

The holiday of Sukkot is a reminder that our people have lived in temporary fragile shelters — during biblical harvests and during our 40-year migration after our exodus from Egypt. We, too, have been refugees.

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# Local Artist's Installation Lights up the Charlotte International Arts Festival

Local artist, Mike Wirth was named a fellow for the 2023 Charlotte International Arts Festival (CIAF) by Blumenthal Arts. Wirth is among a cohort of international and local artists who were invited to display public art installations in Uptown Charlotte's Levine Ave. of the Arts from Sept. 14-Oct. 1.

In June, Wirth was awarded a \$9,000 grant for his proposal to build an immersive pomegranate-shaped interactive light installation, "Rimon." "Rimon" (pomegranate in Hebrew) was designed to be both futuristic and ancient immersing the public into one of the most deep and meaningful Jewish cultural symbols. Like the seeds of the pomegranate, while the visitors wander inside and outside of the illuminated dome-like structure their presence interacts with upwards of 2,600 animated LEDs.

The festival dates coincided with the Jewish High Holidays, and Wirth invited Rabbi Judy Schindler of the Stan Greenspon Holocaust and Social Justice Education Center and Queens Hillel students to lead joyous and enriching cultural programming on the Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Students handed out challah bread and honey sticks and Hillel president, Chava Rosenberg, led the group in the Shabbat candle lighting. On Erev Sukkot, Mike and his family kicked off the holiday when they shook their lulav inside the dome during a busy Friday evening.

The festival lasted for two weeks and thousands of people interacted with the light installation. They were able to read Mike's artist statement connecting the art to Jewish tradition and engage in Jewish rituals and customs during the cultural programming nights that Wirth hosted.

The artist statement reads, in part: "Step into the world of 'Rimon: The Cosmogranate' — an electrifying fusion of art and culture that radiates with the vibrancy of a pomegranate in full bloom. This dazzling creation, named after the Hebrew word for pomegranate, pulsates with symbolism and significance, just like the fruit-shaped structure emulates. This project is a jubilant tribute to the ingenious spirit of the Jewish community. It's akin to revisiting a cherished memory, where the echoes of the past still resonate powerfully in the present. The pomegranate, with its rich history spanning cultures and religions, stands as a beacon of fertility, abundance, and unity. It's a symbol that transcends time, much like the enduring traditions celebrated during the Jewish High



"Rimon" art installation by local artist, Mike Wirth, featured at Charlotte International Arts Festival

Holidays. These holidays hold profound significance, marking moments of reflection, gratitude, and renewal. "Rimon: The Cosmogranate" arrives at the perfect juncture, aligning itself with this tapestry of festivities. Just as the pomegranate's many seeds symbolize the multitude of blessings in one's life, this radiant installation serves as a visual hymn to the blessings and joys that the High Holidays bestow upon the community."

What's next for Rimon? Mike has been seeking new partners in the greater Jewish community to travel the installation to synagogues, JCC's and other Jewish spaces. Wirth is planning to build more Cosmogranates and dreams of filling a large outdoor space like a park or a field with dozens of them.



Rabbi Judy Schindler and Mike Wirth

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## Women's News

# Hadassah: Empowering Women, Advocating for Change



By Aileen Greenberg-Kriner

You may know Hadassah through its fundraising events, social calendar, or list of medical breakthroughs by the Hadassah Medical Organization in Israel. But did you know that when it comes to advocacy, Hadassah takes a strong stand on issues and works to educate and influence the President and members of Congress?

Hadassah members speak out, write to legislators, and meet face-to-face with elected officials locally, at the state level, and in Washington, D.C. These meetings provide an opportunity for Hadassah advocates to discuss pressing issues and advocate for meaningful change. They also empower Hadassah members to be leaders and active participants in the democratic process.

"With 330,000-plus members, associates, and supporters found across every U.S. congressional district, Hadassah makes an impact at the local, state, and federal levels," said Helene Schilian, vice president of education and advocacy for our Charlotte Metro chapter. "Together, we can amplify our impact, strengthen Hadassah's influence in Washington, and bring about positive

legislative change."

Hadassah's advocacy focuses on five priorities:

## Israel/Strengthening U.S.-Israel Relations

Our steadfast dedication to and support of Israel is central to Hadassah's mission. To foster strong U.S.-Israel relations, Hadassah representatives educate elected officials about Israel's needs for foreign aid, security, Israel's right to defend herself against terrorist attacks, legislation to fight BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions anti-Israel movement), and medical and economic partnerships.

## Combating Antisemitism

Hadassah relentlessly fights against antisemitism and hate. On Capitol Hill, Hadassah works with members of Congress to pass bipartisan legislation to combat antisemitism in the U.S. and abroad. Hadassah advocates have been instrumental in passing legislation supporting Holocaust education in schools. Hadassah also helped advance increased funding requests for U.S. State Department initiatives to combat antisemitism.

## reConceiving Infertility Program

Through reConceiving Infertil-

ity, Hadassah women are raising awareness about infertility and are working to expand insurance coverage and access to treatment, and advance infertility-related legislation.

## Championing Women's Health Equity

Hadassah sees the gender disparities in the U.S. healthcare system and advocates for increased funding, improved health data collection, and inclusion of women in all phases of research and clinical trials.

## Ensuring Reproductive Rights

Hadassah is unwavering in its support for full and complete access to reproductive health services, and for every woman's right to make decisions based on her personal religious, ethical, and moral values. Hadassah continues to fight for state and federal legislation supporting and protecting reproductive rights.

Want to get involved? Contact us. Check out the Advocacy Highlights on our website. Hadassah's national website ([www.hadassah.org](http://www.hadassah.org)) has links for advocacy training. Sign up for Advocacy Update emails or access the Hadassah National Action Center, which features political campaigns and

actions you can take to support Hadassah's position on the issues.

Hadassah's commitment to advocacy is steadfast, and our impact is felt far beyond the Jewish community. From healthcare and women's issues to fighting antisemitism and nurturing the leaders of tomorrow, Hadassah women make a difference.

## This Month's Events

It's almost Thanksgiving, and Chaunkah is not far behind (sundown Dec. 7- sundown Dec. 15). Shop for the perfect gifts at *Chanukah Sip, Shop & Schmooze* on Wednesday, Nov. 29. Enjoy wine and cheese as you shop from 5:30-8:00 p.m. at Discovered Traditions Gift Shop at Temple Beth El. Shoppers receive a 10% discount on their purchases, and 10% of total sales will be donated to Hadassah.

Have you recently learned Mah Jongg or have you been playing "forever"? Either way, you can't play without an official NMJL Mah Jongg Card. Order yours from Hadassah, beginning next month. Check our website for details.

Join us for our monthly *Hadassah Wine & Schmooze* at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 7 at Vintner

Wine Market in Arboretum.

*Short Story Discussion Group* meets at 11:45 a.m. on Nov. 10 on Zoom to discuss *News to Turn the World in the book "Frankly Feminist: Short Stories by Jewish Women."* Together, the stories create a powerful portrait of Jewish women's experience.

*Beverly's Book Nook* will not meet in November or December.

*Hadassah BookTalk* is reading "My Own Words" by Ruth Badger Ginsburg. Our meeting is on Tuesday, Nov. 28 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

## Helpful Info

Our website, [www.hadassah-cltevents.org](http://www.hadassah-cltevents.org), has details and registration links for our events. If you have questions or need more information, email [Hadassah-CLT@gmail.com](mailto:Hadassah-CLT@gmail.com) or call (980) 553-1880.

To learn about membership, contact Lori Trapani or Merrill Schenkel at the phone number or email above, or come to one of our events.

The next Hadassah Charlotte Metro Board meeting is Monday, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Follow us on Facebook (Hadassah CLT Metro) and Instagram (Hadassah Charlotte Metro).

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# Hebrew Cemetery Annual Veterans Day Program Recognizes Long Jewish Military History

By Brian Yesowitch

The Jewish community has a long history of involvement in the United States military, dating back to the founding of our nation. One particular story highlights this connection, involving George Washington in December 1778. During a visit to a Jewish merchant named Michael Hart on Chanukah, Mr. Hart began explaining the significance and rituals of the holiday. Surprisingly, President Washington interrupted, revealing his familiarity with Chanukah. He recounted a poignant memory from his time at Valley Forge during the American Revolution. While there, General Washington witnessed a lone soldier struggling to protect a single flame from the biting cold winds.

This soldier was a Polish immigrant who had come to America seeking religious freedom, which he couldn't find under Russian rule. To him, that solitary flame symbolized the Chanukah lights, commemorating the miraculous Jewish victory against formidable foes. The soldier told General Washington



that, just as the God of Israel had helped the ancient Jews triumph over their powerful enemy, He would also assist America in its just quest for independence and freedom. Inspired by the message conveyed by those humble Chanukah candles, General Washington continued to lead the Continental Army with increased confidence and determination, eventually achieving an unlikely victory over the British.

This story encapsulates the enduring relationship that Jewish soldiers have shared with the American military throughout our nation's nearly 250-year history. In Charlotte, we take pride in being home to a significant number of veterans from all

branches of the military spanning generations. Our Hebrew Cemetery serves as the final resting place for soldiers and their families who have been connected to each conflict since the burial of Elizabeth Cohen in 1870.

Twice a year, on Memorial Day in the spring and Veterans Day in the fall, we honor our interred Jewish soldiers by placing American flags on their graves. Our dedicated cemetery staff ensures that these flags remain in place for a week before and after each holiday, allowing family members and other visitors the opportunity to pay their respects to their loved ones. Last fall, we initiated our Veterans Day program, which saw more

than 50 members of our Jewish community coming together to support this mitzvah of placing American flags on the graves of Jewish soldiers.

We extend a warm invitation to join us on Sunday, Nov. 5 at 1 p.m. for a walk through the cemetery and the placement of flags. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we have acquired new American flags for this purpose, and with the assistance of families and friends of our soldiers, our list of graves to honor has expanded, ensuring that everyone in our community who wishes to place a flag has the opportunity to do so.

Charlotte's fall season offers a beautiful outdoor setting, and we anticipate a wonderful, sunny, and cool fall day, much like last year. To sign up for the

event, please provide your name and the number of attendees via email at [sara.schreibman@hebrewcemetery.org](mailto:sara.schreibman@hebrewcemetery.org). For any further inquiries, you can reach out to our director, Sandra Goldman, at [director@hebrewcemetery.org](mailto:director@hebrewcemetery.org).

To discover more about the Hebrew Cemetery, explore options for purchasing funeral plots, inquire about membership and donation opportunities, or include the Hebrew Cemetery Association in your estate planning, please contact our director, Sandra Goldman, at (704) 576-1859 or via email at [director@hebrewcemetery.org](mailto:director@hebrewcemetery.org).



The Hebrew Cemetery joins with the community in remembering the names of those who have been buried in the cemetery in the month of September.

**Gertrude Leifer** 4/1/1925 - 9/2/2023  
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# Around the Table Chats With Glorie Levinson



By Charlotte Rouchouze

Meet 97-year-old Charlotte-an Glorie Levinson, my grandma's dear friend. I've noticed that Grandmas' friends often know more about us than we do about them, and during our recent meeting, teased me for introducing myself as "Charlotte Rouchouze, Betty Smolen's granddaughter" on the phone. "Betty Smolen's granddaughter! Ha! Charlotte, honey, do you think I don't know who you are?" I hadn't seen her since my grandma's celebration of life, so I decided it was time to visit her at Brookdale Carriage Club, her current home. Over lunch, I wanted to hear Glorie's life story.

Beyond their accents, with my grandma's placing her in 1940s Georgia and Glorie's squarely in New York, Betty and Glorie's lives had many parallels. People often mistook them for sisters — both attractive, stylish blondes and third-generation Jewish Americans, both widowed at a relatively young age, and both smart, liberal-thinking women. But let's start from the beginning.

Glorie was born in Brooklyn, NY, to parents who were New York natives. Her dad was an attorney, and she had two sisters and a brother. She attended Erasmus Hall, one of the oldest high schools in the U.S. As a young woman, she embraced the excitement of New York City. She did some modeling in her early years, always showcasing her sense of style and aesthetics, which led her to study interior design in college. However, thanks to her future husband, she would eventually leave the bustling city behind, a decision she has no regrets about. She met David during the summers when his parents sent him to New York to "become cultured," fearing he wouldn't achieve that in his native North Carolina.

After their marriage, they settled in Fairmont, North Carolina, where David's father, Harry Levinson, owned the Fairmont Underselling Store. According to the Fairmont History website, "David's marriage to Glorie Diamant of Brooklyn, NY, added an experienced NY City model to their firm, not to mention a touch of glamour." When asked about moving from New York City to

a small-town in North Carolina, Glorie simply shrugged and said, "My in-laws were such nice people, and important in the community. They made it easy."

To get a sense of the town, I delved into archival newspapers via newspapers.com. In the 1930s and 40s issues of the Robesonian in nearby Lumberton, I found local updates like, "Mrs. Harriett Temple Hauss of Cherryville, North Carolina is spending some time with her mother, Mrs. Alice P. Temple," and "Mrs. Jeanne Frank has been ill for several days but is rapidly improving." There was even a dramatic slander case, where "Mrs. Bryant testified that Mrs. Carper told her that Mrs. Reedy had said, 'She was staying with George Kheiralla at his house as man and wife and ought to be run out of the town of Rowland.'" (Mrs. Bryant won \$1,750 in damages from Mrs. Reedy!)

Such small-town life must have been a stark change from New York City, but Glorie never looked back. She admits that the move made a career in interior design impossible, saying, "Don't put this in the paper, but these North Carolina people didn't know from interior design." (Sorry, Glorie, I included it!) Instead, she learned to play bridge and loved it.

David and Glorie had two sons, Peter and Drew. They were the only Jewish family in Fairmont, and for holidays, they would go to Lumberton, where there was a small Jewish congregation. However, her life took an unexpected turn when she was in a devastating head-on car collision on a stretch of highway between Charlotte and Rockingham when the boys were still young. She and her husband

survived, but the accident led to many facial surgeries and several years during which Glorie relied on the help of family and a devoted nurse named Susan. The accident also affected her memory of that period, making it hard to share many details.

Unfortunately, Glorie's husband David passed away in the early 80s, prompting her move to Charlotte. Here, she continued her active life, playing sports and making friends, including my grandmother, Betty. Every Sunday, the two of them went to a movie together and often treated themselves to a classy dinner afterward.

Peter, the oldest, pursued a career in finance, and Drew became a news reporter with CBS News. Peter also co-founded The Ruach, a band and musical community that offers Shabbat and holiday experiences in Charlotte. Drew is now the head of Media Relations at LifeSci Communications in New York City. Glorie has five lovely grandchildren: Jill, Sophie, Nicole, Jessica, and Sean.

When I asked Glorie to do the interview with me, I inquired if she was familiar with my column. She replied, "Well, I do like reading it, except for the cooking part." Cooking was never her thing, she said, and she told me a story about Betty guiding her through making Betty's famous Butter Bean and Barley Soup over the phone. "I got to the very end, and the soup was simmering away. Betty told me to add some cornstarch, which is what I did." Of course, I knew where this was going, so I asked Glorie about how much she had added. "Oh maybe a cup or so. Well, how was I supposed to know it would turn the whole



Glorie Levinson

pot to glue? But oh, did we laugh." I could almost hear both of their joyful, silly laughs over the phone that day.

Since Glorie didn't have any recipes to share, I'll share my grandmother's famous ranch crackers, which were a favorite part of her famous happy hours. They remind me of that generation's love of good company and meandering chitchat. So, next time you have friends over, try offering them these delicious, addictive crackers.

*Charlotte Rouchouze, PhD is a local French teacher, food blogger, and beaded jewelry designer. Her blog about food traditions from around the world can be found at [www.thechildrenstable.com](http://www.thechildrenstable.com). Contact her at [charlotte.rouchouze@yahoo.com](mailto:charlotte.rouchouze@yahoo.com).*



## Happy Hour Ranch Oyster Crackers



### Ingredients:

1 9 oz bag of oyster crackers  
½ packet or 1 tbsp of ranch seasoning  
½ tsp dried dill  
½ tsp garlic powder  
¼ cup olive oil

### Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 300 degrees.
- Toss all the ingredients together in a bowl or large plastic bag.
- Spread the mixture onto a small cookie sheet lined with tin foil.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes or until just golden. Enjoy!

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# Lonsmen Charlotte Jewish Motorcycle Club Forming in Charlotte

By Jeff Komrower

We are the JMA — the Jewish Motorcyclists Alliance, a diverse group hailing from all corners of the country and even around the world. You'll recognize us by our intimidating appearance, decked out in leathers, chaps, durags, and, of course, our distinctive cuts. We come roaring down the highways on two and three wheels, with the wind in our faces and a shared passion for motorcycling.

As an alliance, we boast 50 clubs and nearly 1,000 dedicated members. Our clubs sport names that range from the formidable, like the Mazel Tuffs, Chai-Way Riders, Hillel's Angels, and The King David Bikers, to the intriguing, such as the Mountain Menschen, Shalom and Chrome, The Wandering Twos, and the Lonsmen. Motorcyclists, in general, share a unique camaraderie that can be hard for non-riders to grasp. However, when you add our common heritage and a shared mission, that bond becomes truly exceptional.

And now, we are excited to announce the formation of a Charlotte chapter of the Lonsmen, and we're actively seeking new members to join our ranks. Much like the established Lonsmen Boston chapter, which has thrived for 12 years, our focus will be on celebrating the sport of motorcycling and having a blast while doing it. We aim to strengthen our ties to our shared heritage, fostering new friendships and connections within our club.

But there's more to being a part of the JMA than the love of the open road, the wind in our hair (and the occasional bug in our teeth), and the joy of riding alongside fellow Jews and non-Jews. There's a profound reason to join us: The Ride to Remember (R2R). Since 2005, JMA members have embarked on annual rides from various cities, including Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Chicago, Kansas City, Atlanta, San Diego, Phoenix, Toronto, Montreal, Melbourne,



JMA Riders arrive at the San Diego Jewish Academy for the 2021 Ride To Remember which raised over \$30,000 for the Butterfly Project which teaches social justice through lessons of the Holocaust.



JMA Members at the 2023 R2R visit the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center in Milwaukee, WI

Australia, and Israel, among others. These rides have a vital purpose - raising funds for Holocaust awareness and education.

Over the years, we've supported numerous causes, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Whitwell, Tennessee middle school known for its Paper Clips Project (twice), the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center in Providence, Rhode Island, the Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum in Oswego, New York, and the Maltz Museum in Cleveland, Ohio, where we raised over \$80,000 through the Schul Boys club. Recently,

our R2R event in May raised over \$50,000 for the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center (HERC) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Our annual ride serves a critical purpose - to ensure that the world never forgets. We have the privilege of meeting and conversing with Holocaust survivors while they are still with us, hearing their firsthand accounts, and renewing our collective determination to remember the unspeakable atrocities committed against our people and others. We ride to ensure that the world never forgets.

Beyond our annual R2R, our

member clubs organize meet-and-greets throughout the year. Sometimes it's just about hitting the road and spending time together, while other times, it's about showing support. In August 2019, several clubs joined forces with the Mazel Tuff's of Pittsburgh to stand in solidarity with the Tree of Life Synagogue following the tragic shootings that occurred there the previous October. We are always there for our fellow Lonsmen.

Combining our love for motorcycling with our Jewish heritage and promoting Jewish values and pride is a truly unique and immensely fulfilling experience. There's a sense of satisfaction in being part of a powerful, formidable group of bikers thundering down the road, all united as Lonsmen, and all working together to ensure that the world never forgets.

Much like the Boston Chapter, we anticipate that the Charlotte Lonsmen will be active not only in riding but also socially, fostering exceptional camaraderie among riders, as well as their spouses and significant others. Whether you're an experienced rider or know someone who is, please help us spread the word. We'd be thrilled to have you join us! For more information, reach out to Jeff (aka Deerslayer) at jkomrower@gmail.com.

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# Bal Tashchit and Beyond: Shalom Park Sustainability Targets

By Summer Minchew and  
Lisa Shpritz

Shalom Green: The Shalom Park Environmental Initiative has three pillars of focus at the Shalom Park campus. 1) Establish and maintain the Shalom Park Community Garden, 2) Provide environmental education to the Shalom Park community, and 3) Reduce the environmental footprint of Shalom Park facilities and operations.

Shalom Park is a vibrant community that encompasses spaces for worship, gatherings, and learning, catering to individuals of all ages, from infants to seniors. Addressing the environmental impact of Shalom Park is a multifaceted endeavor that involves the development and implementation of strategies pertaining to waste reduction, energy conservation, and responsible water usage.

## Introduction to Green Buildings and Communities

Our built environment is all around us; it provides the setting for all our lives events, big and small. Whether we notice it or not, our built environment

plays a huge role in our natural environment, our economic environment, and our cultural environment. Green building is fundamentally a process of continual improvement. It is a process by which today's "best practices" become tomorrow's standard practices, a rising foundation for ever-higher levels of performance.

Green buildings can help us create more vital communities, healthier indoor and outdoor spaces, and stronger connections to nature. The green building movement is dedicated to bringing about a lasting transformation in prevailing design, planning, construction, and operational practices. Its goal is to create built environments that have a reduced impact on the environment, are more sustainable, and ultimately contribute to regenerating our surroundings.

In February 2015, the U.S. Green Building Council and Shalom Park leadership held a community planning workshop, attended by more than 50 people, through which goals for the entire campus of buildings,

comprising more than 250,000 square feet, were identified using the ADVANCE framework.

The ADVANCE program was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council as a framework to increase access to resources and expertise for new, underserved, and underrepresented audiences including faith-based communities. ADVANCE was built to meet organizations and communities wherever they are on the path to sustainability and provide professional resources and assistance.

The discussions and information reviewed during the workshop were compiled and summarized in a document called "USGBC Sustainability Plan Builder for Existing Buildings Report," which was delivered to Shalom Park leaders and includes key sustainability strategies and tactics to improve the environmental sustainability of Shalom Park. Below is the full list of elements comprising the Park sustainability plan. Some of the elements of this plan have been implemented, some are in process, and some may be for fu-

ture consideration. We are sharing the full plan details to give you a sense of the breadth of enhancements we can implement to assist our beautiful Shalom Park in its sustainability journey.

Priorities identified in the USGBC Sustainability Plan Builder include:

- Living Jewish values.
- Healthy spiritual growth.
- Doing the right thing.
- Reduce Energy Use**
  - At the end of their useful lives, replace lamps and fixtures with all LED lighting.
  - Identify natural daylighting opportunities; natural light can be maximized as a high-quality replacement for electric lighting during the daytime. Identify opportunities to harvest daylighting through skylights or solar tubes.
  - Installation of occupancy sensors, dimmers, and other lighting electricity-saving devices for each building.
  - Assess the state of existing mechanical systems in each building and ensure that facility management staff have access to operating manuals and know how to operate most effectively.

## Reduce Water Use

- Conduct park-wide inventory for flush (i.e., toilets) and flow (i.e., sinks) fixtures. Compare installed rates against EPA minimums.

- Develop a plan for replacement and upgrades over time with more efficient WaterSense-rated products.

- Explore options for reducing water and using reclaimed water.

- Explore opportunities to incorporate native plants in landscapes that do not require additional irrigation.

- As turf needs to be replaced, explore water-efficient, low-maintenance options.

- Update irrigation heads to be more water-efficient.

- Assess opportunities to collect rainwater for use in landscape and garden irrigation.

## Establish a Purchasing Policy

- Assess current products purchased and develop a list of approved green product specifications for ongoing consumable goods (i.e., copy paper, light bulbs, disposable paper products), regular maintenance prod-

(Continued on page 26)

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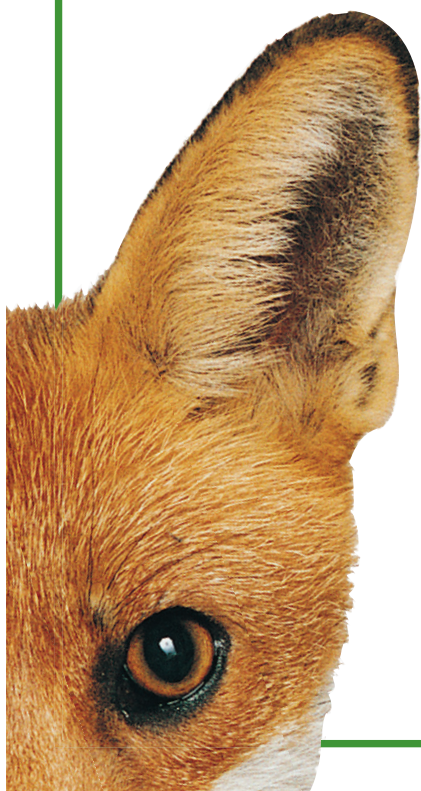
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# Shalom Green

(Answers from page 25)

ucts (i.e., paint, caulks, etc.), and cleaning supplies.

- Revisit the list of approved contractors and identify preferred “green contractors” for maintenance needs.

- Assess current cleaning processes, chemicals, and equipment to determine effectiveness and opportunity for healthy, green alternatives.

- Develop an approved list of green cleaning products and

share it with each building’s facility management and purchasing teams.

Improve Indoor Health by Implementing a Policy for Building and HVAC Maintenance

- Assess current HVAC air filters and establish routine replacement with high-quality filters appropriate for each building’s system. Aim for a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) of 13 or greater.

- Develop a plan to clean

ductwork and HVAC equipment as part of mechanical systems ongoing maintenance.

- Assess the ventilation effectiveness of each building in conjunction with a retro-commissioning report to ensure appropriate levels of fresh air intake.

- Ensure cleaning of walk-off mats at all building entryways happens at least one time per week to reduce tracking of dirt, dust, and other contaminants in



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the building.

- Build a policy to only purchase low VOC carpets, adhesives, paints, and furnishings.

Divert Waste Generated

- Establish a long-term plan for waste auditing to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of existing plans and procedures to train staff and educate occupants as they change.

- Talk with food service teams about bulk purchasing opportunities that reduce cardboard boxes and other packaging waste.

- Change all computer default settings to two-sided printing to reduce paper use and lower-resolution print quality to reduce ink use.

- Assess space used for storage to determine how it can be better used to support existing recycling and composting plans.

- Identify local options for Styrofoam recycling pick up and wood pallet recycling or reuse.

- Identify suitable options for ‘coreless’ paper roll products.

- Do cost-benefit analysis of reusable silverware. Explore the use of ceramic mugs for drinks, rather than paper/plastic.

- Understand and follow recycling requirements for Mecklenburg County.

Increase the use of Alternative Transportation

- Begin a dialogue with stu-

dents, parents, and teachers about healthier transportation options.

- Explore incentives to increase carpooling.

- Conduct a transportation survey at Shalom Park to gather data for possible solutions.

- Improve exterior signage and way-finding.

- Install bike racks.

- Provide education or signage in carpool lanes to encourage drivers to turn off engines.

- Improve pedestrian connections between buildings.

- Improve lighting along pedestrian walkways to encourage use.

Shalom Green: The Shalom Park Environmental Initiative is comprised of “green champions” from every part of our broader community – they are Shalom Park partners, friends, and community advocates whose goals include pursuing the targets laid out by the ADVANCE Sustainability Plan Builder Report. If you would like to help make this plan come to life, please support our efforts! You can support this work in many ways, from volunteering with Shalom Green, to keeping the environment in mind when visiting Shalom Park facilities, to contacting Park leaders to let them know you support a more sustainable Shalom Park. And of course, you can always apply these strategies to advancing sustainability within your own home and neighborhood.

Jewish tradition teaches the importance of caring for the environment, for we must act as partners in preserving creation. If you are interested in donating your time or dollars to Shalom Green, please visit our website at [www.shalomgreenCLT.org](http://www.shalomgreenCLT.org) and email us at [info@shalomgreen-CLT.org](mailto:info@shalomgreen-CLT.org). Connect with us on Facebook at Shalom Green: Shalom Park Environmental Initiative and on Instagram and Twitter @shalomgreen\_CLT.



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**SHALOM GREEN**  
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Every year, we are challenged with making the holidays relevant and experiential in a unique way for our students. This year, students in grades four through seven loaded into buses and went to Xtreme Challenge, a 17-acre facility ideal for team building and now, Sukkot building. Students were tasked with building sukkot that met the specifications from the Mishna. What?



Mr. Isham, the CJDS S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) instructor, prepared materials and tools that the students might need upon reaching the building site. The students were divided into groups with a seventh-grade student at the helm, and the other members were from across the grades. The students found piles of various sizes of wood, branches, bamboo, cloth, hemp, tape, material, scissors, tape measures, mallets, and more. The students

After several hours, the groups had various levels of success, with all sukkot needing various stages of being rebuilt, reconfigured, and rethought. If you see a

For more information about Charlotte Jewish Day or to take a tour, call 704-366-4558 or email [gosborne@cjdpschool.org](mailto:gosborne@cjdpschool.org). Now accepting applications for the 2024-25 school year for grades TK-8.



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## Education and Youth

# Freedom School Marks 13th Summer at Shalom Park!

By Margaret Musa

This summer, 42 scholars participated in the Shalom Park Freedom School, a six-week literacy and enrichment program for children at risk for summer learning loss.

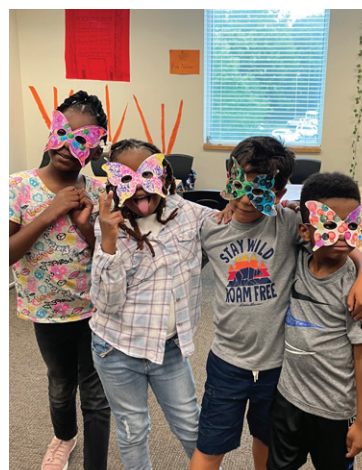
What happened in a day at Shalom Park Freedom School this summer?

After eating breakfast on-site, the scholars kicked off their day with energetic cheering and

chanting at Harambee (a Swahili word meaning togetherness) and then heard a story read by a guest reader from our Shalom Park community. The scholars spent the next three hours reading books and honing their literacy skills in the Temple Israel Religious School and Charlotte Jewish Day School classrooms. At noon, they walked over to Temple Beth El, where they ate lunch, generously prepared and

served by Jered Mond of Izzy's Catering. After lunch, they participated in afternoon activities, which might have included chess lessons, a field trip to Ray's Splash Planet or Discovery Place, water activities on the Levine JCC fields, or a visit with Shalom Park's Butterfly Project.

Each week, a group of teens from the Shalom Park community volunteered in the classrooms. These teens made up our Teen



Scholars display their masks after a visit from the LICC Butterfly Project.

Board, and they served as role models to the scholars by helping in the classrooms and leading enrichment activities. One parent of a scholar commented that his son's favorite part about Freedom School was spending time with the teens in his class.

Community volunteers spent thirty minutes each day reading books with scholars during their DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time. On the Great Day of Reading, sixty campers from Camp Judea visited the Shalom Park Freedom School, read books with our scholars, and played a huge game of Four Corners with them!

It truly takes action and donations from every part of our Shalom Park community to make the Shalom Park Freedom School a success!

Freedom School has given me a place where I can develop my social skills and build my confidence. By continuing to learn and exercise my brain, I feel up-to-date and ready to go back to school.

-Rebecca, Shalom Park Freedom School Scholar 2023

Who supported and donated funds for the Shalom Park Freedom School?

Individual donors and the agencies, schools, and temples at Shalom Park supported us! Funds for the program came from an allocation from the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, Temple Beth El's Social Justice and Action Fund, Temple Israel's Social Action Fund, and individual donors. Space for classrooms was donated by Temple Israel; space for lunch and Finale was donated by Temple Beth El; playground use was donated by Charlotte Jewish Day School; activity space and custodial and security services were donated by the Foundation of Shalom Park. The Levine-Sklut Judaic Library provided each scholar with books for their home bookshelves. Additionally, the following agencies helped fill new backpacks with school supplies for each and every scholar for the new school year: Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, Foundation of Shalom Park, Charlotte Jewish Preschool, Charlotte Jewish Day School, Temple Israel, Temple Beth El, Levine JCC, and Jewish Family Services.

Thank you to our Steering Committee volunteers and community supporters who worked behind the scenes to make the program a success!

The Shalom Park Freedom School Steering Committee was led by Margaret Musa and Annie Lord. Merle Gottheim planned afternoon activities; Tess Berger planned two amazing family nights where families were served pizza, salad, fruit, and homemade desserts; Liz Wahls coordinated our Harambee readers; Judy Kaufmann and Maddy Gallant provided daily snacks. Action Plus Ideas donated water bottles for the scholars.

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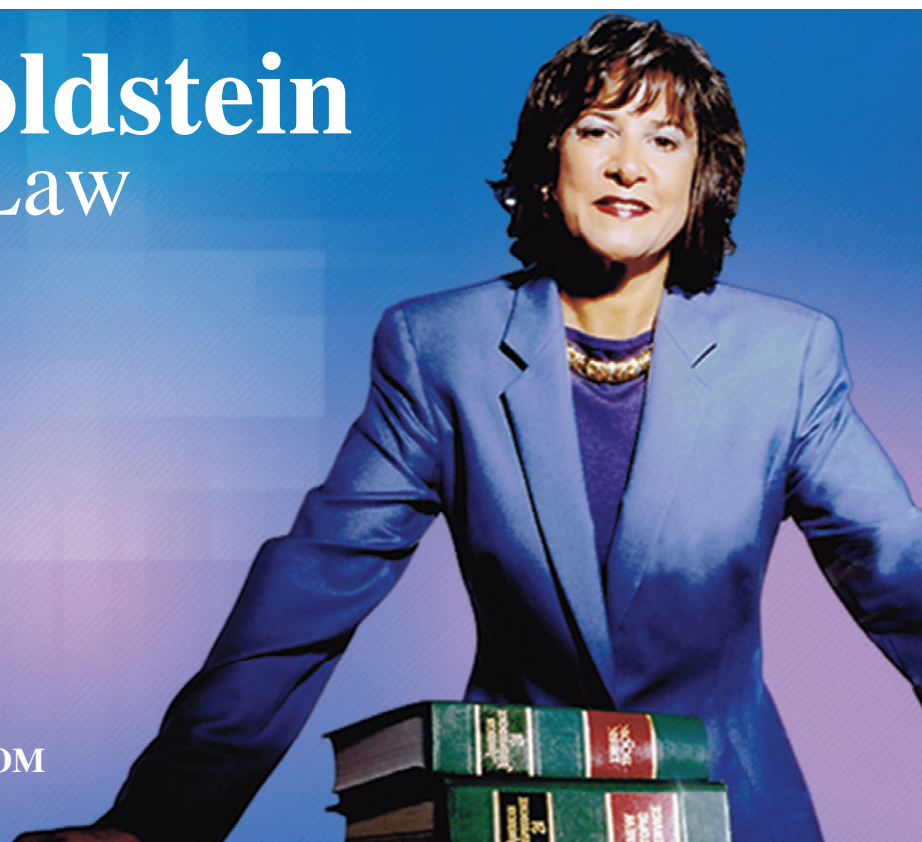
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Scholars and teen board member Jessie Adams in the classroom





## Education and Youth

# BBYO Eastern Region Welcomes New Genesis Fellow

BBYO's (B'nai Brith Youth Organization) Eastern Region welcomes Zachary Tabachnikoff as its new Genesis Fellow. Zachary, known to Jewish teens across North Carolina and the country as "Tabby," is a recent Florida State University graduate with a background in hospitality and event management. He has a strong connection to the Jewish community, having been involved in various Jewish organizations and activities throughout his life. Zachary comes from a family with deep Jewish roots, including parents and a grandfather who are rabbis, a stepmother who works for the Jewish Federation, and a grandmother who was a Hebrew school teacher.

Zachary's journey with BBYO began during his teenage years, and he credits the organization with playing a significant role in his personal growth and development. His goal as a staff member at BBYO is to provide the same transformative experiences to other Jewish teens in the Charlotte area. He is dedicated to helping them find themselves,

develop leadership skills, and build meaningful relationships.

Zachary is part of a new BBYO Fellowship Program called "Genesis," which involves working in various communities and also spending time learning how the international organization operates. In Charlotte, he primarily supports BBYO chapters and collaborates with other cities in North Carolina, such as Greensboro, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem. His responsibilities include assisting with event planning, coordinating transportation, working with event venues, and helping chapters become more self-sufficient in terms of scheduling, fundraising, philanthropy, and recruitment.

BBYO is entering its centennial year, and Zachary is excited about the organization's growth and the increased collaboration among its chapters in Charlotte. The addition of a staff member like Zachary has already had a positive impact, with teens appreciating his energy and enthusiasm for programming. One teen, Lindsay Pfeffer, pres-

ident of the local chapter Chai Chaverim BBG had this to say when asked about Zachary: "I'm truly looking forward to the great year we have ahead in BBYO! Specifically, though, I'm excited to work with our new associate regional director, Tabby. Already, he has opened so many doors for us that have been closed in the past like bringing new and engaging programming to popular venues throughout the city. I'm so grateful I'll get to learn from him as a mentor and a friend this year. I can't wait to see what we accomplish!"

One of Zachary's goals is to foster community-wide events, as the Charlotte chapters have typically operated independently. The Charlotte BBYO community is enthusiastic about working with him, and they anticipate a successful year ahead.

Earlier this year North Carolina was privileged enough to host the BBYO international president, TJ Katz, for a week. During his time here he was excited to see the success and energy around all of the chapters.



Zachary Tabachnikoff

He was also able to meet with Zachary to help teach him some more about the current state of the order and include certain practices and themes that may have changed since his time in the organization. "As the International President of BBYO, it's

amazing to see the work Zachary is doing with the teens in North Carolina. He's already successfully been able to connect with the teens in the area, and we're super lucky to have him on the staff team."

BBYO's has already begun celebrations for its 100th anniversary, with events hosted by thousands of teens in communities around the world. Charlotte's kickoff event was well-attended, and the region had a significant presence at the local BBYO International Convention registration launch night. The coming weeks will see various exciting local events, and there is a sense of enthusiasm and anticipation for what Zachary and the teens can achieve together.

If anyone is interested in joining BBYO or has questions about the organization, they can reach out to Zachary at [Ztabachnikoff@bbyo.org](mailto:Ztabachnikoff@bbyo.org) for assistance and information.



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Infants

Pre-K





Education and Youth

# Unlocking Jewish Pride: Our Interactive and Fun Hebrew School

*Leah Levin, Director Hebrew School of the Arts. Co-Director Ballantyne Jewish Center*

Are you ready to embark on a journey of learning, discovery, and Jewish pride? Welcome to Hebrew School of the Arts, where education is not just about textbooks and lectures, but an immersive experience filled with interactive activities, arts and crafts, and a whole lot of fun!

Our Hebrew School is more than just a place to learn how to read Hebrew. We believe in fostering a deep connection to Jewish traditions, customs, and identity. Our curriculum is designed to make every lesson engaging and memorable.



Maya Blecher shows off her mini sukkah model.

Our Hebrew school focuses on interactive learning. Learning about holidays and mitzvot can be a breeze when they're made interactive. At our Hebrew School, we use innovative teaching methods including games, role-playing, and multimedia presentations to keep students engaged.

Arts and crafts are a fundamental part of our program. We encourage creativity through hands-on projects which allow students to express their artistic talents while also learning about Jewish history, Torah stories, holidays, and mitzvot. From building sukkot to acting out the Chanukah story, our students get to experience the joy of Jewish traditions firsthand.

Jewish pride is at the heart of what we do. We want our students to not only learn about their heritage, but also feel a sense of pride in being Jewish. Through storytelling, discussions, and community events, we help our students connect with their roots and develop a strong Jewish identity.

We provide a welcoming and inclusive environment where stu-



Juliet Frances prepares delicious pomegranate salsa in honor of Rosh HaShanah.

dents can make lifelong friends who share their Jewish journey. We organize family events, field trips, and social gatherings to strengthen these bonds.

At Hebrew School of the Arts, we create a space where Jewish children can thrive, learn, and develop a deep sense of pride in their heritage. We are dedicated to nurturing the next generation of proud, knowledgeable, and engaged Jews. Join us on this



CGI Ballantyne Winter Camp 2023

exciting journey of learning, creativity, and Jewish identity, and watch your child flourish in a vibrant and supportive community. Come be a part of our Hebrew School family and let the adventure begin!

## CGI Ballantyne Winter Camp 2023

After completing our tenth successful summer with more than 150 campers, CGI Ballantyne is back and offering an amazing Winter Camp experi-

ence for your children. With activities, games, exciting Jewish themes, daily trips, crafts and much more, your children will have a blast every single day. Our handpicked staff are experienced, energetic, and fun-loving camp counselors who love working with children. A special thank you to the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte for their support.

(Continued on page 33)



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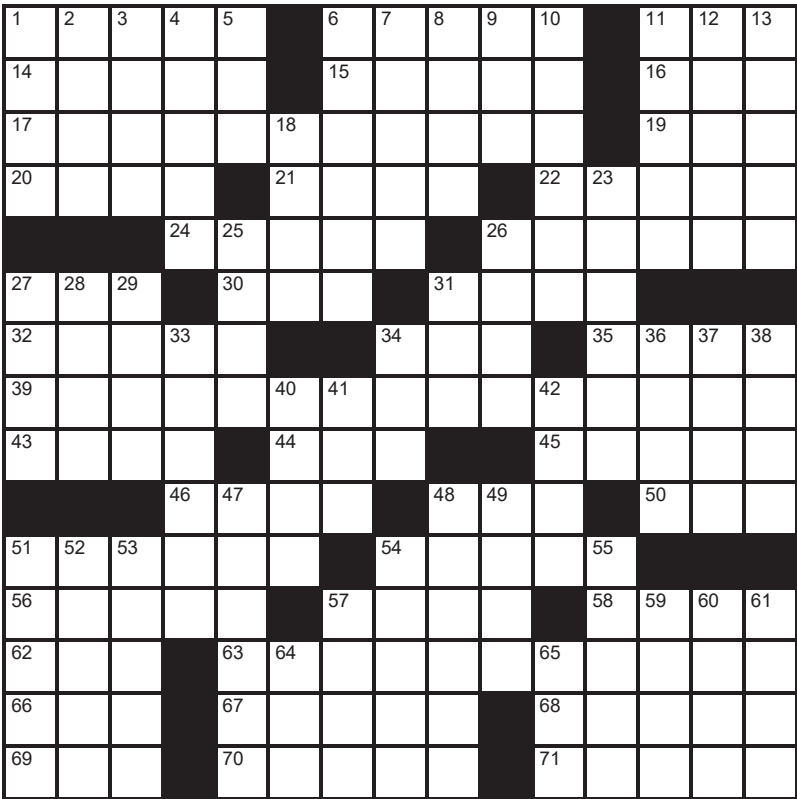


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Israel



- 2. Driving Miss Daisy playwright Alfred
- 3. They might ruin your garden
- 4. Really annoy
- 5. Timber-shaping tool
- 6. Catatonic state
- 7. Fitting name for one of the Angry Birds pigs
- 8. Early color TVs
- 9. Paul French \_\_\_\_ Isaac Asimov
- 10. Most polytheists, to-day
- 11. The Silence of the Lambs director
- 12. George who was Mary
- 13. Team in a pickup game, maybe
- 18. "Arrivederci"
- 23. Turns away, as the eyes
- 25. Large, flightless bird
- 26. Venetian VIP of old

Across

- 1. Israel, once...or land the New York Times labeled as part of "Ancient Palestine"
- 6. Book that never uses the word "Palestine"
- 11. \_\_\_\_ Moines
- 14. Winning
- 15. Lake with a Daytime Emmy
- 16. Kosher Yellowstone resident
- 17. Israel, once
- 19. 1002, to Caesar
- 20. Constellation named for a musical instrument
- 21. Signs
- 22. Actor who appeared in both Interstellar and The Martian
- 24. Frequent Hepburn co-star
- 26. Comforters
- 27. \$, for short
- 30. Common kibbutz tool
- 31. Fall short
- 32. Item in the High Priest's breastplate
- 34. One is used to quantify some Jewish measurements
- 35. Speak like a tough guy, say
- 39. What Israel was renamed by Hadrian as a punishment to the Jews

Down

- 43. Back
- 44. Army 1sts and 2nds
- 45. Boxed Jewish item, usually
- 46. "I am \_\_\_\_ I am": Exod. 3:14
- 48. It's not PC?
- 50. Nat. where Volvo is headquartered
- 51. The world's largest river, in volume
- 54. The Golan, from Eilat
- 56. Begin famously walked to his funeral
- 57. Asher \_\_\_\_ ....
- 58. A Jew Today writer Wiesel
- 62. Cancelled Simpsons character
- 63. Israel
- 66. Animal that could essentially be used for all Biblical holidays
- 67. Words with "directed"
- 68. She meets a caterpillar smoking a hookah
- 69. M.D.'s org.
- 70. Book that never uses the word "Palestine"
- 71. Book that never uses the word "Palestine"

Down

- 1. Killer of Sisera, in some secular writings

(Answers on page 35)

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Education and Youth

# Jewish Preschool on Sardis Gathers to Pray and Increase in Mitzvot for Israel

JPS students and families gathered to add light in a world that seems so dark. We gave tzedakah, recited tefillot (prayers), Tehillim (psalms), and the blessing for the protection of the Israeli Defense Forces. Afterwards, families had the opportunity to do mitzvot such as purchasing a mezuzah for a door at home that doesn't have one yet, giving Tzedakah to organizations in Israel, purchasing a letter in the Unity Torah scroll, lighting Shabbat candles, and wrapping Tefillin. It was heartwarming to see families commit to fulfilling mitzvot in the merit of our brothers and sisters in Israel. May the prayers of our young children be answered immediately, and may we see peace in Israel.



We recited tefillot together.



Giving extra tzedakah in honor of Israel's safety



Families committed to lighting Shabbat candles.



We gave tzedakah.



We collected pictures of our family & friends who live in Israel. Looking at these before we said Tefillah each day helped us remember who we are praying for — all our brothers and sisters in Israel.

## The Playground @ JPS

coming soon!

For dedication opportunities and to check out the details, please visit:



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[jpskids.org/playground](https://jpskids.org/playground)



call 704-364-8395 or visit [jpskids.org](https://jpskids.org)



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Education and Youth

# Exploring the Rich Flavors of Jewish Cuisine: A Hebrew High Cooking Class

By Melanie Mason

In the heart of our Hebrew High community, a delightful and enriching experience is taking place — a Jewish cooking class that goes beyond the kitchen. As we gather to learn the art of preparing traditional Jewish dishes, we also dive into the history, culture, and traditions that have shaped these culinary delights for generations.

Food has a unique power to bring people together, and in this cooking class, students are not just learning recipes; they are connecting with their heritage and each other through the shared experience of preparing and enjoying Jewish cuisine. The class is a celebration of diversity within the Jewish culture, with recipes representing both sweet and savory foods from the Ashkenazi, Sephardic, and other Jewish culinary traditions.

One of the primary objectives of this cooking class is to preserve and transmit the traditions of Jewish cuisine to the next generation. As they learn to cook, they are simultaneously keeping these traditions alive. This hands-on approach to learning



Bruce Soto, Mylene Frankl and Simon Schuster concentrating very hard while cutting up apples for their recipe

fosters a deep appreciation for the historical and cultural significance of the dishes being prepared.

The class features a rotating menu, with each session focusing on a different set of taste,

background, ingredients, and skill. One week, students might be chopping vegetables for a hearty shakshuka, while the next they might be rolling out dough for rugelach, a beloved dessert, all while gaining insight into the

unique ingredients and techniques that define each recipe.

The Jewish Cooking and Baking class at Hebrew High is more than just an exploration of flavors; it's a journey through the heart and soul of Jewish heritage. As students roll up their sleeves and embrace the culinary traditions that have been passed down through the generations, they are also forging bonds with their fellow students

and connecting with their Jewish identity in a meaningful way. In this kitchen, history, culture, and delicious food converge, creating a truly enriching experience for all involved.



## Ballantyne Jewish Center

(Continued from page 30)

Monday through Friday, December 25 – 29, 9 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Extended care available upon request

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Children must be at least 3 years old and potty-trained to attend.

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Register for one day or for the entire week.

Early Bird Price: \$70 per day or \$300 for the week

AFTER November 7: \$80 per

day or \$340 for the week

The cost includes daily snacks and a hot kosher lunch.

To register, or for more information contact Leah Levin at Leah@JewishBallantyne.com or (704) 408-1116 or visit our website [www.CGIBallantyne.com](http://www.CGIBallantyne.com).



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Newspaper archives are a treasure trove of collective memories, providing a snapshot of our history. The following article is from The Charlotte Jewish News, October, 2006. To read other issues of The CJN, visit the archives at <https://www.digitalnc.org/newspapers/charlotte-jewish-news-charlotte-nc/>.

# Looking Back: Year 2006

## Federation’s Israel Emergency Campaign Raises Over \$460,000

The missiles are quiet and we pray the cease-fire will translate into real security for Israel. To date, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte’s Israel Emergency Campaign has raised more than \$460,000 to help rebuild and restore all that has been destroyed in northern Israel. Your continued support ensures that the Jewish Federation’s on-the-ground partners — the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) and American Jewish Joint Distribution (JDC) Committee remain on the scene, ready to help. On Wednesday, September 6, our community was briefed by JDC Representative, Kobi Tav. Following Mr. Tav’s stories regarding how Israeli families are coping with the crisis, our Israel Emergency Campaign chair, David Epstein, responded with his personal story.

Below is an excerpt from David Epstein’s speech:

“Every gift to this emergency campaign is important. However, I would be remiss if I did not publicly acknowledge the extreme generosity of Leon and Sandra Levine, who have made a gift of \$100,000. In addition to this wonderful gift, so far in our campaign we have received three extraordinary gifts of \$25,000 from Howard Levine, Eric and Lori Sklut and Bill and Patty Gorelick.

“As you know, I am very passionate about this campaign and about Israel. I believe that just as the State of Israel has risen from the ashes of the Holocaust, so, too, has the Jewish community risen since the dark days of WWII. I believe that the State of Israel has given the Jews of the Diaspora a status that we would

not have achieved on our own. Here in the United States, as well as in the rest of the Western world, Jews have reached unprecedented heights. I would suggest to you that some of us may even take our status for granted. And yes, it is true that the Jewish peoples’ contribution to the world, to its culture, to its medicine, to its science — I could go on and on — have certainly been a significant factor in achieving our current status. But that was also true in Spain in the 15th Century and in other European countries and yet, in each instance, the Jews were eventually expelled or otherwise reduced to second class citizens (to put it mildly). I believe that it is the State of Israel that has significantly contributed to the place we now hold in our society. The State of Israel is re-

spected throughout the western world; it is the Jewish state and the IDF’s fighting ability has not hurt either. Now, whether you agree with me, in whole or in part or not at all, is for you to decide.

“What you must agree with me about, however, is that if, and may God forbid this, something happens to the State of Israel, overnight the Jews would again be a stateless people, guests in every part of the world in which we live, and subject to the political and religious vagaries of the times.

“From its founding, the State of Israel has served as a home, as a haven, and as a refuge, first for the displaced persons of remnants of the Jews of Europe, then for the Yemenites and for Jews of other countries in the Arab world, then for the Jews

of the FSU, and more recently, from Ethiopia and from Argentina.

“And now, with the worst antisemitism raging in France, England, and other European countries, Israel is again a home, a haven, and a refuge for those that need it. And if anyone doubts this, just look at the increase in Aliyah from the countries I’ve mentioned.

“So in my mind and in my heart, this campaign is about the current needs of the people of Israel and the State of Israel. But, this campaign is also about our children and our grandchildren and what their lives will be like in the future. And I submit, and I believe this with every fiber in my body, that without the State of Israel, the lives and status we now enjoy will no longer be there.

(Continued on page 35)

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Looking Back

(Continued from page 34)

“I believe that the State of Israel is more threatened now than at any time in its history. There are no second chances for Israel and it is us, and our fellow Jews throughout the Diaspora, who are entrusted with Israel’s well-being and yes, its very existence.

“Since, I would not ask any of you to do what Aleen and I would not do on our own, Aleen and I are doubling our gift, representing more than 60% of our gift to the 2006 Annual Campaign. Israel needs our help now and this is what Aleen and I, in good conscience want to do, and this is what Aleen and I, in good conscience should do, and

this is what Aleen and I will do. Please join Aleen and me in this extremely important effort.

“On behalf of the Jewish Federation of Charlotte and the people of Israel, I thank you for your continued generosity and support.”

The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is committed to making sure the citizens of Israel’s North can go home again. 100% of your donation to our Israel Emergency Campaign will be sent directly to Israel to help rebuild lives and lift spirits. We appreciate all our donors who have generously contributed to the Israel Emergency Campaign. There is still time to give.

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*Join Us!*

Wednesdays 8-11 AM at the Levine Jewish Community Center  
Thursday 9 AM-5 PM in the home of Lynn Edelstein, 3802 Columbine Dr.  
(704) 366-6765

(Puzzle on page 31)

1	J	U	D	E	A		6	T	O	R	A	H		11	D	E	13	S			
14	A	H	E	A	D		15	R	I	C	K	I		16	E	L	K				
17	E	R	E	T	Z		18	C	A	N	A	A	N		19	M	I	I			
20	L	Y	R	A		21	I	N	K	S		22	D	A	M	O	N				
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27	U	S	D		30	H	O	E		31	L	O	S	E							
32	S	T	O	33	N	E			34	E	G	G		35	R	A	37	38	P		
39	S	Y	R	I	A	40	P	41	A	L	A	E	42	S	T	I	N	A			
43	R	E	A	R		44	L	T	S			45	E	S	R	O	G				
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51	A	52	A	53	Z	O	N		54	N	O	R	T	55	H						
56	S	A	D	A	T		57	B	A	R	A		58	E	59	L	60	61	I	E	
62	A	P	U			63	T	H	E	H	O	L	65	Y	L	A	N	D			
66	R	A	M			67	U	S	E	A	S		68	A	L	I	C	E			
69	A	M	A			70	B	I	B	L	E		71	K	O	R	A	N			



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# We Stand With Israel

## Israel Emergency Campaign

Israel is facing a crisis on a scale never before seen — and in times of crisis, we stand together. Now more than ever, Israel needs you.

Jewish Federations across North America are working together to collectively raise \$500 million to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs in Israel as well as the longer-term rebuilding and rehabilitation needs in the months and years ahead. **Here in Charlotte, we have launched an Israel Emergency Campaign to raise \$2.5 million toward the collective goal.**

100% of your donation will go toward supporting victims of terror and addressing the unprecedented levels of trauma caused by the horrific attacks in Israel.



**Jewish  
Federation**  
of Greater Charlotte

# Israel needs you.

Please give generously.

