

The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS

Celebrating Jewish Life

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Governor Cooper Signs Historic SHALOM Act Into Law

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

In a historic moment for North Carolina, Governor Roy Cooper signed the SHALOM Act into law, accompanied by representatives of Jewish communities across the state, including Tair Giudice, chief impact officer, and Douglas Greene, government relations and public affairs associate, who attended on behalf of Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte through its Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC). This new law, which passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, 45-2 in the NC Senate and 105-3 in the NC House, aims to address the rise of antisemitism by adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Jewish communities across the state, including Federations in Charlotte, Raleigh, and Greensboro; Jewish for Good; Hadasah; Voice4Israel; and the NC Holocaust Foundation and NC Council on the Holocaust have advocated tirelessly for the passage of this act through countless meetings, phone calls, and events like the May 8 "Day of Advocacy." These organizations worked together to raise awareness, educate legislators, and mobilize support to ensure that the law reflects our collective needs and concerns. Individual members of the Jewish community were vital to these efforts, reaching out to their representatives with hundreds of calls and letters to reiterate the importance of this act, a message that was heard loud and clear by NC lawmakers.

The JCRC, the advocacy and public affairs arm of Jewish



Representatives of Jewish organizations across the state were present for the signing, including Tair Giudice, chief impact officer (far left) and Douglas Greene, public relations and government affairs associate (far right) for Federation and its JCRC.

Federation of Greater Charlotte, along with Federation's Outshine Hate initiative, works to combat antisemitism and support Jewry on both a local and global scale. The JCRC educates, engages, and mobilizes the broader Charlotte community to act on critical issues, including the SHALOM Act, antisemitism, and Israel affairs.

Between October 7, 2023, and Jan. 7, 2024 there was an average of nearly 34 antisemitic incidents per day reported in the U.S., marking a 337% increase in the prevalence of such incidents. Despite this unprecedented rise, nearly one-third of all Americans say they either do not know the meaning of antisemitism or have never heard the word. Adopting the IHRA definition ensures that antisemitism is clearly defined across North Carolina, thereby

offering better protection and response to antisemitic acts.

The IHRA definition is the preeminent and most commonly accepted definition of antisemitism. It has been adopted by more than 1,100 governments, universities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide, 31 U.S. states, and both the U.S. State Department and

the U.S. Department of Education. This definition is comprehensive, including contemporary examples that aid in distinguishing antisemitic rhetoric.

It is important to note that the SHALOM Act does not revise any existing anti-discrimination policies, limit freedom of speech, or outlaw criticism of Israel or the Israeli government. These are

common and damaging misconceptions. Rather, the SHALOM Act provides guidance to public officials on applying existing laws, helping public institutions stay compliant with federal civil rights obligations. Moreover, it serves as an important tool to educate others on why certain speech may constitute antisemitism, which is offensive, intolerant, and harmful.

Governor Cooper released the following statement on the signing: "Defining antisemitism is important to stopping it, and this new law helps do that as antisemitic incidents are on the rise. While we protect the right to free speech, this legislation helps to make our state a more welcoming, inclusive, and safe place for everyone."

This effort exemplifies the strength and resilience of our Jewish communities, demonstrating how collaboration and advocacy can lead to meaningful change. Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is deeply thankful for the community's and North Carolina legislators' support. The passage of the SHALOM Act marks a significant step towards a safer and more inclusive North Carolina.

Celebrating the Legacy of Debby Block

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte's Center for Jewish Education proudly celebrates the remarkable career and enduring legacy of Debby Block as she announces her retirement from her role as program coordinator at the Center for Jewish Education. Born in Ohio and later moving to Montreal, Canada at the age of 16, Debby brought a wealth of experience and passion when she, her husband, and their two sons relocated to Charlotte in 1993. Her journey here began almost immediately as she became a teacher at the Charlotte Jewish Preschool, where she quickly became a beloved figure.

Over the past three decades, Debby's dedication, passion, and tireless efforts have left a profound mark on the greater Charlotte Jewish community. She served as director of both the



Debby Block, "Miss Debby"

Charlotte Jewish Preschool and Temple Israel Religious School where she shaped the educational experiences of countless children, instilling in them a love for learning and a deep connection to their Jewish heritage. Notably, during her tenure as director

of the Temple Israel Religious School Debby's commitment to inclusive education led her to help start Tikvah Charlotte, a religious school for children with special needs.

(Continued on page 3)

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Editor's Corner

What Matters to YOU?



Shira Firestone, Managing Editor CJN

If you're reading these words, you belong to a very special group. Let me explain why:

Our Jewish community in Charlotte is estimated at about 20,000 households. Then there's a subset of those households that receive The Charlotte Jewish News — about 4,600 homes (and businesses). Of course, we have to assume that not everyone who receives the paper reads it, so you belong to that subset as well. And in the subset of that subset are the readers who find themselves on page two, reading my column.

So, if you're here, still with me, you're part of an especially engaged and committed subset. You're someone who deeply

cares about our Jewish community and values the information and connections that The Charlotte Jewish News provides. For that, I thank you.

Our paper has grown to anywhere between 36 and 48 pages depending on the month, and it's likely that you don't read it cover to cover, page by page. More likely, you skip around to areas that are especially relevant and interesting to you. And that is especially important for me to keep in mind, as its editor.

I was reminded of that diversity of interests last month when I watched the first of our presidential debates. The moderators framed each question from the voters' perspective, introducing each question with some version "the voters want to know..." or "the voters are concerned about..." covering a range of topics. But what I noticed was that different friends leaned forward, listening more attentively and with more interest to different questions. The viewer who hushed the room to hear about immigration was the same one who used the question about the economy to refill their drink. One leaned forward to hear the

candidates' answers regarding abortion, but checked out when the conversation centered around the environment.

It struck me: our Jewish community, like the voters whose concerns were the topics of debate, has diverse interests and priorities. Though we are still one community (perhaps more united and in step with some of our concerns and interests than at this time last year); as individuals our Jewish journeys are unique.

This prompts me to ask: What matters to YOU?

Is it antisemitism? Safety and security? Israel? Deepening your spiritual path? Passing on Jewish identity to your children and grandchildren?

My hope, and if you're reading this, my assumption, is that you read the paper because in some way it addresses that which most matters to you. Under the umbrella of *Celebrating Jewish Life*, the purpose of the paper is to "represent, inform, and engage" its readers. I want to ask you to reflect: Does the paper represent the priorities and interests that matter most to you? Is it valuable in informing you about the issues and topics you care about? Does it serve as an effective tool to engage you with those interests and our broader Jewish community? Your responses to these questions are crucial as we strive to fulfill our mission and ensure The Charlotte Jewish News remains a vital resource for all our readers. Our paper is like a three-legged stool, supported equally by the Jewish agencies, our advertis-

ers, and you, our readers. Each leg is crucial for our stability and growth. For the past four years, I've worked diligently to strengthen two of these legs: helping agencies communicate their messages effectively and assisting advertisers in creating successful campaigns to reach new customers and clients. Now, it's time to focus on you, our dedicated readers.

Over the past four years, we've been expanding our reach beyond print, venturing into social media, blogs, our website, the new Chai-Lights newsletter announcing upcoming community events, and even a Jewish careers page. Our vision moving forward has two key components: to ensure our current and future initiatives truly resonate with and meet your needs and to extend our reach, inviting the estimated 15,000 additional Jewish households in our area to join us in *Celebrating Jewish Life*.

To achieve these ambitious goals, we need your engagement and support to shape our efforts and help us grow. We're asking for your help in three key areas:

Financial support: Currently, fewer than 5% of our readers contribute annually. While our paper is free to read, it's not free to produce. Though our advertisers are generous, we have limited

ad space. Your contributions help fill this gap. Please return the enclosed envelope or visit our website to make a secure donation.

Engagement: Stay connected with us by reading our blog, signing up for our Chai-Lights newsletter (found at the bottom of our home page), and following us on social media for exclusive content.

Feedback: We value your opinion. Please take a moment to complete our short survey, which will help us understand what matters most to you and shape our future content.

Visit www.charlottejewishnews.org to easily contribute, engage, and provide feedback.

Our community is strong, and this paper is its mirror. As readers, you're an essential leg of our three-legged stool. Your support ensures we continue to reflect and serve our vibrant Jewish community.

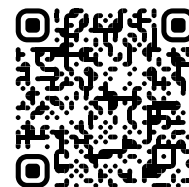
Thank you for your continued readership and support. With your input and engagement, we can ensure The Charlotte Jewish News remains a dynamic, relevant, and inclusive platform for our entire Jewish community.

Shira

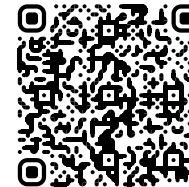
Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

(28226 Zip Code. For other locations, visit www.charlottejewishnews.org.)

August 2 — 8:07 p.m.
 August 9 — 8:00 p.m.
 August 16 — 7:52 p.m.
 August 23 — 7:43 p.m.
 August 30 — 7:34 p.m.



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Jill Newman: A Jewish Legacy

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

Jill Newman was a leader and a dear friend of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, whose passing on June 4, 2024, was a loss felt by the entirety of the greater Charlotte Jewish community. Jill's profound influence, from her three-year Federation Board presidency, her term as vice president, to an astounding four years chairing the Annual Campaign, touched every facet of Federation. She served as a guide through pivotal moments, including an executive director search, the implementation of an exhaustive strategic plan, a facility relocation, and more. Her leadership was instrumental in driving initiatives that strengthened our community and ensured its future.

Beyond her remarkable contributions to Federation, Jill's work extended throughout our Jewish community. As Vice President of the Levine Jewish Community Center, she played a crucial role in establishing the Levine JCC's Endowment Fund,



Jill Newman

ensuring the center's future stability and growth. Her presidency of Hadassah and her active volunteerism at Temple Beth El showcased her unwavering commitment to Jewish values and community building. Jill's dedication was not limited to organizational roles; she was a constant presence, providing support, mentorship, and inspiration to countless individuals within the community.

Jill's philanthropic spirit and leadership extended beyond the Jewish community. Her service

on the boards of the Charlotte Repertory Theater, the Golden Circle Theater, the Mint Museum Auxiliary, and many other organizations underscored her dedication to improving the lives of others. Jill's involvement in these initiatives highlighted her vision for community service, her love for theater and the arts, and her passion for fostering cultural and educational growth in Charlotte. Her efforts with Planned Parenthood, the Guardian Ad Litem agency, and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation further exemplify her altruism and commitment to social causes.

The Charlotte Jewish community is profoundly grateful for all Jill has done to strengthen our community and promote strong Jewish ideals. Federation and the entire community grieve the loss of such an exceptional individual. During this difficult time let us remember Jill's character, her enduring legacy of service and love, and the lasting impact she made on all who knew her.

The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS
 THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

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Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

Federation's Advocacy Transforms Antisemitic Incident into Catalyst for School Reform

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

In a case that underscores the pervasive nature of antisemitism, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte played a pivotal role in advocating for a young boy who endured relentless antisemitic bullying at school by connecting his family with the resources required to enact real change. The boy, who is not Jewish, became the target of verbal and physical abuse based on his classmates' mistaken perception of his faith.

The ordeal began after the student wore a Team Israel Olympic jersey of his favorite baseball player, Ian Kinsler, to school at the Community School of Davidson. What started with a few snide comments quickly escalated to near-daily harassment from as many as nine classmates, who bombarded him with Nazi ideology and other antisemitic slurs.

Complaints to the school proved ineffective as the administration seemed unconcerned with taking appropriate action. Overwhelmed by the dual task of comforting her son and seeking justice, the mother found herself at a loss. "At some point I called a friend of mine whose son went to the Charlotte Jewish Preschool, and I just said, 'Do you know anyone that I could talk to?'" she recalls. Her friend directed her to Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, setting in motion a chain of events that would eventually bring about a settlement leading to reform at the school.

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte immediately recognized the gravity of the situation and committed to assisting. Tair Guidice, chief impact officer, and Douglas Greene, government relations & public affairs asso-

ciate, spoke on the phone with the mother for hours, listening to her story and helping to devise a plan to take action. The family was connected with legal help at the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (Brandeis Center), a nonprofit organization renowned for its strategic legal guidance to individuals facing antisemitic harassment and discrimination.

The Brandeis Center took the case to the U.S. Education Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Based on the evidence it reviewed as part of its investigation, the OCR determined that the evidence substantiated the claims of harassment and revealed the school's failure to address the hostile environment. "In the settlement, the Education Department confirmed that the evidence substantiated the Brandeis Center's claim

that the child was subjected to a hostile environment based on his perceived Jewish shared ancestry, and that the school knew about it and did not take prompt and effective steps to address it or the broader hostile environment at the school," the Brandeis Center reported.

The settlement mandated comprehensive changes at the school, including new policies, enhanced reporting and record-keeping procedures, extensive teacher training on investigative techniques and Title VI compliance, student awareness training, and more. These measures aim to create a safer and more inclusive environment for all students.

Reflecting on the ordeal, the mother emphasizes the impor-

tance of seeking support and taking action. "It is so important for any child and family that encounters antisemitism in their school to know that they also can have a team to fight against it if they just reach out, and that they can take action to report it and make existing laws work. Federation and the Brandeis Center are excellent hands to be in."

This case highlights the critical role that organizations like Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte play in combating antisemitism and advocating for justice. Swift and decisive actions not only provided relief for one family, but also helped to set a precedent for addressing and preventing such incidents in the future.

Miss Debby

(Continued from front page)

Around 2010, Debby brought her talents to the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library and later to the Center for Jewish Education (CJE), where her roles included program director, interim director, storyteller, and PJ Library coordinator. At the heart of Debby's work is her unparalleled passion for storytelling. She has the unique gift of bringing stories to life through the use of puppets, songs, and other interactive methods, making them more than words on a page. Her storytelling sessions have captivated the hearts and minds of young children, leaving a lasting impression that many carry into adulthood.

"I feel truly fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with Debby over the past eight years. She has taught me so much about our Jewish community, Jewish education, the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library, and the art of engaging adults, families, and children in high-quality, captivating programming," said Lisa Garfinkle, operations and project manager for the Center for Jewish Education.

Miss Debby hosts at least 500 story times per year for



Debby smiling during one of her story time groups,

preschool and elementary-aged children. If you walk with Debby anywhere at Shalom Park you are sure to be stopped by multiple people giving their greetings, just saying hello, or stopping her to chat. Children especially will make their excitement known by shouting "Miss Debby!!" at the top of their lungs as she passes by. "I remember doing that myself as a kid," says Jessica Goldfarb, one of Debby's former students and current Federation employee. "I'm incredibly thankful to Debby for the impact she had in creating such excitement for learning — in both me and in the kids today."

Beyond her professional roles, Debby Block's volunteer

contributions have been equally valuable. As vice president of Hadassah, she founded the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival in 2005, serving for years as its chair and curator of films. Her involvement extended to initiatives like "6 Weeks, 6 Books" for the Shalom Park Freedom School, which she spearheaded for 12 years.

Even as Debby steps into retirement, her influence will continue to shape the community. The playground she helped construct will remain a place where children play, families will enjoy the legacy of the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival she founded, and future generations will experience the magic of her storytelling through recorded stories.

Debby Block's retirement marks the end of an era, but her legacy will endure. Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is profoundly grateful for her years of service, her unwavering dedication, and the joy she has brought to the community. As we celebrate her incredible achievements, we look forward to the lasting impact her contributions will have on enriching the Greater Charlotte Jewish community for generations to come.



Debby when she first moved to Charlotte, alongside her class, circa 1993

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Resilience and Revelry: My Journey Through Tel Aviv

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

As the communications specialist at Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, I've had my fair share of encounters with the strength of the Jewish community and Israel. Still, my recent trip to Tel Aviv offered a profound and unexpected perspective. The purpose of visiting was centered around attending my cousin's wedding, a more than 400-person event which was as much a giant family reunion as a celebration of marriage. In preparing to leave, I was uncertain of what to expect. I had braced myself for the worst — air raid sirens, frightened citizens, closed businesses. Instead, what I found was a testament to human resilience and the enduring spirit of the Israeli people.

Entering Tel Aviv, I was struck by the normalcy that enveloped the city. People were going about their daily routines — working, shopping, and playing on the beach — while knowing it could all change any minute. It was a powerful reminder that life, indeed, goes on. Despite the recent hardships, the city and the Israeli people were strong and unwav-

ering.

We spent time in the shuks, open-air markets, which sell everything from nuts and pomegranate juice to t-shirts and Judaica. I was lucky enough to be in Israel during one of the local artists' markets, filled with hand-crafted items such as pottery, felt crafts, paintings, jewelry, and more. I justified my exorbitant spending there by saying it was going towards a good cause, supporting Israeli artists.

However, echoes of loss and reminders of the recent tragedy were ever-present. Posters of October 7 victims and hostages covered every surface. In the alleys behind the shuks, sprayed on the walls, read a message in English: "I am not OK." Nearly a third of the guests at our hotel were displaced Israelis from the south, living in hotel rooms while continuing their work and schooling remotely. This is where I was able to see The Jewish Federations of North America's Israel Emergency Campaign dollars in action, with their housing and other living costs being completely subsidized. It was a sigh of relief to see them and see that, despite their situation, they



The bi-weekly artist market showcases beautiful creations from Israeli artists.

were still doing well.

My family and I visited Hostage Square, where we had the opportunity to speak firsthand with the families and friends of victims of the October 7 at-

tack. While it was clear that they missed their loved ones dearly, surprisingly, they did not seem sad. Instead, they appeared determined to spread their message and bring the hostages home.

Each family had their own tent, decorated with pictures and posters of those they were missing. A common and familiar phrase was seen and heard: "We will dance again."

And dance they did — Tel Aviv's nightlife was alive with streets full of musicians, performers, and lines to enter bustling nightclubs. My cousin's wedding celebrations went on until three in the morning, giving him only a few hours to eat breakfast with the family and then head to basketball practice. The coffee from the little café down the street was a lifesaver that morning.

During my trip, the people I spoke to told me that their grief comes in cycles interspersed with their day-to-day lives. As time goes on and as they heal, they are finding more and more moments of happiness amidst the ongoing challenges. While life cannot return to "normal" yet, the people of Israel are living on, gathering for joyous occasions and getting stronger every day.





Back-to-School Bubbles

Times of transition call for a celebration! Let's celebrate by jumping in foaming bubbles with the Fantastic Fire Department. Fun, friends, crafts, playground & more!

Date: Sunday, August 4
Time: 10 a.m. – Noon
Place: Shalom Park, 5007 Providence Rd.
Admission: Free

Ages: Most appropriate for families with children 0 - 5

Snacks: Kona Ice available. Each person will pay individually for Kona Ice.

What to bring: Bathing suit (optional), water shoes, towel, and/or change of clothes

In lieu of admission fee, please bring back-to-school supplies to donate (markers, crayons, glue, notebooks, or safety scissors, etc.)



Jewish Federation
of Greater Charlotte



PJ Library



Charlotte Jewish Preschool
LEARN • GROW • CONNECT



PJ OUR WAY

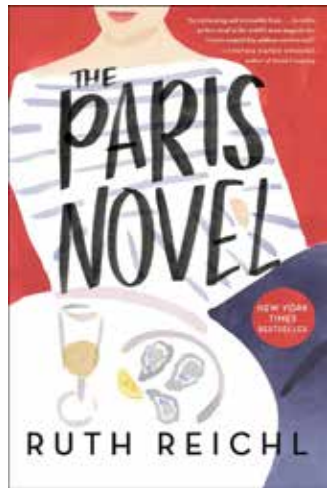
Sue's Bookshelf



By Sue Littauer

The meteorologists predict a very hot summer so I predict you'll be staying inside to avoid the heat. If you're looking for some good books to enrich your down time, I have some suggestions for you. I recommend two books by Caroline Leavitt: "Days of Wonder" and "Is This Tomorrow," Ruth Reichl's new book "The Paris Novel," and my favorite "The Goddess of Warsaw" by Lisa Barr.

Stop rolling your eyes about reading another World War II, Holocaust novel. "The Goddess



of Warsaw" is an attention grabber from start to finish. Best-selling author Liv Constantine describes it as:

"Utterly gripping ... a transformative and immersive story so powerful and captivating, I could not put it down. Rarely does a protagonist leap off the page and win over the heart like the unforgettable Bina Blonski ..."

This historical novel goes back and forth between Hollywood in 2005 and the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. Lena Browning, the mysterious and famous movie star has agreed to an in-depth interview with Sienna Hayes, an ambitious young woman who wants to direct a movie about Lena's life. The dark secrets Lena has been hiding are revealed as she describes her past in Warsaw when she was Bina Blonski. Utilizing her acting skills, the beautiful blonde Aryan-looking Bina was able to go behind enemy lines as a spy to gain information and procure weapons to protect her fellow Jews. Her narrative reveals the sacrifices, unimaginable bravery, and heart-rending love story in Bina's past. The hatred she holds for the cruel Na-



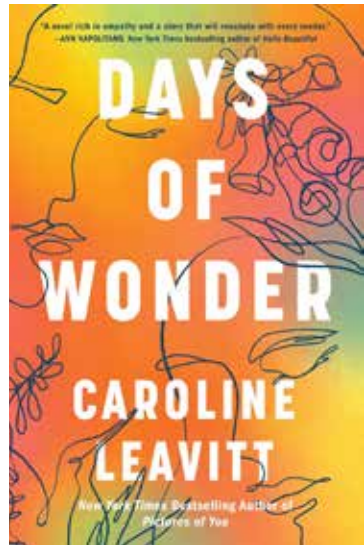
zis stays with her throughout her lifetime ... and it carries over to her life as the beautiful American actress she becomes. Her ambition is to destroy the Nazis hidden by the Paper Clips project in the United States and those hiding as respectable citizens in South America.

It never ceases to amaze me that as each horrific recounting of the Holocaust is told, new information is revealed to me. In Bina's case, the bravery she

exhibits is possible because of the deep-seated hatred she had for the Nazis responsible for the death of her parents, family, neighbors and fellow Jews. Whether she lived or died during her execution of life-threatening actions, was secondary to the revenge she sought on their behalf. I highly recommend "The Goddess of Warsaw" — a book and a heroine who will remain with you long after you've turned the

last page.

The Center for Jewish Education Book Club will meet on Aug. 14 at 10:30 a.m. in Room A110 on Main Street at Shalom Park. The book we will be discussing is "The Marriage Box" by Corie Adjmi. For more information, please contact sueb.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org.



Center for Jewish Education Book Club Schedule

July 10	The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store	James McBride
August 14	The Marriage Box	Corie Adjmi
September 11	Family Family	Laurie Frankel
October 9	The Wolf Hunt	Ayelet Gundar-Goshen
November 13	Leaving Eastern Parkway	Matthew Daub
December 11	Stockholm: A Novel	Noa Yedlin

All meetings are on Wednesdays at 10:30 AM • All community members are welcome to attend.

For more information about the CJE Book Club, please contact sueb.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org.



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Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte



FEDERATION IMPACT: BENEFICIARY AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

NORTH CAROLINA HILLEL

As a means of bettering our greater Charlotte Jewish community, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte allocates donation funds to local Jewish organizations who embody Jewish values and overall better our community. In recognition of their work, we at Federation wish to bring attention to these organizations and the good that they do.

With eight campuses across North Carolina, NC Hillel plays a vital role in supporting Jewish young adults throughout their college years and beyond. It provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where Jewish students from diverse backgrounds can form lasting friendships and explore their Jewish identity. Through a variety of programs and events, NC Hillel encourages students to engage deeply with their heritage, develop meaningful connections, and become active, thoughtful members of both the Jewish and broader communities — missions shared with Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.

As college campuses increasingly become centers for protests and heightened tensions, NC Hillel has increased efforts to combat antisemitism, becoming a crucial resource for Jewish students facing these challenges. NC Hillel and Federation work together extensively to address antisemitism on college campuses, keeping in constant contact with university administrators and local security to ensure the needs of Jewish students are being met. This partnership not only provides immediate support and safety measures but also fosters a proactive approach in creating a campus environment where Jewish students can thrive without fear of discrimination or hostility.

Amidst tense atmospheres, NC Hillel Executive Director Hannah Spinrad is dedicated to continuing a focus on creating and maintaining Jewish safe spaces where students can gather and participate in exciting events like Shabbaton, Passover celebrations, and attending Hillel International's Israel Summit in Atlanta.

“Being Jewish is a gift,” she affirms, highlighting the importance of embracing what she terms “Jewish joy” in our current landscape.

Through programs, events, and advocacy, NC Hillel empowers students to live their best Jewish life, stand up against antisemitism, and be proud of their identities. Their efforts ensure that Jewish students have a supportive network and the resources necessary to navigate the complexities of college life while maintaining their Jewish identity and values. In these uncertain times NC Hillel and the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte stand united, ensuring that Jewish students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.



Board Game CAFE

Wednesday **AUG 7**
5-8 pm
LEVINE-SKLUT JUDAIC LIBRARY

- CODENAMES
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- POP UP PIRATE
- UNO
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- MONOPOLY DEAL
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Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

SCREAMS Before SILENCE

ME & THREE

Join us and invite three guests

A documentary film on the sexual violence committed by Hamas on October 7, 2023.

Film & Discussion

August 8, 7-9 PM

in the Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park



Jewish Federation
of Greater Charlotte



HADASSAH
Charlotte Metro Area



TEMPLE BETH EL



temple israel

Kids Triathlon Supports Adaptive Programming at the Levine JCC

By Julie Rizzo, Levine Jewish Community Center Senior Director of Member Engagement

On May 19, 2024, the Levine Jewish Community Center (LJCC) hosted the 12th Annual LJCC Kids Triathlon. This event is about more than fun athletic competition; it is about giving back. Children ages five through 14, of all backgrounds and abilities, swim, bike, and run for a cause! The Kids Tri was created in 2012 to raise awareness of and provide funds for pediatric rehabilitative services at Levine Children's Hospital (LCH) and the Adaptive Sports and Adventures Program (ASAP), which is part of Carolinas Rehabilitation.

Since its inception, this event has raised just under \$1 million through corporate sponsorships and individual fundraising by participants. For the first 10 years of the event, all the net proceeds were divided between the pediatric rehabilitative unit at Levine Children's Hospital and ASAP. For many years, the LJCC has wanted to establish programming at its facility to serve children and adults with intellectual and developmental



LCH rehab graduate Dhyana Krishnachander high-fiving LCH staff after completing the event.

disabilities. For the past two years, a portion of the net proceeds have remained at the J for that purpose.

The LJCC's intent is not to compete with or supplant the programming offered by any existing organization; rather, its goal is to supplement that programming to help serve the needs of this community. To that end, staff at the LJCC recently met with representatives from Special Olympics, Camp

S.O.A.R., the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Charlotte, InReach, Carolina Collaborative Prep, and Mentra, and has reached out to several other organizations and community members. This very informative meeting will serve as the starting block for LJCC staff with special education backgrounds to begin to create adaptive programming and programming for the neuro-divergent community.

None of this would be possible

without the Kids Tri. This year's event had 15 corporate/individual sponsors and 157 registrants, who did a great job with their fundraising. Those who raised a minimum of \$500 were invited to a special pre-event VIP reception at which they met and had photos taken with Carolina Panther's guard, Chandler Zavala!

This year's event had seven awe-inspiring participants:

- Christopher Lindler participated for the third time this year. In 2021, he was admitted to the pediatric rehab unit at LCH after a surgery that reduced his muscle tone. He worked hard for two and a half weeks and was discharged. He then began waterskiing with ASAP and has done so for two years.

- Eight-year-old Shane West-Ringler spent four weeks in LCH rehab after having surgery for a brain tumor in 2021. He has made great strides and was planning to participate in the Kids Tri for the second time. Unfortunately, chemo treatments wore him down, but we look forward to next year!

- Thirteen-year-old Jorgy Emerson first connected with ASAP

two years ago when he wanted to try adaptive waterskiing, which he now loves! Since then, he has participated in a pickleball clinic and is looking forward to snow skiing next winter. This was Jorgy's second Kids Triathlon!

- Lulu Steinwedell was hospi-

(Continued on page 8)



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Kids Triathlon

(Continued from page 7)

talized at age four after an MRI showed a brain tumor. She went to rehab at LCH and stayed for a little more than three weeks, making incredible progress! At almost age six, she participated this year in her first LJCC Kids Triathlon.

- Eight-year-old Dhyana

Krishnachander was hospitalized a year ago in respiratory distress and had a very complicated hospital course. She was admitted to the pediatric rehab unit and remained in rehab for almost two months, amazing everyone! We welcomed her on May 19 to her first Kids Tri!

- Huston Stevenson was admitted to the inpatient rehab unit in Sept. 2022 after being hit by a car, sustaining a traumatic brain injury, at age 12. He stayed in rehab for five and a half weeks and inspired everyone! This was his first year participating in the Levine JCC Kids Triathlon.

- Carson Hawkins is an extremely motivated and independent young man with high aspirations. Through hard work in physical, occupational, and speech therapy, he swims, walks, and rides a bike and is able to hit a baseball independently. He was excited to participate in the Kids Tri for the first time and had everyone cheering him on as the first person to get in the pool this year.




Carolina Panther, Chandler Zavala, and adaptive participant Carson Hawkins

This wonderful event would not be possible without the support of the J's staff, Shalom Park partners, and volunteers. The

LJCC is already making plans for next year's Kids Tri, which will be held on May 18, 2025. We hope to see you there! Stay tuned for more information about adaptive and special needs programming!






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The Levine JCC Butterfly Project Annual Homeschool Workshop

By Lori Semel and Emily Russell

“This is one of the most memorable field trips I have taken my kids to,” said a homeschool parent in 2023. This is a high compliment from a homeschool parent, as this community of educators relies on various field trips to enhance their children’s learning. The Levine Jewish Community Center (LJCC) Butterfly Project will host its Annual Homeschool Workshop on Sept. 23 for students ages 10 and older, each accompanied by at least one parent or chaperone. This is one of three workshops during the school year that offer opportunities for parents and students to attend together. Homeschool parents have shared that this format is impactful because post-workshop discussions can be more detailed and nuanced.

The Butterfly Project is a worldwide initiative with the goal of painting ceramic butterflies in memory of the 1.5 million children who perished during the Holocaust. The LJCC Butterfly Project workshop expands upon that goal, using the history of the Holocaust as a vehicle to teach what can happen when biased attitudes, biased acts, and discrimination are allowed to flourish.



Participants walk away with an awareness of the effects of the Holocaust on its most innocent victims – the children.

The 2½ hour workshop includes:

- A Holocaust survivor sharing their story.

- An examination of the Anti-Defamation League’s Pyramid of Hate, encouraging students to Take a Stand against bias and discrimination.

- Painting a ceramic butterfly in memory of a specific child who perished in the Holocaust.

- A visit to the Margaret and Lou Schwartz Butterfly Garden Holocaust Memorial.

Similar to the NC public school curriculum, homeschoolers encounter WWII starting in 6th grade and revisit it at various times during high school. The Holocaust might appear in

their history lessons, a novel, or artwork. Our workshop gives parents and students a reference point for engaging with these other historical materials and a way to relate the hatred of that time to the hate we still see persisting in various communities today.

The LJCC Butterfly Project coordinators feel it is important to reach out to this diverse and dynamic community. It provides an opportunity for homeschoolers to access resources to enhance their learning, build community engagement by coming to Shalom Park, and network with other homeschoolers in the area.

Catherine, age 15, who attended in 2023, said it best:

“This event was so touching and inspiring! Everything discussed during the presentation

felt very close to my heart, and I would love to someday raise awareness as this organization does. I have always been fascinated by the heartbreaking stories of the Holocaust and am so excited that I had the opportunity to meet a survivor in person. Her story was beautiful, and I am so glad this organization has given me the amazing opportunity to

hear it.”

To register for the workshop, visit charlottejcc.org or call LJCC Customer Service at (704) 366-5007. There is a \$5 fee for the workshop, which will be held at the Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts, Levine JCC, 5007 Providence Rd., Charlotte.



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A Day in the Life of a Jewish Family Services' Social Worker at Levine JCC Camps

By Rachel Green, MSW, LCSW, JFS Director of Programs and Services

As the morning rush begins and the carpool line forms at the Levine Jewish Community Center (LJCC), the morning quiet is quickly replaced by the excited chatter of children and the enthusiastic greetings of camp counselors for another awesome day at LJCC Camps. For more than 25 years, campers and dedicated staff have come together to create unforgettable summer memories. Amidst this lively atmosphere, there is a brand new addition to the summer fun. The role of a LJCC camp social worker, provided by Jewish Family Services (JFS), is vital, as it provides support, guidance, and education to ensure the well-being of everyone involved.

Before camp started, the camp social worker provided a training workshop to educate the counselors on various topics, such as recognizing signs of stress for each age group, managing group dynamics, and teaching coping strategies for the campers and counselors.

As the campers arrive, the social worker moves around Camp Katan, observing interactions and offering support. During the morning activities, a young camper is visibly upset, tears streaming down his face. He clings to his counselor, expressing how much he misses home. The camp social worker models getting down to the child's level



JFS therapist, Emily Jones, LCSW, guiding a counselor on how to best support her campers' social/emotional needs

and encourages the counselor to reassure the child that he is safe and it is OK to feel sad. The social worker praises the counselor for validating the child's feelings and assuring him it is OK to miss home. The camp social worker suggests that the counselor find a fun distraction for the child and invites his friend to join them in playing with blocks.

The camp social worker then moves to "Camp Mindy" and notices one of the new counselors standing by herself. The social worker pulls the counselor aside to check-in. The new counselor expresses her anxiety about starting camp. She explains

that she feels overwhelmed by the responsibility and fears she might not be able to handle it. The social worker offers her reassurance and practical advice on managing stress, such as taking deep breaths, taking smaller steps to reach their goals with campers, and seeking support from fellow counselors. With a calming presence and encouraging words, the social worker helps the counselor feel more confident and prepared for the day ahead.

As the day progresses, the social worker encounters a group of counselors who are frustrat-

ed with campers not following directions during a game. The camp social worker provides support and validation about how this behavior can make the camp day harder. The camp social worker also leads the counselors in a discussion about age-appropriate behavior, expectations for the campers at the end of a long day, and alternative ways to approach them. These approaches include explaining the importance of following directions for everyone's safety and enjoyment. By framing the conversation in a constructive manner, the counselor helps the campers see the value of cooperation and encourages them to participate more attentively. This approach resolves the immediate issue and instills a sense of responsibility and respect in the campers.

At the end of the day, a teenage counselor asks to speak with the camp social worker and shares his anxiety about camp. He shares that he feels the pressure of being a role model and worries about making mistakes. The social worker listens attentively, offering reassurance that he just needs to be himself and providing practical coping strategies for managing stress.

She discusses the importance of self-care, such as getting enough sleep and drinking water during the long hot days, taking short breaks when he can,


and leaning on his fellow counselors. The social worker also emphasizes the support network available at camp, encouraging the counselor to utilize support from staff and the social worker whenever he feels overwhelmed. This personalized support helps the counselor feel more at ease, knowing he is not alone in his journey.

Through their dedicated efforts, the LJCC camp social worker ensures that both campers and counselors have a positive and enriching experience. By providing guidance, education, and emotional support, they help create a nurturing environment where everyone can thrive. Whether it's comforting a homesick camper, guiding counselors through challenging moments, or promoting self-care, the social worker's role is integral to the success of the camp community. If you or anyone you know needs emotional support or other assistance, please contact us at info@jfscharlotte.org or (704) 364-6594.

Details may have been altered slightly for the privacy of those involved.



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Record-Breaking Funds Raised at JFS's Live Laugh Give Comedy Night

By Julie Loftis, JFS Marketing Specialist

On June 9, 2024, more than 300 guests “laughed and gave at Jewish Family Services’ (JFS) Live Laugh Give comedy night fundraising event. This year, honorees Barbara and Jerry Levin were recognized for their many contributions to both the Jewish and greater Charlotte community. The event welcomed headliner Modi Rosenfeld, who did not disappoint with his one-liners and jokes.

Live Laugh Give 2024 was our most successful event to date, raising approximately \$250,000. Howard Olshansky, JFS’ executive director, remarked, “We are so moved that once again our community opened their hearts, and the event raised over \$250,000 to help JFS secure the necessary resources needed to meet the growing needs of our community.” Olshansky shared that since the first year of this event, JFS’ services have expanded by over 60% in response to our community’s growing needs. In particular, he talked about the current mental health crisis being experienced by our youth, especially with the rise in antisemitism in our schools and college campuses. He indicated that money raised from this year’s event will help support the creation of a mental health plan for our community’s children and youth who are experiencing high levels of stress and anxiety.

We are grateful for our co-chairs, Adina Loewensteiner and Blair Goldsmith, and for the generosity of our sponsors, led by our Entertainment Underwriters, Lebo’s. The entertainment was preceded by a sponsor reception underwritten by Pinnacle Financial Partners and closed with a dessert reception, which featured a meet-and-greet with Modi.

Funds raised from Live Laugh Give, the annual Family to Family Campaign starting in September, and generous donations



Honorees Barbara and Jerry Levin and family, and comedian Modi Rosenfeld



LLG co-chairs, Adina Loewensteiner and Blair Goldsmith

throughout the year help JFS maintain the crucial support our community relies on. Thanks to our supportive community, Live Laugh Give surpassed expectations. For more information on donating funds, contributing to the food pantry, or volunteering, please visit JFSCharlotte.org or call (704) 364-6594.



Call To The Heart paddle raise — the community coming together to support a great cause

Jewish Family Services Volunteers & Donors June 2024

Volunteers: Jessica Alfandary, Marcia Arnholt, Mike Arnholt, Daniel Benjamin, Andrew Bernstein, Dan Coblentz, Jonathan Collman, Andrea Cronson, Julie Dermack, Joni Deutsch, Sheryl Effren, Rachel Friedman, Robert Friedman, Meredith Gartner, Richard Goldsmith, Jennifer Golynsky, Gail Halverson, June Hirschmann, Rebecca Hockfield, Oren Hubara, Tara Hubara, Dawn Hubbs, Bob Jacobson, Rikki Kinitzky, Etti Krausse, Jennifer Koss, Elliot and Stephanie Kreitman, Marcia Lampert, Eric Lerner, Lisa Levinson, Kim Levy, Adina Loewensteiner, Matt Luftglass, Frada Mozenter, Wendy Petricoff, Barbara Rein, Nina Rose, Marilyn Schuster, Janice Shubin, Stuart Singer, Teresa Singer, Harry Sparks, Lorin Steifel, Steve Teich, Gail Vogel, Nancy Wielunski, Amanda Zaidman

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Live Laugh Give Committee: Meredith Baumstein, Andrew Bernstein, Andrea Cronson, Rachel Friedman, Blair Goldsmith, Jackie Kaplan, Jamie Krusch, Marcia Lampert, Adina Loewensteiner, Rachel Peterson, Andrew Rosen, Samantha Saltzman, Karen Silver

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Live Laugh Give Volunteers: Sydney Adamo, Michelle Bamford, Limor Bregman, Peg Epstein, Lex Fall, Jodi Finkelstein, Rob Friedman, Stacey Gurewitz,

Jewish Family Services Tributes June 2024

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Ruth Goldberg
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Adina Loewensteiner
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Claire Putterman and Rachel Friedman

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Religious Life

Temple Beth El Celebrates Young Leaders with Michelle Miller Award

By Madeline White

In May, Temple Beth El proudly continued its tradition of honoring exceptional young leaders with the Michelle Miller Award for Jewish Commitment. Established by Dr. Fred and Joy Miller in memory of their daughter Michelle, this prestigious award recognizes the remarkable dedication of Confirmation students each spring.

Our 2024 Michelle Miller Award recipients are Benjamin Majerscik and Hadley Lord. Both students demonstrated outstanding enthusiasm for Jewish life and leadership within Temple Beth El and the broader community.

Known for an eagerness to engage in discussions to deepen his understanding of Judaism, Majerscik's commitment was evident during a February Religious Action Center (RAC) trip to Washington, D.C. His group focused on advocating for comprehensive mental health support for teenagers. Beyond his advocacy, Majerscik has made significant contributions as a tutor at Temple Beth El, including assisting dozens of students with reading Hebrew and learning prayers. His Sunday mornings are a true testament to this dedication, as



Dr. Fred Miller (left) and Joy Miller (right) with 2024 Michelle Miller Award recipients Benjamin Majerscik and Hadley Lord

he tutors b'nei mitzvah students and assists with a Hebrew class. Hadley Lord is known for her boundless energy and passion. During the RAC trip, Lord leveraged her skills from the Speech and Debate team to deliver a compelling speech to Capitol Hill staff about climate change. Her commitment continues with an active role on the

LIBERTY Youth Group Board and as a counselor at URJ Camp Coleman. Lord is also a talented singer and performer, recently starring as Mordechai in TBE's Purim Shpiel. She serves as a madricha for the 4th grade, inspiring her students to live Jewishly. The Michelle Miller Award for Jewish Commitment con-

tinues to uplift our Temple Beth El community. This year, please join us in celebrating Benjamin Majerscik and Hadley Lord, two incredible teens who embody

Michelle's enduring legacy, and thanking the Millers for honoring future generations of Jewish youth.

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Religious Life

Temple Solel at Rock Hill Pride Outdoor Festival

By Pauline and Orchid Childs, Temple Solel Board Members

Despite soaring temperatures and a heat index close to 100, volunteers twirled colorful umbrellas and danced at the Rock Hill Pride Festival in downtown Rock Hill on June 22, 2024. Strangers sang out "happy pride" as they passed one another, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Temple Solel held one of the 150 booths at the Rock Hill Pride Outdoor Festival, right next to our interfaith partner Grace Presbyterian. Many people stopped by to get information about Temple Solel. A 12-year-old girl took information for a friend, saying, "I bet my friend doesn't know there is a temple in Fort Mill. Her family drives all the way to Charlotte."

Some visitors were excited to find out about a temple so close by, while others expressed a desire to reconnect with their Jewish roots. Guests collected magnets with contact information, snap bracelets with messages of compassion and inclusivity, and brochures about the temple. Some played ring toss and received water bottles.

Various people stopped by just to say hello, including a pastor wearing a shirt that said "Your Pastor Loves You" in rainbow colors. Others brought their dogs by to get water.

"The atmosphere was warm and welcoming," said Orchid



Temple Solel Board Member Jan Rose and friend at Rock Hill Pride Outdoor Festival

Childs. "It was fun to people-watch," added Jan Rose.

The Rock Hill Pride Outdoor Festival was part of a larger Pride Festival that lasted from June 15

to June 23, featuring several activities like a Pride march, drag brunch, and open mic night.

At the festival, children danced to the music, showing

off multicolored hair or rainbow dresses. The event offered a variety of activities for children, including a kid's zone, drag queen story hour, and bracelet-making inside The Mercantile. A "Love is Love" parade was also created for the kids to enjoy.

Adults sported rainbows on shirts, hair, dresses, and socks. Many t-shirts displayed messages of love and acceptance in rainbow colors, with slogans like "love," "be kind," "tacos and equal rights please," "mind your own gender," and "today is a great day to respect some pronouns." Some shirts were a little racier, like "big boobed bisexual."

Even the dogs joined in the festivities, wearing rainbow skirts or outfits. Some small dogs stayed cool in rainbow-covered bags filled with ice.

The festival featured a variety of vendors. Mainstream retail establishments like Walmart and Sports Clips set up alongside small businesses selling socks, crock charms, and t-shirts. Several mental health providers also had booths, with one explaining, "We wanted the LGBTQIA community to know that we are a safe space."

Most booths offered giveaways like flags, rainbow fans, love necklaces, or rainbow magnets. A group offering free Mom, Dad, and Sister hugs held a booth for anyone who needed them. One of these moms shared her

motivation: "I'm here because of the negative way my child had been treated. I want other members of the LGBTQIA+ community to know they are loved." She added that despite the heat, she was impressed by how kind and welcoming everyone at the festival was.

A few protestors held anti-pride signs, but were blocked by others with signs that said, "You are loved." One escort made light of the situation with a sign that read "Be kind" on the front and "I'm (unfortunately) with ignorant" on the back when near a protestor.

While next year's Rock Hill Pride Festival has not yet been scheduled, Temple Solel continues to welcome members and guests with open arms. The inclusive congregation values presence, enthusiasm, talents, and involvement over annual dues. They meet at 7 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month at Grace Presbyterian Church, 2955 W. Highway 160 in Fort Mill. For more information about services and events, visit templesolelsc.org or call (803) 610-1707.



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Religious Life

Unveiling the Past: Temple Kol Tikvah's Jewish Genealogy Group Connects Generations

By Rhoda Miller

In the heart of Davidson, the Jewish community at Temple Kol Tikvah has discovered a remarkable way to connect with their heritage and history. The Jewish Genealogy Group, a vibrant and growing initiative, has become a focal point for members eager to explore their roots, share family stories, and preserve the legacy of Jewish traditions for future generations. "Our goal is to create a space where members can learn about their ancestry, understand their family's journey, and connect with their heritage in a deeper way," explains Sylvia Gabrieli, one of the group's founding members.

A Journey of Discovery

With the support of a grant from the Carolina Foundation for Jewish Seniors and the cooperation of the Jewish Council of Lake Norman, the group was founded in response to a burgeoning interest within the Temple Kol Tikvah community. As a newly retired Certified Genealogist®, I moved to the Lake Norman region three years ago from Long Island, where I was active in the Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island since 1995 and am a past president. I was determined to find a way to start a group in my new community at Temple Kol Tikvah. With interested people signed up at the annual Mona's Jewish Deli Fest and interest among the senior group, Healthy Active Living, and other Temple members, the group just completed its first year of meetings. Participants were attracted from the Charlotte area, farther than initially imagined. This interest mirrors a wider trend among Jewish communities worldwide, where

uncovering family histories has become a meaningful way to strengthen cultural identity and familial bonds.

Meetings and Activities

The group meets monthly, offering a range of topics designed to support members in their genealogical research. These topics include beginner strategies, deciphering historical records, conducting oral history interviews, and using online resources such as JewishGen.org, newspapers, and Holocaust research. Members range from beginners to advanced researchers who have attended conferences of the International Association of Jewish Genealogy Societies (IAJGS). The next conference will be held in Philadelphia, Aug. 18-22, 2024, where I will present two beginner programs. See www.iajgs2024.org for further information.

As a companion to my enthusiasm for providing beginner programming, I will be the featured genealogy speaker on a Mediterranean cruise from May 13-22, 2025. See <https://www.gotailoredtravel.com/travel-package/37/genealogy-cruise> for details.

Impact on the Community

The impact of the Jewish Genealogy Group extends beyond individual discoveries; it has strengthened the bonds within the Temple Kol Tikvah community. Allie Gulotta, Religious School principal, invited me to do genealogy programming under the Better Together grant. Events over the school year have brought together seniors, students, and their families to share artifacts and oral history stories, and to create family history books. By comparing their

journeys and findings, members create a sense of collective heritage and pride. This communal aspect of genealogy has been particularly meaningful for younger generations, who gain a profound appreciation for their ancestry and cultural identity.

Looking Ahead

As the Jewish Genealogy Group at Temple Kol Tikvah continues to grow, its members

are excited about the future and planning for the upcoming year. The next meeting will be held on Sept. 29, at 1:00 p.m., to begin the fall season. For further information, contact admin@temple-koltikvah.org.

For those interested in joining the Jewish Genealogy Group, Temple Kol Tikvah welcomes all who wish to embark on this journey of discovery. Whether

you are a seasoned genealogist or a curious beginner, the group offers a warm and inclusive environment to explore your heritage and connect with others who share a passion for preserving Jewish history.



Join Temple Kol Ami for Religious School Open House

By Shari Baum

It has been a hot summer, but it's about to get even hotter at Temple Kol Ami (TKA) of Fort Mill, South Carolina. Our amazing religious school teachers have been planning a new curriculum and are excited to welcome back our awesome students! We are looking forward to reuniting with returning kids as well as seeing new faces for another year of wonderful Jewish education and friendships.

We will kick the year off with our annual Pancake Breakfast on Aug. 25 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Walnut Grove Christian School, 1036 Maxwell Mill Road, Fort Mill. Everyone is welcome to tour the school, meet the fantastic staff, and ask any questions you may have. Come find out why Sundays are Fun Days at TKA Religious School!

Is your child ready for Hebrew school? No matter where they are on their path of Jewish learning, we can accommodate their needs and get them up to



TKA Religious School students help lead Shabbat service

speed. Our religious school meets three Sundays per month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Walnut Grove Christian School in Fort Mill, convenient to the York County/Ballantyne/South Charlotte area. We can accommodate Torah Tots through b'nei mitzvah. Please check our website at www.templekol-amisc.org or contact us at tka.religiousschool@gmail.com for more information. It has never been more important than now to give your child a Jewish edu-

cation and a Jewish community to feel a part of.

After a long summer break, Temple Kol Ami will also be starting our Friday night Shabbat services again on Aug. 23 at 7 p.m. We are excited to welcome Cantor Mary Thomas on a more regular basis in the coming year to lead us in Kabbalat Shabbat services (please see our calendar on the website for dates she will be with us). Cantor Thomas will also be joining Rabbi Bruce Aft to lead High Holiday services in October. Attendance at TKA High Holiday services is free for temple members and available to the general public for a fee of \$150 (inclusive of all services and break fast). Contact us for more information. We can't wait to hear Cantor Thomas' beautiful voice as she chants the Kol Nidre.

If you live in the greater York County or the Ballantyne area, Temple Kol Ami might be the place for you! We are a warm and inclusive Reform congregation comprising Jews from diverse backgrounds. There are so many wonderful advantages to being a member of TKA, not the least of which is being a part of the revitalization of the Jewish community in this area! We hope you will come play and pray with us sometime soon!



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Religious Life

Tisha B'Av and Confusing the Holocaust with October 7

By Rabbi Chanoch Oppenheim, Charlotte Torah Center

The Hebrew month of Av, this month, has the only sad “festival” of the year: Tisha B’Av. It’s a day commemorating the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem as well as the beginning of the almost 2000-year exile in which we find ourselves. Some say the Holocaust was the worst event in Jewish history, but Tisha B’Av marks the beginning of us losing our homeland, the most tragic event in our history because it affected a greater percentage of Jews at that time. It’s been 10 months since October 7 and over 80 years since the Holocaust, the most felt persecutions by the Jewish community in recent history. Some people used Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) as an opportunity to compare October 7 to the Holocaust, but is there truly a connection between these two tragic events?

Many people in the 20th century viewed the Holocaust as the end of a millennia of persecution, pogroms, blood libels, expulsions, discrimination, and ill-treatment of Jews, in gener-

al. We assumed we had entered a new era, but unfortunately, we were wrong. Seeing the images of October 7 reminded us of the gruesome images of the Holocaust — innocent, defenseless people were mocked and murdered, and their bodies were mutilated and defaced. The wanton violence reminds us of the Holocaust. So much about October 7 feels like the Holocaust—including the aftermath, with universal antisemitism that seemingly came from nowhere.

The Holocaust exposed the underbelly of European enlightenment. 100 years of acculturation, urbanization, industrial revolution, and the dignity of the human condition ushered in a new era of hope. Law and order replaced savagery, and egalitarian governments replaced monarchies. But it turns out the new Europe wasn’t too different from the old Europe. The past 10 months have been a wake-up call for people who had become intoxicated with multiculturalism and optimistic about improved relations with our Arab neighbors. Unfortunately, those dreams perished on October 7.

Even so, we still look forward to the day we will live peacefully with them.

When Yom HaShoah approached, many conflated the Holocaust with October 7, but the Holocaust deserves its own reckoning, and so does October 7; here are some major differences:

- Imagine five years of October 7. During the Holocaust, thousands of Jews were slaughtered every day and world Jewry was incapable of helping.

- On October 7, Jewish communities in Israel were assaulted but they and we are confident that they will thrive again in the not-so-distant future. During the Holocaust, hundreds of Jewish communities were decimated forever.

- Imagine the events of October 7 happening without a response or an army for protection, which was the case during the Holocaust.

- Imagine this happening with the cooperation of local police, as opposed to today. Even though there is much Jew-hatred, the police are committed to our safety.

- October 7 was a pogrom fol-

lowed by a war. It was the first time in Jewish history a war followed a pogrom; in the past, we just remained vulnerable and defenseless.

- In the Holocaust, bodies were incinerated, thrown into pits, or just left on the ground.

(Continued on page 18)

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Religious Life

Camp Gan Israel Lake Norman Completes Its Fourth Summer

As the week of Camp Gan Israel (CGI) in Lake Norman comes to an end, I reflect back on our fourth incredible summer of having camp in Lake Norman.

CGI Lake Norman 2024 was filled with drama, music, and Jewish Pride. Walking through camp you could hear the songs of "I am Proud to Be a Jew," camp cheers and the sounds of new friendships being made. Our incredible counselors made sure each child had the best week possible.

Between the daily trips and creative activities, there was never a dull moment. Of course, we always finish off camp with a Shabbat party and challah baking.



CGI rides the train at Village Park.



CGI campers are ready to show off their creativity with tie-dye.



Jeremiah enjoying the carousel at Village Park.



Xander creates bubbles at Patterson Farms.

Rabbi Oppenheim

(Continued from page 17)

These Jews never had a proper burial. But the overwhelming number of volunteers after October 7 did what they could to provide the final dignity to those murdered. State and military funerals were held; victims' families were able to bury their dead. It's a metaphor for the difference between October 7 and the Holocaust: October 7 had follow-up, while the Holocaust remained an open wound.

- During the Holocaust, we were alone, and leading up to it millions of immigrants were denied asylum in the U.S., Palestine, and other countries. After the war, Polish and other Eastern European nationals violently told their former neighbors they were no longer welcome. But it's different now. Despite all the rhetoric, this country has stood behind Israel. Perhaps not as forcefully as we would like, but they support Israel, and so does—oddly enough—Germany. We're not alone.

- Although we never want a theology to cover up human suffering and trauma, over the past 10 months, we have been processing a new theology; it wasn't just an attack on our people, it was an attack on G-d's presence in the world. How so?

These terrorists talk about G-d in a fraudulent way. For them, death and terror are a virtue, not an abomination. It contrasts a culture that celebrates the Divine quality—tzalom Elokim—of every human being vs. one that doesn't. The fact that it happened in Israel reminds us that Eretz Yisrael cannot be easily settled. This was all prophesied and recorded thousands of years ago. Hitler's assault came from a personal philosophy; he didn't speak in the name of religion. October 7 exposed once and for all a theology of hatred.

It's important to find continuity in Jewish history but at the same time to realize the differences between what occurred on October 7 vs. during the tragic years of the Holocaust. G-d brought His people back to their Land after WWII; it's a unique gift conveying its own history and we are fortunate to be living witnesses to it.



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Greenspon Center Minds the P's: Poland, Pickleball, and Programs

By Mary Eshet

What do Poland, pickleball, and programs have in common? Besides all starting with “p,” they are the focus of the Stan Greenspon Holocaust and Social Justice Education Center this summer.

CHP graduates travel to Poland

The first and second cohort graduates of the Certificate in Holocaust Pedagogy (CHP) program completed an impactful journey to Poland in June, culminating their experience in the CHP program, which provides intensive training on methods and strategies for teaching about the Holocaust across subjects and settings in grades 6-12. Judy LaPietra, associate director of the Greenspon Center, and Katie Cunningham, Holocaust curriculum and outreach specialist, led the group of 23 North Carolina educators, including teachers, facilitators, district specialists, and state curriculum writers, on the nine-day trip.

“We have been planning and anticipating this trip for two years, since we initiated the CHP program,” said Cunningham. “The experience was even richer and deeper than I could have imagined. While the history, resources, and tools we cover in the program are immensely valuable, there is no substitute for personally visiting the sites of the atrocities committed in the Holocaust and for experiencing

and celebrating Jewish revival and renewal.”

The itinerary included viewing the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw, visiting the Treblinka Memorial and Museum, a guided tour of the former German Nazi death camp at Majdanek, and a walking tour of Kazimierz with visits to several surviving synagogues and the Old Jewish Cemetery. The last two days of the trip, the group visited Auschwitz-Birkenau.

“There is no way to really understand the magnitude of what happened without seeing it,” said Christy Brooks, an educator who joined the trip. “It’s not just the numbers, it’s the plans, the deception ... It’s overwhelming and this opportunity to be here with other educators who are learning and sharing their knowledge has brought so much life to what could just be death and destruction. The fact that we are all here together making sure that this story lives on in us, with our students, and with our communities really is enlightening and provides hope.”

Coming up in August: Pickleball!

The Greenspon Center is excited about its second annual Pickleball for Peace event, which will be at 1 p.m. on Aug. 18 at Queens University. In the hot days of August, this indoor pickleball tournament is a great opportunity to have fun, get some exercise, and support the



Certificate in Holocaust Pedagogy graduates at Oświęcim Synagogue learning about the history of the Jews of Oświęcim after a tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Greenspon Center — all while staying cool!

“We had such fun last year at our first pickleball tournament, visiting with longtime supporters and new friends of the Greenspon Center,” said Rabbi Judy Schindler, director of the Center. “We welcome experienced pickleballers, novices, and spectators to join us for a lively afternoon and to learn more about our work to combat hate and advocate for social justice.”

If you’re interested in attending, being a sponsor for the

event, or donating an item for the raffle, please contact Terri Eberlet Katz at Eberlet@queens.edu.

2024-2025 Program Guide previews a year of opportunities.

The 2024-2025 Greenspon Center program guide will be available on the website (stangreensponcenter.org) later in August.

In the coming year, several well-established programs will continue with new cohorts. The CHP program will welcome its third cohort of educators in September and embark on another journey to Poland in Summer 2025. The Social Justice and Community Organizing Certificate Program will also launch its third cohort, providing participants with political education and practical skills to effectively organize for social change. The Black/Jewish Alliance (BJA) will begin its fourth cohort, travel south on the annual Deep South Pilgrimage, and expand to include the broader community in programs. For example, in September, the BJA will host a staged reading of “The Green Book: A Play.” The play sheds light on a time in America when Jim Crow and separate but equal was the law of the land. A Jewish concentration camp survivor enters the play, and the complexities of the times play out.

Rabbi Judy Schindler and Judy LaPietra will offer Signature Jewish Studies courses to the community in the fall and spring. The fall class will focus on the very timely topic, “Elections 2024 – What does the American civic history and Judaism have to say?” and the spring session will cover “Art and the Holocaust.”

Once again, the Greenspon Center will commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day with a special event

for the community in January. In February, the BJA will come together with Queens University’s Hillel and Black Student Union to host Soul Food Shabbat for the ninth year.

Throughout the year, the Center also looks forward to hosting robust book club discussions. In July, Jamie Brooks, principal of Ardrey Kell High School, led a rich discussion of “Between the World and Me” by Ta-Nehisi Coates, a brutally honest portrayal of the plight of African American males in the United States. Stay tuned for book selections in the coming year!

The Greenspon Center also leads and sponsors various professional development opportunities for educators throughout the year. In July, the Center was thrilled to partner with the South Carolina Council on the Holocaust to host the Advanced Holocaust Educator Institute of the Carolinas in Charleston. Over five days, participants examined the construction of race and identity as drivers of Nazi genocide and the American Jim Crow system.

“It is so rewarding to see our foundational programs mature, become increasingly sustainable, and broaden their impact,” said LaPietra. “At the same time, it’s energizing to embrace new events and opportunities with each year. With each program and initiative, we make progress toward our mission: to develop informed and engaged global citizens who are prepared to respond to prejudice and discrimination with actions advocating human rights for all.”

Calling all pickleball players!



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Jewish Community Refugee Initiative's Fifth Annual Drive-Through Sukkah for Refugees

By Amy Lefkof

Although Sukkot doesn't officially begin until the evening of Oct. 16, 2024, the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative (JCRI) invites you to participate this fall in its fifth annual Drive-Through Sukkah for Refugees a month earlier than usual. JCRI will once again partner with Refugee Support Services (RSS) to provide food and kitchen items to 125 local refugee families.

Volunteers are needed to box food and kitchen items at Shalom Park at the Poliakoff Pavilion on Tuesday, Sept. 17, from 12-2 p.m. Given that COVID is still with us, this event will be outside, assembly-line fashion, with volunteers spaced apart. Delivery of the totes will be early the following morning, Wednesday, Sept. 18, at RSS, located on the grounds of Aldersgate, 3925 Willard Farrow Drive.

Jonathan Lee, RSS's food and community info program coordinator, is looking forward to partnering once again with JCRI, noting: "The 125 families loved the totes filled with food and kitchen supplies last year. They were so happy to walk away with such a heavy bag!"

On the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, we commemorate both the fragile "booths" set up during Biblical harvests and the tem-

porary shelters used during the Jewish people's 40-year migration in the desert following their exodus from Egypt. JCRI's Drive-Through Sukkah for Refugees project recognizes the plight of today's refugees and asylum seekers who often occupy temporary precarious housing on their journey to a safe new destination.

During the June 28 presidential debate, immigration was

spotlighted with much misinformation about who immigrants are, and why they come to our country. With more than 120 million people displaced worldwide due to conflict and violence, it is important for us as Jews, who have also been refugees and resettled in strange new places, to be sensitive to dangerous and

(Continued on page 25)



Members of the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative (JCRI) in Fall 2023 sharing the harvest with local refugees for the holiday of Sukkot.

NC Council on the Holocaust

By Michael Abramson, Chairman, North Carolina Council on the Holocaust

The North Carolina Council on the Holocaust teaches students about the Holocaust to prevent bullying, prejudice, and ethnic scapegoating in schools. Students model the behavior around them and believe antisemitism is a normal thing to do. Students must understand why teaching the Holocaust is necessary. They learn through the Holocaust Council that the Holocaust is not the only example of a genocide. Students learn what happened to Armenians in

Turkey 25 years before the Holocaust and what happened to Cambodians under the Khmer Rouge thirty years after the Holocaust. Students learn that the Holocaust was not simply a spontaneous one-time phenomenon. As Wendy Kesser writes, "The Holocaust was a deliberate, sinister, and government-driven process of fear-mongering that persistently and methodically ate away at the foundations of human decency. First, the Jews were defined and identified. Then, they were separated. Ultimately, they were stripped of any vestige of humanity — even called 'ver-

min' — to make their 'extermination' logical and defensible." It is not only our responsibility as educators within the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to teach the Holocaust, it is our moral obligation as Jews that we inherit to prevent such horrors from ever going unchecked again.



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Calaniot Memorial Finds Final Home at Hebrew Cemetery

By Sandra Goldman, Hebrew Cemetery Executive Director

The Calaniot ceramic flowers, a poignant tribute to the victims of the atrocities on October 7 in Israel, have found their final exhibit space at the Hebrew Cemetery. This installation marks the culmination of a community-wide project that began in early 2024, reflecting the Charlotte Jewish community's solidarity with Israel and its people.

The Calanit, also known as the red anemone, is Israel's national flower. Blooming during winter, these little red flowers symbolize life and resiliency, carpeting the landscape for miles in Israel's south and inspiring the annual Darom Adom (Red South) Festival. In the wake of the October 7 attack and subsequent war, a group of Israeli ceramic artists initiated a global project to create 100,000 clay Calaniot in memory of the victims.

Responding to this call, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and the Levine Jewish Community Center (Levine JCC) organized Calaniot ceramic workshops throughout January and February 2024, coinciding with the peak season for the red anemone flower bloom in Israel. More



Sandra Goldman (Hebrew Cemetery) and Noah Goldman (Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte)

than 200 community members participated in these workshops, creating the flowers that initially formed the "Calaniot Before the Rain" art installation in front of the entrance to the main building at Shalom Park.

Now, these community-crafted Calaniot have found their permanent home at the Hebrew Cemetery, a choice of location that imbues the exhibition with deep significance. Cemeteries,

as sanctuaries of remembrance and reflection, provide a solemn backdrop that honors the memory of those lost. The Hebrew Cemetery, with its historical and cultural resonance, deepens this act of commemoration, linking the present tragedy to a broader narrative of endurance and remembrance.

The beauty of the Calaniot ceramic flowers stands in stark contrast to the violence they

memorialize, inviting visitors to reflect on the fragility of life and the enduring impact of loss. The serene environment of the cemetery fosters a space for quiet contemplation, allowing individuals to process their grief and pay respects in a meaningful way.

Furthermore, the cemetery setting facilitates community healing. As a place where people traditionally gather to mourn and remember, these holy grounds

foster a sense of solidarity and shared humanity. The Calaniot thus transform the Hebrew Cemetery into a living memorial, a testament to resilience and the enduring power of memory.

Tamir Avraham, a native of Israel who experienced the attacks in his hometown of Ofakim, near the Gaza border, shares his perspective: "Every year, at the end of January through February, in the South of Israel where I was born, the red Calaniot bloom and beautifully cover the land, almost creating a red-carpet effect. For us, the blooming of Calaniot is a symbol of renewal and majesty of HaShem's work. This year, the blooming season once again arrived with a feeling of hope and trust that everything will renew for good. That's the perpetual renewal of nature. After October 7, our land was covered with the blood of our brothers and sisters. Red Calaniot have always survived adversity and the hostile weather, but also this year, reminded us of all of those who perished in the south of Israel and cannot see their blooming anymore. Nevertheless, seeing the beauty of their velvet red

(Continued on page 24)

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Women's News

Transforming Bodies Into Art: Hadassah's Empowering Cancer Fundraiser

By Aileen Greenberg-Kriner

When you think of Jewish art, you probably think of beautiful illustrations in a Haggadah or children's book, synagogues with sun-catching stained-glass windows, beautiful arks, and Torah covers. You may imagine a sculpture or framed masterpiece in a museum or a lovely lithograph in your home. It's unlikely a woman's painted torso comes to mind.

Since when is a painted body Jewish art? Since women (and a man) have been having their upper bodies painted for Celebrate the TaTas Painting Days, the first of two events Hadassah Charlotte holds to raise money for cancer research at the Hadassah Medical Organization in Jerusalem.

Many studies suggest that engaging in creative activities such as painting can increase happiness, reduce stress, and promote well-being. Being painted can produce the same feelings.

Most of the women who have been painted tell us how empowering it feels. Many are breast cancer survivors and thrivers with scars and radiation tattoos. Having their bodies transformed into beautiful works of art is uplifting and liberating. Their stories reaffirm the importance of our fundraising efforts for Hadassah's cancer research.

Each woman is paired with a female professional artist, and they discuss the type of scene or theme the "paintee" would like. While the painting takes place in a big room, it is sectioned off with curtains to create a private space. Once the artist is finished, a female photographer takes pictures of the completed masterpiece. Photos are taken from the neck down to conceal the identity of each individual.

After Painting Days, the pictures will be made into a poster-size photo collage that will be introduced at The Reveal on Saturday evening, Nov. 16.

Please sign up to be painted,



Painted TaTas from 2023 Painting Days

paint, or to take photographs at the Hadassah Charlotte website (see below) and join us for Painting Days. Men are also welcome to be painted and photographed.

Even if you are not being painted, visit us during Painting Days at Temple Beth El to learn about breast cancer resources in Charlotte and to support the many artists and vendors who will be selling their creations and donating all or a portion of their proceeds to Hadassah.

Painting Days will be held on Monday, Aug. 19 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesday, Aug. 20 from noon to 8 p.m. If you are interested in assisting us during our TaTas events this year, please contact Cindy at (980) 553-1880 or celebratethetatas.Hadassah@gmail.com.

Summer Events

The countdown is on to Rosh HaShanah. Don't forget to order a sweet New Year's gift of "Hon-

ey from the Heart" for friends and family. Each eight-ounce jar of kosher honey is \$14 and comes with a personalized card for the recipient. Order online by Aug. 8 for free shipping. The last day to order is Sept. 12 for delivery by Rosh HaShanah (+\$8

Hebrew Cemetery

(Continued from page 23)

amidst the tanks and bombs, invites us to thrive, to keep fighting for life as those who survived the attack have done it as well. Also, to have compassion for each other and appreciate life even more. Calaniot are a symbol of resilience for all Israelis and us as Jews. Having these ceramic flowers in our Hebrew Cemetery is a precious gift. They will remind us of not only the cycle of life but also to have hope and faith that our hostages will come back home and our land will be in peace. We will renew, and we will be strong to bloom and prosper as a nation: Am Yisrael Chai!"

The journey of these Calaniot, from their creation by community members to their final resting place at the Hebrew Cemetery, embodies the project's goal of healing and remembrance. Michelle Rusgo, director of art and culture at the Levine JCC, reflects on the project's impact and culmination: "It has been moving to see everyone come together to create these flowers. Art is a great vessel for healing. After making donations, people were still wondering what they could do. There was a strong

shipping fee). Order at www.orthoney.com/HCM.

Chill out with a great group of women at Hadassah Wine & Schmooze on Aug. 6 at 7 p.m. at Vintner Wine Market in the Arboretum. Are you a new member or thinking about joining Hadassah? This is the perfect time to meet and greet.

Short Story Discussion Group meets on the second Friday of the month and continues to read stories from the collection "Frankly Feminist: Short Stories by Jewish Women." The next meeting is 11:45 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 9. We will discuss "The Curiosa Section" by Harriet Goldman.

Call in for Hadassah Book-Talk on Tuesday, Aug. 27 for a special treat! Peggy Orenstein, the author of "Unraveling: What I Learned About Life While Shearing Sheep, Dyeing Wool, and Making the World's Ugliest Sweater," will join us on our Zoom call.

The next Hadassah CLT Metro Board meeting is Monday, Aug. 19, at 7 p.m. on Zoom.

Save The Dates for...

*Two fabulous Celebrate the TaTas events -- Painting Days on Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 19 and 20, and the Reveal Gala on Saturday evening, Nov. 16.

*A new Hadassah Charlotte Metro Area Jewish Community Directory coming in 2025.



Watch for info about how to be included and advertise with us.

Helpful Info

To learn about membership, contact Laurie Sheinhaus at the phone number or email below, or come to one of our events. We'd love to have you join us!

Our website, www.hadassah-cltevents.org, has details and registration links for our events. If you have questions or need additional information, email HadassahCLT@gmail.com or call our general phone number, (980) 553-1880. Follow us on Facebook (Hadassah CLT Metro) and Instagram (Hadassah Charlotte Metro).



pull to connect with one another and to heal together. This project has been a wonderful way for our community to do that."

Rusgo continues, "It is very befitting for the Calaniot to find their final resting place at the Hebrew Cemetery. These beautiful flowers, created by the Charlotte community, will forever memorialize the atrocities of October 7 and the resilience of the Jewish people."

The Board of Directors of the Hebrew Cemetery is proud to have collaborated with Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and the Levine JCC to display these clay flowers in the peaceful meadows of our cemetery. The

exhibition leverages the unique emotional, cultural, and historical significance of the location and creates a powerful and poignant tribute to the victims of the October 7 atrocities.

As the clay Calaniot stand as a testament to resilience and unity, they also serve as a reminder of the enduring connection among communities worldwide. This living memorial in the Hebrew Cemetery not only honors those lost but also celebrates the strength and solidarity of the Jewish community in Charlotte and beyond.



The Hebrew Cemetery joins with the community in remembering the names of those who have been buried in the cemetery in the months of May and June, 2024.

Estelle Thompson	8-11-1947	-	5-29-2024
Joan Goldsmith	1-18-1929	-	5-29-2024
Eileen Schwartz	9-24-1944	-	6-4-2024
Jill Newman	3-5-1938	-	6-4-2024
Louise Roth	3-5-1939	-	1-8-2024
Anna Schreiber	8-1-1954	-	6-7-2024
Mintza Leah Cohen	4-27-1943	-	6-16-2024
Arline Stern-Nicokiris	12-17-1943	-	6-15-2024
Jim Rosenberger	8-26-1946	-	6-22-2024

JCRI

(Continued from page 22)

inaccurate immigration rhetoric. Mark Hetfield, president and CEO of HIAS (formerly Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), one of nine resettlement agencies authorized through the federal government to resettle refugees in the U.S., said regarding immigration at the first Presidential debate: "Former President Trump had nothing truthful to say about refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers, and President Biden said too little to forcefully speak the truth that refugees and immigrants are a blessing to this country. After 250 years of history, this is one lesson we should have learned by now. *The way to make America great again is to make America greet again.*"

HIAS particularly opposes the use of anti-immigrant rhetoric and conspiracy theories about an "invasion" at the border, which echo discrimination faced by "generations of immigrants in some of the darkest moments in our history." HIAS's local Charlotte affiliate is Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRA), which often partners with JCRI. According to CRRA's Executive Director, Marsha Hirsch, for Fiscal Year 2024 (Oct. 1, 2023-Sept. 30, 2024), CRRA will resettle

300 new arrivals, and Catholic Charities (another Charlotte resettlement agency) expects to resettle about 400. Most of these new arrivals have come from Afghanistan, Venezuela, Central America, Syria, Burma, Congo, and Ethiopia.

JCRI needs to raise around \$700 more to purchase food and kitchen supplies. If you are interested in making a monetary donation, please send a check payable to Temple Beth El (TBE) with JCRI in the memo line. Although JCRI is a Shalom Park-wide social justice initiative, TBE is JCRI's fiduciary agent. To volunteer to be a "buyer" or an assembly line worker, please contact JCRI co-chair Elizabeth Weinstein at elizabeth.c.weinstein1@gmail.com. You can also donate ONLINE on TBE Shulcloud in the "Donate" tab <https://tbe.shulcloud.com/> and select The Fund Type: Pass Through Fund and Fund name: Jewish Community Refugee Initiative.







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Around the Table with Regina Frances



By Charlotte Rouchouze

One fiercely hot morning in June, I visited Regina Frances in her Charlotte apartment, a cozy, bright space dotted with colorful Judaica, photos, and art. We sat down at her dining table, neatly covered with a traditional embroidered linen spread that Regina told me she had hand-stitched with her grandmother. Our conversation drifted to another place that I imagined to be hot and sunny, the port city of Patras in the Peloponnese of Greece where Regina's family story began.

Her family was part of a very small community of Jews called the Romaniote who had been in Greece since the time of the Roman Empire and who are said to be the oldest Jewish community in Europe. A common feature of Jewish populations that were once spread out across the Mediterranean and the Middle East is that they were, in fact, made up of several culturally distinct communities with different histories. There were those who had migrated directly from the Land of Israel in ancient times after the destruction of the Temples, and there were those who had taken a more circuitous route, often via Spain. Each community carried bits and pieces of the places through which they had passed: different languages, religious customs, and foods.

Regina's family was part of the more ancient community, which, she explained, had fully embraced their Greekness in addition to their Jewishness. They spoke Greek and Italian, had close ties with non-Jewish Greeks, and practiced neither the Ashkenazi customs typical of Jews who had migrated from Eastern Europe nor the Sephardi ones practiced by a majority of Greek Jews who descended from Spanish Jews expelled during the Inquisition. According to an article I read by archaeologist Dr. Zanet Battinou, the Romaniote Jews adopted the Greek language but kept Hebrew words, creating a unique Judeo-Greek language, while still preserving Hebrew for worship. Regina told me she grew up speaking Greek and practicing a Greek-influenced form of Judaism. They were traditional but flexible, proudly Greek but also steadfast in their Jewishness.

Regina herself was only a toddler when, in 1941, the Germans invaded southern Greece, leaving the Jews at the mercy of the Nazis. The Velessi family was lucky enough to be hidden by a kind Greek family, Elias and Kathryn Michalos, who gave them a cabin they owned in the mountains on their vineyard property. The stay was not easy. This town was far more rural than anything the Velessis had ever known, and there was constant fear of Nazi raids, which occurred on two occasions. On the first one, the Nazis, having learned of the Michalos family's secret activities, burned their home to the ground, leaving them forced to live in the cabin with the Velessis. On the second raid, the Germans destroyed the village, and the surviving villagers were later sheltered by the church.

But unlike the 87% of Greek



Regina Frances (right) with husband, mother and sisters

Jews who perished in the Holocaust, most of Frances' family survived, with the exception of two aunts and four cousins. They even managed to recover most of their property from neighbors and friends who had kept it safe for them during the war, promising to return it should the owners survive. But the Greek civil war followed on the tails of WWII, and the Greek economy was in shambles. Many of Regina's family members planned their departure, some for Palestine and some for the United States.

In the early 1950s, the family boarded the Flying Tiger propeller jet and relocated to the United States with the help of HIAS (originally the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) and Jewish Family Services (JFS). Their new home in Baltimore did not initially impress the 14-year-old Regina. She found the city crowded and gloomy, and the bread spongy and bland. She longed for the crusty bread of Greece. But over time the family adjusted and made the US their home. They even reunited with

the Michelos family who had also immigrated to Baltimore, and became lifelong friends. Regina lived in Baltimore until, on a trip to Miami, she was begrudgingly set up with Simon Frances, who would become her husband. "I didn't want a Greek Jew!" she told me. But he won her over, and the two made their life in Miami, where Regina lived until moving to Charlotte.

When I asked Regina about other culinary memories or traditions that have stuck with her over the years, she had many. There were the orange-scented koulourakia cookies that always lived in a jar in the kitchen; there were leek fritters, zucchini fritters, beans stewed in tomato sauce, and lemony avgolemono soup; there were little fried pieces of dough called Haman's ear that were eaten at Purim, a kosher version of moussaka, and always plenty of herbs and olive oil. Before her mother Emily's passing, Regina decided to spend some time following her around the kitchen and writing down everything she did. She

now keeps these precious recipes along with her own in a fabric-bound book that is falling apart at the seams.

A specific memory she recounted to me was of Passover in Greece. They always had a joyful and laughter-filled seder with scores of aunts and uncles. A yearly tradition at the seder table was a game in which each person held their roasted egg (hamin eggs which I discussed in a previous issue) and attempted to keep it intact while others did their best to crack it. Legend has it that Regina's sister got her hands on a wooden darning egg, perhaps explaining her multi-year streak as the winner. Regina also described a traditional savory Passover pie they called pasteli in which a matzo meal dough was layered with ground meat and beaten eggs, all baked until crispy.

Of all the recipes Regina described, I decided to share this simple one which is perfect for late summer.

Regina's Greek Green Beans

- 1 lb. green beans, ends and strings removed
- 1 onion, sliced
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 8 oz. (small) can of tomato sauce
- 1 bunch of flat Italian parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper

First, heat the oil over medium heat and fry the onions until transparent. Add tomato sauce and sauté for an additional few minutes. Next, add the beans and the equivalent of two cans of water. Allow the beans to cook until the water has evaporated. Toward the end of cooking add chopped parsley and season to taste.

For more information about the Romaniote Jews of Greece, check out the website of the Kehila Kedosha Janina synagogue and museum in the Lower East Side of New York City, the last remaining Romaniote synagogue in the Western Hemisphere.

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. Contact her at charlotte.rouchouze@yahoo.com.



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Bal Tashchit and Beyond: Conscious Consumerism

By Summer Minchew

We are all consumers. We all buy things, things we need, and things we want. Consumerism is defined as "a social and economic order based on the idea that increasing the consumption of goods and services purchased in the market is always a desirable goal, and that a person's well-being and happiness depend fundamentally on obtaining consumer goods and material possessions."

While consumerism has been widespread since the early 1900s, according to National Geographic, there are now about 1.7 billion people belonging to the global "consumer class," the group of people characterized by diets of highly processed food, desire for bigger houses, more and bigger cars, higher levels of debt, and lifestyles devoted to the accumulation of non-essential goods.

Rising consumerism has helped meet basic needs and create jobs. However, increased globalization, automobile dependence, and changing diets have led to a collective consumer appetite that has had a devastating toll on the Earth's water supplies, natural resources, and ecosystems.

Conscious consumerism is an emerging trend that addresses two main consumer goals: consuming less and ensuring that what we do consume is as sustainable as possible. According to a 2022 Simon-Kucher study, 71% of global consumers are making changes to the way they live and the products they buy to live more sustainably. We can all support healthier consumerism for ourselves and our planet by reorienting our way of purchasing.

One easy way to get started is to take note of the most common things you buy in your household for one month. Then consider whether there is a more sustainable option for the things you bought most frequently or spent the most money on.

- Take a hard look at convenience items. Convenience often equals plastic. These items include individually packaged food items like frozen meals, string cheese, fruit cups, water bottles, soda bottles, and beverage cans. Instead, buy in bulk, pack your lunch in reusable containers, and bring your own reusable bottle filled with your favorite beverage.

- Plan your meals and cook at home. Cooking your own meals will use less energy and result in less packaging waste than eating out. Be even more conscious in the kitchen by making a meal prep plan before going to the grocery store to avoid food waste, using reusable storage containers instead of plastic, trying meat substitutes, freezing your leftovers, and composting

your food scraps.

- Look for labels. Coffee enthusiasts should look for the Fair-trade logo. Search the EPA Safer Choice database or look for the Green Seal-certified logo before buying cleaning products. Buy USDA Organic products and produce. The Leaping Bunny on cosmetics certifies that companies have not tested their products on animals. Look for the Certified Sustainable Seafood label at the fish counter and the Certified Humane label on meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. Look for products that are made from recycled or biobased materials or can be properly recycled at the end of their life. Look for products whose manufacturers focus on social or environmental issues, like B Corp and Cradle to Cradle.

- Buy less and buy quality. Before adding to your cart, consider the useful life of the product you are purchasing. Especially true of the clothing and small electronics industries, often inexpensive items aren't made to last. A high-quality pair of jeans may cost more, but consider that over their lifetime, they will outlast five pairs of fast-fashion pants with far less environmental impact. Take care of the things you have, repair items, and donate items you no longer want to charity.

- Buy used, share, or swap. Love books? Swap Books at a Little Free Library or go to the public library and check out a book instead of buying a new one. Need a fashion fix? Thrift instead of buying new. You'll be in good company. According to the ThredUp 2024 Resale Report, the global secondhand apparel market is growing 3 times faster than the overall global apparel market.

- Think about returns before

you purchase. Online shopping is super convenient, but conscious consumers must consider what happens to online returns. In far too many cases, our purchases are not able to be resold, this is especially true of personal care items and apparel. These returns often find their way to landfills. If you aren't sure of your size, try it on in the store before buying online.

The goal of conscious consumerism is not to focus on

sacrifice, but instead on how to provide a higher quality of life using the lowest number of raw materials. Small consumer changes can influence the way we produce goods and the way we consume them, resulting in a healthier planet and happier consumers.

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 or email us at info@shalomgreen-CLT.org. Connect with us on Facebook at Shalom Green: Shalom Park Environmental Initiative and on Instagram @shalomgreen_CLT.



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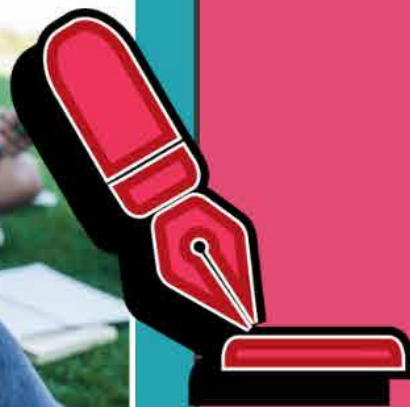


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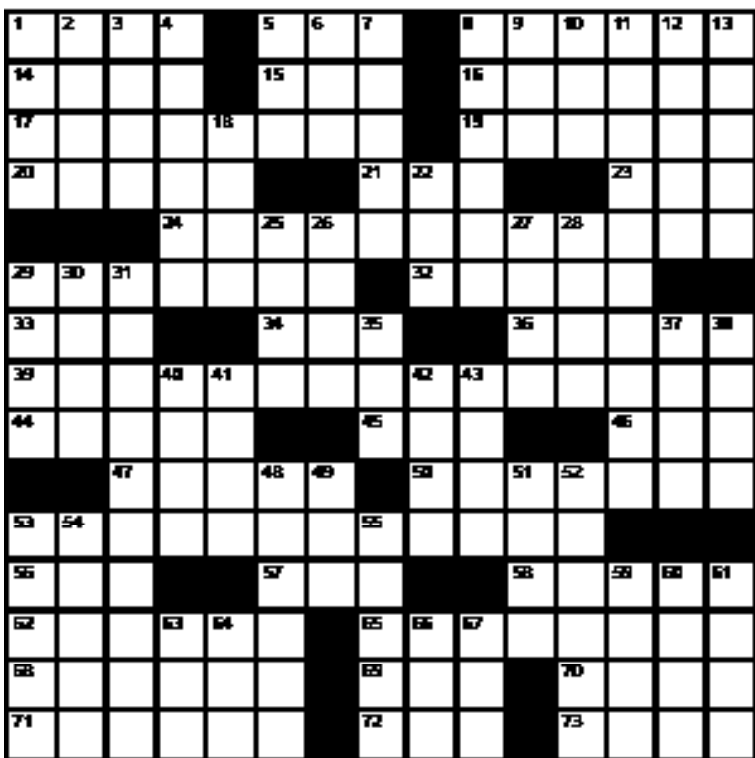


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45. 1 of 2,297 for Hank Aaron
 46. Big name in camping gear
 47. Most's opposite
 50. Like those who waited to meet with a Rebbe, usually
 53. Torah center up for auction?
 56. He had an incredible uncle, in Genesis
 57. Leinenkugel product
 58. Schooner needs
 62. More rudely sarcastic
 65. Halachic document that's a bullseye?
 68. Make a king, perhaps
 69. Kind of pond in a Japanese garden
 70. Really small amount
 71. Picks up on
 72. View
 73. "Moses und ___" (Schoenberg opera)
7. She raised Moshe
 8. Major Mel Gibson or Tom Hardy role
 9. "Dos" half
 10. Yehoshaphat to 15-Across
 11. Stereotypical mid-life crisis comforts
 12. Any broadcaster
 13. Member of a Jamaican religion, for short
 18. Earthenware container of crosswords
 22. Lawyers' prof. org.
 25. "Are you ___ not?"
 26. Hatched
 27. Place for some flakes
 28. "___ Zemiros"
 29. Makers of animal tracks
 30. "He's got a bit of ___" (warning from a Shadchan)
 31. It can lower your heating bill
 35. Many fly to TLV from here
 37. Algonquian living in Canada
 38. The future of Judaism?
40. Three-point shot, in slang
 41. "Coup" target
 42. Common crossword clue ending
 43. Name that sounds like a night in Israel
 48. Intellectual pain?
 49. As late as, briefly
 51. It, in Italy
 52. Law that wouldn't be too popular in most of Israel
 53. Heroines of "Born Free" and "Frozen"
 54. It's "good" for the French
 55. Cubicle furnishings
 59. Famous lab assistant
 60. Jared of "Suicide Squad"
 61. Major fan, nowadays
 63. Insult, in slang
 64. Haifa to Katzrin dir.
 66. Garden tool
 67. Less than satisfying sports result

- Across**
 1. Kind of bracelet
 5. Working part of Tanach?
 8. What a Rav might give someone so they can improve
 14. One making a pilgrimage to Mecca (Var.)
 15. He ruled Judah for 41 years
 16. Blindness, medically
 17. Bracha for a Prime user?
 19. Those giving to Chai Lifeline
 20. Major name in Zion-ism
 21. Sea in Israel that's a Thanksgiving staple
 23. No longer working: 42-Down.
 24. Tractate for Jack Ma's company?
 29. Chaver, in Roma
 32. Cellular transmitters
 33. Golfer Palmer, to pals
 34. It's refined
 36. Modern pagan movement
 39. Superstore near the Temple Mount?
 44. Growth ___

- Down**
 1. Less fanatical Iranian ruler
 2. Hardly cool
 3. Just a little open
 4. They're often tossed before they're made?
 5. Inauguration Day 42-Down
 6. "Bear" in Barcelona

(Answers on page 34)

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Education and Youth

Charlotte Jewish Day School Professional Development at MIT



By CJDS Staff

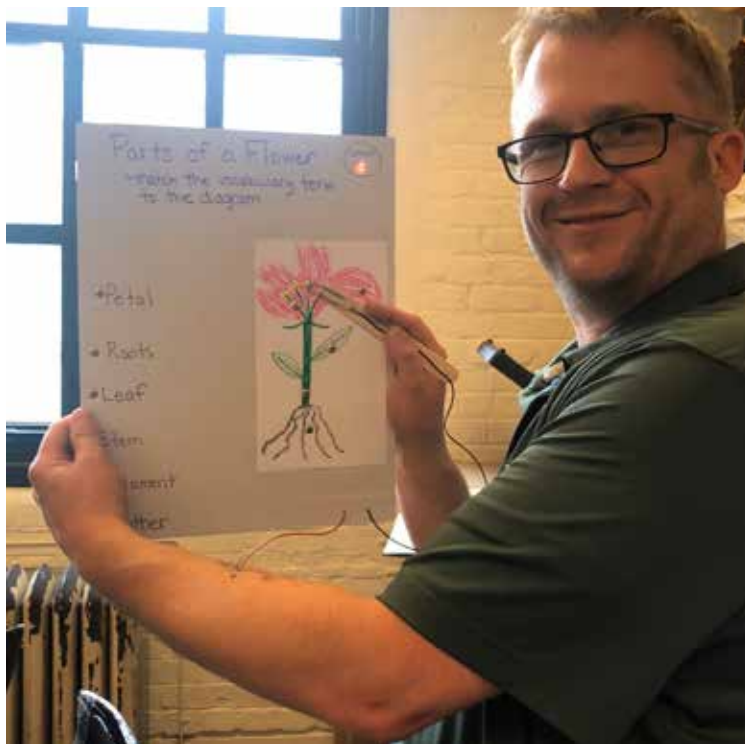
This summer, from June 24-26, the Charlotte Jewish Day School (CJDS) was able to send their STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math) teacher, Richard Isham, to Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge to learn how to incorporate different design and engineering strategies into the school's curriculum. Mr. Isham quickly found himself in the role of a student, faced with many challenges.

On the first day, Rick learned how to build cardboard automatas, engineered mechanisms constructed entirely out of cardboard and everyday materials that are controlled by a hand crank. Inside the mechanism, students use gears and wheels that they make themselves, or with help from a laser cutter, to make movement outside the box. Additionally, he learned how to turn 2-D objects into 3-D designs using the school's recently purchased laser cutter. For this experience, he cut out pieces of a cardboard dog and assembled them into a free-standing structure. Strategic cutting strategies were shared

on how to utilize cardboard and make it functional for projects.

He also learned how to sew using conductive thread to make stuffed animals controlled by 3V cell batteries. Rick got creative and designed a multi-circuit stuffed menorah with seven different lights, turned on and off with a switch. To do this, he had to make a blueprint, transfer the design onto a piece of felt, hot glue the lights to secure them in place, and then connect the positive and negative prongs on the lights to the battery using the conductive thread by making multiple parallel circuits.

On the second day, Rick learned how to create 3-D models using free online software called Tinkercad. This program is very similar to the program the students used last year called Makers Empire. He used the program to make a 3-D printed flashcard for students to remind them to believe in Hashem. Next, he used a software called Vectr and etched into a mirror a slogan that celebrates equality. The laser burned the backside of the mirror in order to make images transparent through the glass. He also



Richard Isham

made ink stamps using a Cricut machine.

Finally, on the third day, he learned more about electronics. He was able to create festive flashlights, hardwire complex

circuits using a variety of classroom materials, and integrate into these circuits a variety of different sensors that are controlled by angles, distance, light, and force. This was really fun

and something that he had some experience with. This challenged him. The opportunity to experiment with creating circuits using alternative materials and unique sensors to control the functionality of the circuits was amazing.

This was a fantastic experience that will help our CJDS students improve their problem-solving skills, challenge themselves, investigate and use the newest tools and gadgets in STEAM education, and have a ton of fun doing so.

CJDS has two dedicated spaces for the design and innovation curriculum. The newly renovated Spark Lab is geared to students in grades 4-8 and features a hydroponic garden, 3-D printers, laser cutters, a construction zone with power tools, and a video and podcast studio. The space for TK-3 has a hydroponic garden, 3-D printer, laser cutter, and many other supplies for students to build, create, and hone their critical thinking skills.

For information about the CJDS Design and Innovation Lab, contact Gale Osborne gosborne@cjdschool.org

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Education and Youth

Club Z Charlotte Celebrates Fourth Graduation, Fostering Jewish Leadership

By Lena Kosinovsky

Club Z, an organization dedicated to empowering Jewish youth with knowledge about Israel and fostering leadership skills, celebrated its fourth graduation in Charlotte on May 26. This year's graduates were Joshua Gets, Rachel Rubin, and Ari Zatin.

The graduates demonstrated their proficiency in Israeli history through an exam and presented capstone projects on subjects of importance to Israel. Notably, the Charlotte class achieved the highest average test scores of any Club Z chapter in the country for the fourth consecutive year.

Club Z's mission is twofold: to equip Jewish youth with the knowledge and resilience to counter anti-Israel propaganda they will inevitably encounter in college (and that most already experienced in high school), and

to nurture proud Jewish leaders. The organization's success is evident in its graduates' ongoing commitment to supporting Israel and their active roles in pro-Israel campus groups.

Charlotte's chapter, though young, has already made significant impacts. Alumni such as Evan Biller (class of 2021), Jonah Rubin (class of 2022), and David McCrudden (class of 2023) have become prominent pro-Israel leaders at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Jonah and David gained national attention during campus protests by protecting the American flag from protesters. Additionally, Jonah testified before Congress regarding the SHALOM Act, which was subsequently passed in both the North Carolina Congress and Senate.

Georgia Engelhardt, a 2021



Club Z Charlotte 2024 graduation

graduate, founded the Students Supporting Israel chapter at UNC Charlotte and has successfully opposed Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) resolutions adopted by the student government.

"We don't expect every Club

Z Charlotte teen to become a campus pro-Israel leader," says Kosinovsky. "We are proud of our graduates who are simply unwavering Jews and Zionists. Many of those we didn't think had the fire to become leaders have pleasantly surprised us."



Club Z provides ongoing support to its graduates through alumni networks and national conferences, fostering connections among Jewish youth across the country.

To learn more about Club Z Charlotte or to make a donation, visit clubz.org/locations/charlotte/. Registration for the 2024-2025 school year is now open. For questions, contact charlotte@clubz.org.

For excellent content about history, current affairs, and Jewish pride, follow Club Z on Instagram @ZionismForTeens.

Club Z Student Spotlight

By Liat Hubara

"Pushed to join, stayed by choice" would be a great way to summarize my path to being involved in Club Z. My parents have always been proud Zionists. My father is originally from Israel, and my mom has always been a vocal supporter of Israel. Although I knew what being a "Zionist" meant, I'll be honest and admit when my parents insisted I try out a "youth organization, focused on Israel education," I was not particularly running to do it.

I grew up in a very Jewish home, attended Jewish day school and synagogue regularly, but my family is not what I would call "religious." I consider my lifestyle to be very tradition-based when it comes to holidays and rituals; however I really did not have a knowledgeable background in Israeli history, or present day conflicts. I'm what anyone would consider a typical American teenager — I hang out with my friends, listen to music, and scroll social media sites. Being a young "activist" was never on my list of plans for myself, but in May 2021, I found myself attending a local rally in support of Israel, during its conflict at that time. I found myself wanting to understand the situation more in depth. Jewish (and Israeli) pride was running through my heart as I waved my blue and white flag and stood with others in support of our homeland. Unfortunately, as Zionists, we often find ourselves having to explain our position to others and I never wanted to find myself in a situ-

ation where I couldn't produce accurate, informed arguments in support of the country I hold so dear to my heart.

I started attending the local Club Z events, and eventually made my way to the national conference in January 2023, in Miami, Florida, where I made many connections with fellow young Zionists from around the country. From the moment I entered the hotel, every single person I encountered made me feel welcome, and embraced. I was not alone or ever facing "clique" situations, struggling

to fit in. It was there at the conference that I felt connected so deeply to other Jewish young people, more than ever before. I heard from speakers who were engaging, informative, and truly inspirational. A young Arab spoke to us, and explained his antisemitic upbringing, and his own journey to becoming an ally and supporter to the state of Israel. It was truly a life-changing experience for me, and opened up my eyes (and my interest) to why Zionist work is so very important.

(Continued on page 33)



Liat and the former Club Z president, Rachel Rubin, on October 8 at Club Z protest

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Charlotte FC's Liel Abada Will Play for Israel in the Paris Olympic Games

Israel to Compete in Soccer Tournament for First Time Since 1976

By Steve Goldberg

Charlotte FC's Israeli national team player Liel Abada is heading to Paris for the 2024 Olympic Games.

By making the semifinals of the 2023 UEFA European Under-21 Championship, where they lost to eventual champion England, the nation of less than ten million people has also qualified for the men's 2024 Paris Olympic soccer competition, returning for the first time since Montreal 1976.

"It's really big I think for me. It's a dream you know," said Abada, who scored the second goal in the Crown's 3-1 win at Cincinnati. "When you start playing football, you dream to play in the national team."

"I'm really (looking forward) to play in the Olympics. For the country as well. It's something big, something historic for Israel. Especially in this time and we are really waiting for this Olympics."

While the Games officially open on July 26, the soccer competition begins two days prior.



Photo: Steve Goldberg/SCS Media

Israel will face Mali at the Parc des Princes stadium, the home of perennial Ligue 1 champion Paris Saint-Germain on July 24. They are in Group D which also includes games against Paraguay

(July 27) also in Parc des Princes and Japan (July 30) at La Beaujoire Stadium in Nantes.

Abada will leave Charlotte FC after the away match against the Columbus Crew. Depending

upon Israel's progression in the tournament which ends with the final on August 10, Abada will miss at least three games, one in league play against Austin FC, and two in the Leagues Cup,

away to Philadelphia and home against Cruz Azul. In his first 14 games with Charlotte, he has started 12, scoring 4 goals with 2 assists.

A new generation powers Israel

While it doesn't ensure success, Israel defeated perennial soccer power Brazil in the quarterfinals of the FIFA Men's U-20 World Cup, eventually winning the bronze medal over South Korea 3-1. They also defeated Olympic first round foe Japan 2-1 in group play.

Unlike the basketball competition which has no restrictions on player selection, FIFA has deemed the Olympic tournament an Under-23 event to keep it from rivaling the World Cup in any way. Rules do allow for three players over 23 to be added to the roster.

This will be the nation's 18th appearance at the Summer Olympics, except for Moscow 1980 due to the United States-led boycott. The 18 players on the soccer team will be a large contingent (Continued on page 33)



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Paris Olympic Games

(Continued from page 32)

of the 88 Israeli athletes competing in these Games.

Of the 18, only five, including Abada, do not play in Israel. Daniel Peretz is a goalkeeper with FC Bayern Munich in Germany. Midfielder Omri Gandelman plays for Gent in the Belgian league and Oscar Gloukh for Red Bull Salzburg in Austria. Defender Stav Lemkin competes for Ukrainian side Shakhtar Donetsk.

“We want to do our best; we will go there, and we will do our best,” said Abada. “It’s something special for everyone.”

A potential talent pool for MLS

Abada is now one of just two Israeli-born players in MLS,

joining Tai Baribo, who was signed by the Philadelphia Union last year. The 26-year-old center forward also played for Maccabi Petah Tikva.

As to whether the Olympic tournament can be a showcase for other Israelis to come to MLS, Abada, who last played in the Scottish Premier League for Glasgow Celtic, said he’s been impressed with the competition here. “MLS is a really good league with really good players. In Israel we have so many good talents, young players and I think it would be good for them, but you know, I cannot control who comes here or not.”

As for himself, he says the move has been good. “I’m real-

ly happy to be here. I’ve gotten so much support from the staff, from the coaches, from players, from the fans, and you know, I feel like it’s home here so it’s a really good place for me.”

“I had like a tough year last season, but I’m starting to feel really good. Hopefully, we can continue to do what we do the best.”

Paris last hosted the Olympics in 1924, an event featured in the 1981 Academy Award winning film Chariots of Fire. A central character in the film was Harold Abrahams, the Jewish sprinter, and his struggle against prejudice to fit in with his upper crust English teammates.



Photo: Steve Goldberg/SCS Media

Club Z

(Continued from page 31)

After my first conference, I committed to learning more, and continuing to embrace Club Z. I attended local events, and kept gaining useful information and skills, in addition to making friends that shared my same interests. Fast forward to October 7, 2023, when Jews around the world stood still. I immediately leaned into my Club Z “family” and we planned for a community rally right away. In the following weeks and months, the national Club Z network has continued educating us, and keeping us informed during these mind-blowing times. In January 2024, I attended my second national conference, which once again impacted me on a level that is hard to explain in words. I walked away with more knowledge and passion than I could have gained on my own about Israel and its ongoing conflicts. I was even featured on the local

Los Angeles news, highlighting our reasons for standing in solidarity with Israel along the LA Interstate.

Since October 7, like many Jews, I have found myself in difficult and painful conversations with peers. It is because of the knowledge and confidence that I have gained from Club Z that I have been able to stand strong in solidarity with Israel, and defend each and every argument I encounter. One of the great things about Club Z is that if you believe in the state of Israel’s right to exist, it’s for you! You do not have to be religious, well versed in Israel history, or even a practicing Jew; you just have to be interested in learning truth, and making friends. I would encourage any young person, wanting to feel, understand, and do more, to get involved.



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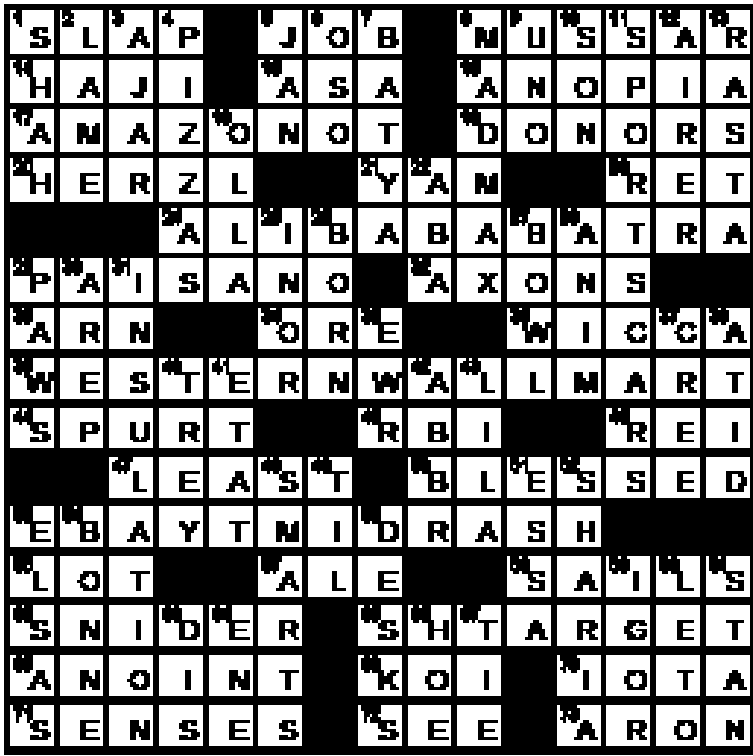
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(Puzzle on page 29)



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

Looking Back: Year 2006

Deborah Block Receives Hadassah Leadership Award

Debby Block of The Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah has been named a recipient of the Twentieth Annual Hadassah National Leadership Award. This award pays tribute to members whose leadership accomplishments within Hadassah and civic, educational and cultural organizations reflect Hadassah's dedication to the principles of the volunteer ethic. Award recipients are selected by their peers and represent a wide range of achievements.

"Leadership often means taking risks, being able to face criticism, developing vision and carrying through a project despite all complications," said June Walker, National President of Hadassah. "Anyone who has dared to be a leader understands the challenges. How delighted we are to welcome Debby into the Hadassah family as the recipient of the Hadassah National Leadership Award."

"Debby's past achievements have led to this well-deserved

honor, and we look forward to sharing in her future accomplishments," said Janice Bernstein, Past President of the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah.

Debby moved to Charlotte 13 years ago with her husband, David, and sons, Jeremy and Daniel, from Montreal, Canada. She began working as a teacher in the Charlotte Jewish Preschool, and eventually became the preschool director. Several years later she left that position to pursue a master's degree in Early Childhood Education. She was soon called upon to be the director of the Temple Israel Religious School, which she is currently doing.

Debby joined the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah Board of Directors as a Vice President of Education. She immersed herself in this position, and is responsible for getting the Lunch 'n' Learn monthly session going on a consistent basis. She and her co-VP, Roz Cooper held several Hadassah Educa-

tion day events. Debby saw a gap in the Charlotte Jewish Community; we had no Jewish Film Festival. With help from the members of the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah and other community members, Debby and co-Chair, Amy Krakovitz, got the First Annual Jewish Film Fest off the ground. Each year it has grown, and it will continue to grow under her direction. The Charlotte Jewish Community is grateful to Debby Block for all she is doing to promote Jewish learning in our town. The Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah is proud to recognize Debby by bestowing upon her, the National Leadership Award.

With 1,000 chapters in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, Hadassah is the largest women's Jewish and largest Zionist organization in the United States celebrating 94 years of service rooted in health care, education child rescue and rehabilitation.



Debby Block and Hadassah president, Heidi Rotberg, 2006

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