

## Standing Together: The Jewish Community Responds to Hurricane Helene Disaster

By Shira Firestone

When Hurricane Helene brought heavy rains, causing widespread flooding and landslides to Western North Carolina last month, it left a trail of destruction that transformed idyllic mountain communities into disaster zones overnight. Floodwaters submerged entire towns, severing lifelines to essential services. Thousands faced power outages projected to last weeks or even months, and the region faced a grim tally of lost lives and an agonizing search for those still missing. The storm's impact rippled far beyond the immediate area, creating a profound sense of urgency across the state to respond. The Jewish community of greater Charlotte mobilized swiftly, with both individuals and organizations stepping in to support our Western North Carolina neighbors.

The immediate concern was locating missing loved ones, a task complicated by widespread power outages, road closures, and disrupted communication. Rabbi



In an aerial view, a person rides past a destroyed church in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene flooding, Swannanoa, North Carolina, Oct. 6, 2024. (Mario Tama/Getty Images)

Bentzion Groner of Chabad of Charlotte learned of the devastation after turning his phone on Saturday night, following Shabbat. When he finally reached Rabbi Shaya Susskind of Chabad Asheville, he found him grave-

ly concerned about the welfare of their community members, fearing the worst with no way to communicate or know if they were safe.

Chabad mobilized quickly, reaching out to Matzil, a Jewish

relief organization based in New Jersey and Florida, which arrived within two days equipped with off-road vehicles, chainsaws, and satellite phones — a lifeline for a community cut off from essential services. Matzil's team, trained in

search and rescue, worked tirelessly to locate missing individuals. Chabad of Charlotte served as the command center for these efforts, as Asheville Chabad's internet access was initially down. Chabad of Charlotte hosted a website where people could enter the names and addresses of missing loved ones. The Matzil team, with its specialized equipment and expertise, navigated through blocked roads, located the missing, and reported back to anxious families — bringing a sense of relief during an incredibly uncertain time. "Not all of the stories of search and rescue had a happy ending, but we are relieved to report that all of the members of our community have been located and are safe," said Rabbi Groner. While the rescuers were on their way to Western North Carolina, Rabbi Groner had already filled a cargo van with bottled water, food, fresh wipes, and a generator. By 6 p.m. on Sunday, three hundred hot meals had been

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## Remembering October 7

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

More than a year has passed since the devastating attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023. In that time, the Jewish community in Charlotte has shown incredible

strength and unity, standing together in response to the tragedy. Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC) has played a vital role in guiding the community's efforts to support Israel and stand with Jewish people world-

wide. From vigils and fundraising to educational initiatives and artistic expressions, Federation has empowered our community to turn grief into action, fostering resilience along the way.

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, just two days later, Federation organized a vigil that drew an overwhelming number of participants from across Charlotte. The beyond-capacity crowd saw almost 1,000 people gathering to mourn and show solidarity with Israel. The vigil was a testament to our community's collective strength and desire to come together during a time of unimaginable grief.

Federation swiftly transitioned to leading a broader, coordinated response to support Israel. One of the key components of this response was the Israel Emergency Campaign, initiated by Jewish Federations of North America. Federation, having led similar efforts in past



The community gathered in grief and solidarity at a vigil in the aftermath of October 7.

crises, was particularly well-suited to quickly mobilize resources and facilitate the outpouring of support from the community. The campaign raised over \$854 million globally, with \$597 million already allocated for critical humanitarian aid and economic

recovery. Locally, our greater Charlotte community contributed more than \$2.6 million, reflecting incredible generosity and a steadfast commitment to supporting Israel in its time of need. On Federation's Israel Solidarity Mission in January, members of the Charlotte Jewish community had the opportunity to travel to Israel and see these dollars at work.

Amid the crisis, the rise of antisemitism in the U.S. and abroad added another layer of urgency to the community's response. Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) took a leading role in advocating for our community's needs and educating through the Outshine Hate initiative. A series of events, classes, and speakers were organized to promote understanding, combat antisemitism, and build resilience. Federation's leader-

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# Editor's Corner

## Reframing Aging: From Cultural Aversion to Honored Wisdom



Shira Firestone, Managing Editor CJN

November is National Family Caregivers Month. This observance, started by the Caregiver Action Network in 1994 and officially proclaimed by President Obama in 2013, aims to recognize the efforts of caregivers across the U.S., raise awareness about caregiving issues, and support those who provide essential care to family members.

In the last few years, my involvement in the care of my father and stepmother has taken an increasingly significant part of my time, energy, and attention. And yet, initially, I didn't think of myself as a caregiver. My father and stepmother don't live with me, and I associated caregiving with situations like the year-and-a-half I spent living with my mother during her final days. However, reading the

Jewish Family Services article, *Caring for the Caregiver*, in this issue (page 12) expanded my understanding. I realized that my frequent responses to my stepmother's falls, accompanying her to doctor's appointments, helping with medical decisions, arranging medication dispensing, and the countless hours spent researching and arranging appropriate assisted living care more than qualify as caregiving.

Caregiving today is far more complex than it used to be. With the rise in diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, more and more families are finding themselves navigating specialized care that often exceeds what can be managed at home. It's no longer just about providing companionship or basic assistance; caregivers are often tasked with coordinating specialized medical care, managing medications, and finding appropriate living arrangements that offer memory care or other specialized services. According to the Alzheimer's Association, about 6.7 million Americans aged 65 and older were living with Alzheimer's dementia in 2023, and that number is projected to nearly double by 2050. Similarly, nearly one million people in the U.S. are living with Parkinson's

disease, a figure that is expected to rise to 1.2 million by 2030.

As I've navigated these challenges with my own parents, I've become more attuned to the broader societal attitudes, and my own, toward aging, which further complicate caregiving. In our youth-obsessed culture, aging is often treated as something to avoid. The multi-billion-dollar anti-aging industry bombards us with promises to "turn back the clock," implying that looking younger is inherently better. Older adults are often invisible in the media, and when they do appear, they are often portrayed as comical, forgetful, or out of touch. Even our everyday language reflects this bias; we use phrases like "over the hill" or "past their prime," as though life's peak happens only in youth or middle age.

In our attention to the physical transitions of aging, we often fail to see beyond the surface, assuming that physical or cognitive decline defines the entirety of a person. In doing so, we dismiss the richness of their inner lives and, by extension, fail to provide the kind of care that truly respects their humanity.

During visits to care facilities for my parents, I was struck by a particular activity that I witnessed over and over. Frequently, the residents were gathered around a single table coloring. What bothered me was not the coloring; it was that the books they were using could have been chosen right out of a toy store. They were filled with pictures of elephants and clowns and other childish themes. While the activity was well-intentioned — most likely chosen for the wider lines that are easier to color within — it struck me as unintentionally infantilizing.

A quick online search revealed a wealth of coloring books designed specifically for seniors, featuring adult themes like intricate flowers, nature scenes, and nostalgic images, all with larger, more accessible lines. It seemed to me that it would be easy to acquire some of these as options. This small detail seemed to encapsulate a larger issue: in our attempts to care for our elders, are we inadvertently diminishing their dignity?

This disconnect is even more troubling when considering the disparity in care for those unable to afford private options. The conditions in some elder care facilities mirror society's broader devaluation of aging, where the quality of care depends too often on resources, rather than a fundamental respect for human dignity.

All of these elements — how we portray older adults, the language we use, and the systems we create for their care — contribute to a broader narrative that often fails to honor the full humanity of aging.

Jewish tradition, however, sees aging differently. In Hebrew, there's a beautiful phrase that describes old age: "זקנה מופלגת" (ziknah muflaget). It's a phrase that captures more than just the passing of years. "זקנה" (ziknah) means "old age" or "elderliness," and "מופלגת" (muflaget) comes from a root that suggests something that is "exceeding" or "distinguished." Together, the phrase implies a kind of advanced, distinguished presence — one that honors the wisdom and experience accumulated over a long life.

This reverence for age is further reflected in Jewish teachings. The Torah tells us to "rise before the aged and show def-

erence to the old" (Leviticus 19:32). This is not just about politeness, it is a mitzvah. It is about recognizing the wisdom and dignity that come with age. The concept of "l'dor v'dor" — from generation to generation — suggests that each generation has something valuable to pass on to the next, directly countering the idea that aging somehow diminishes a person's worth. The Talmud emphasizes that this mitzvah applies regardless of the elder's status — whether they are wealthy or poor, learned or unlearned — because the experience that comes with age is inherently valuable.

This perspective offers a challenge to the way we currently view aging in our culture. It invites us to reconsider not just how we care for our elders, but how we see them. Are we viewing them through a lens of diminished relevance, or are we recognizing the richness of their wisdom and the value of their lived experiences?

As we honor caregivers this month, let's also take the time to honor those for whom we offer that care — those living embodiments of "מופלגת זקנה," carrying within them the stories and wisdom of a lifetime. By reframing how we see aging as a stage of life rich with meaning and deserving the utmost respect rather than through the lens of decline, we have a chance to transform not only how we care for elders, but also how we approach our own aging. In doing so, we rediscover the beauty and potential present in every stage of life.

*Shira*

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- November 1 — 6:10 p.m.
- November 8 — 5:04 p.m.
- November 15 — 4:59 p.m.
- November 22 — 4:56 p.m.
- November 29 — 4:54 p.m.



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# NextGen Kicks Off New Year With Charlotte FC



NextGen participants with Liel Abada and Idan Toklomati (Inset photo credit Steve Goldberg/SCS Media)

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte's NextGen; a platform for young Jewish adults ages 20-45 aimed at building social, professional, and volunteer opportunities within the greater Charlotte community; recently hosted a thrilling afternoon at Bank of America Stadium. In partnership with Temple Beth El, Levine JCC, and Charlotte FC, the event brought together more

than 100 people to support Israeli soccer player Liel Abada and strengthen community bonds.

The day kicked off with a pre-match Sip & Mingle in Champions Village, where attendees gathered to enjoy drinks and conversations with new friends. This event was a strong start to NextGen's upcoming year of programming, showcasing the group's commitment to making Charlotte a welcoming home for Jews, whether born-and-raised

locals or newcomers.

With NextGen in the crowd roaring with support, Charlotte FC came alive on the field, shaking off a three-game losing streak with Liel Abada in the lead. Abada ignited the momentum by scoring the team's first goal, beginning an offensive surge that propelled Charlotte FC to a decisive 4-0 victory — more goals than their previous four games combined! Abada finished the game with one goal, three shots

on goal, and five shots total.

After the match, attendees who had purchased their pre-match tickets with NextGen were treated to a post-game VIP experience, taking to the field after the game for a group photo with Liel Abada and Charlotte FC's newest player, Idan Toklomati from Netanya, Israel, offering a unique chance to meet and chat with some of the most exciting Israeli athletes in action today.

Elina Mazo, director of donor engagement, welcomed everyone to the event, emphasizing its purpose. "This gathering is all about creating opportunities for us, as young adults, to come to-

gether and strengthen our bonds with the community. Now it's our turn to step up and take responsibility for the future of the Jewish community."

This event highlighted NextGen's emphasis on connecting socially, giving back, and creating leaders within the Jewish community. The gathering wasn't just about cheering on a soccer team — it was about coming together to share a meaningful experience and strengthen the bonds that make greater Charlotte's Jewish community thrive.



## October 7

(Continued from front page)

ship empowered members of our community to learn, engage, and respond thoughtfully to the growing challenges we faced both locally and globally.

Art became another powerful way for our community to process grief and foster connection. Shortly after the attacks, in observance of Chanukah, the "Empty Tables" installation in Uptown Charlotte offered a poignant reminder of the lives lost. Tables with empty settings representing the hostages missing from their families' Chanukah celebrations became a visual representation that invited the greater Charlotte community at large to reflect on the reality of those so violently taken on October 7.

Soon after, the "Calaniot" project and exhibition emerged as a deeply moving tribute. Community members came together to create hundreds of clay flowers. The Calaniot, the national flower of Israel, represents resilience, as they bloom even in the harshest environments. Initially displayed at Shalom Park and later moved to the Hebrew Cemetery, this exhibit became a lasting memorial, honoring the lives lost and reflecting Israel's enduring strength in the face of tragedy.

Building on these artistic expressions, Federation, in collaboration with our Partnership2Gether region in Hadera, Israel, helped bring the "Hinnen" exhibition to life. Featuring memorial pieces by 50 artists from both the U.S. and Israel, this project captured the memories of those tragically killed. Ten of these artworks remain on display at the Speizman Gallery wall, located outside of Gorelick Hall at Shalom Park. Two of these pieces were created by local Charlotte artists Mike Wirth and Tara Spil. This exhibition provides a shared space for reflection and healing, highlighting the deep bond between our local community and our partners in Israel.

Now, a full year has passed since the attacks, and we came together once more to commemorate the one-year anniversary on October 7, 2024. With hundreds again in attendance, we mourned the lives lost, prayed for the hostages still being held captive, and renewed our commitment to standing with Israel.

As we move forward, Federation continues to prioritize ongoing initiatives like that promote safety, education, and unity. Through LiveSecure, Federation

helps to provide vital security training and resources for Jewish communal spaces in Charlotte, ensuring that our community can gather safely and confidently. Security responses are coordinated with local law enforcement, the Secure Community Network (SCN), and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Federation's advocacy work, led by the JCRC, remains critical in combatting antisemitism at its root through legislative reform and educational programming.

Reflecting on the past year, it's clear that our community's response has been rooted in resilience, unity, and action. While Federation led the way, it has always been the collective spirit of our community that has motivated these efforts. From raising millions for Israel to participating in vigils, educational programs, and advocacy efforts, each of us has played a role in shaping this response. We continue to remain united in our commitment to building a stronger, safer, and more connected Jewish future — here in greater Charlotte and in support of our extended family in Israel.

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# Continued Advocacy Efforts of Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

Since its reintroduction to our community in 2023, the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) has made significant strides in its mission to promote the interests of the local Jewish community through advocacy, education, and civic engagement. As the legislative and public affairs arm of Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC), the JCRC plays a pivotal role in addressing key issues affecting Jewish people today, including combating antisemitism, fostering interfaith dialogue, advocating for legislation, and more.

### Legislative Successes and Continued Advocacy

One of the JCRC's most significant accomplishments this year has been its advocacy for the SHALOM Act in North Carolina. The act codifies the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, providing government institutions and public schools across the state with clear guidelines on identifying and addressing antisemitism. The JCRC partnered



Members of the JCRC participated in a nationwide organized fly-in to Washington D.C. to advocate for the Antisemitism Awareness Act and the needs of our Jewish community.

with other Jewish organizations across North Carolina, such as the Jewish Federation of Greater Raleigh, the Greensboro Jewish Federation, Jewish For Good, Hadassah, Voice4Israel, and

more to ensure the passage of this vital legislation, which was signed into law July 1.

The JCRC's legislative efforts extend beyond the state level. The Antisemitism Awareness

Act, which would codify the IHRA definition of antisemitism at the federal level, passed its first stage in the House of Representatives with a decisive 320 to 91 vote in May. In February, the

JCRC participated in a national fly-in to Washington, D.C. to advocate for this act, and is now working diligently alongside national partners to advocate for its passage in the Senate.

### Combating Local Antisemitism

Locally, the JCRC remains vigilant in its efforts to combat antisemitism. Through the Outshine Hate initiative, educational workshops, training, and programming, community members are better able to recognize and address antisemitism effectively.

Recent incidents of antisemitic activity in Charlotte have been reported to and addressed by Federation and the JCRC, who work closely with local and national partners to ensure that each incident is handled effectively. To streamline this process, an online reporting tool is now available through the JCRC Action Dispatch, as well as on JFGC's e-newsletter and website, making it easier for community members to report and seek assistance in addressing antisemitic incidents.

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Honoring Sue Worrel



November 17 | 5 PM | Temple Beth El

Please join us as we pay tribute to Sue Worrel for her leadership of Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.



Register Here



Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

# Sue's Bookshelf



By Sue Littauer

November is a special time of year when all Americans are reminded to give thanks for our blessings. We gather around the Thanksgiving table, and, in many families, we go around and say what we're thankful for. If we are very fortunate, we can offer thanks for the warmth and love that surrounds us and our family.

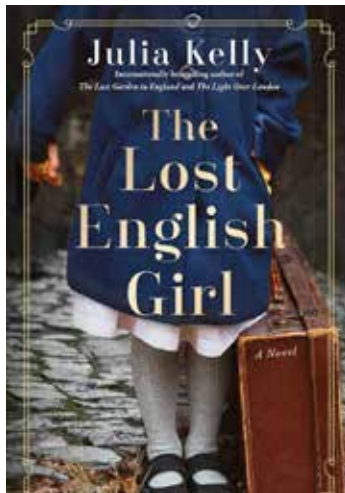
It won't come as a surprise to any reader that "family" is a common theme in many of the books we read, and that the meaning of family varies from book to book. Some common statements about family that

apply to the books I'm recommending this month:

- Blood is thicker than water.
- Family comes first.
- Families come in a variety of shapes and sizes.
- True family isn't necessarily biological.
- Sometimes, family ties need to be broken.
- Families can nurture and sustain or ruin and destroy.

In September, our Center for Jewish Education (CJE) Book Club welcomed author Laurie Frankel, who spoke with us on Zoom about her book "Family Family." The book addresses various issues related to adoption and presents a beautiful example of an unconventional family that stands together in solidarity, challenging the distinction between "real" (biological) and adopted family members.

In "Welcome Home, Caroline Kline," the debut novel of author Courtney Preiss, a sophisticated young woman leaves New York City to return to her hometown in New Jersey to care for her dad while he recuperates from an injury. Little does she know that she'll be caught up in the hokey small-town life that gives her



dad's life meaning.

"The Lost English Girl" by Julia Kelly is an emotionally complicated historical fiction about what mothers will do out of love for their children. The best and worst family scenarios come to light in this fast-paced epic saga about love, motherhood, and betrayal set against the backdrop of World War II.

Elizabeth Graver's fifth novel, "Kantika," is the story of a Sephardic Jewish family's emigration from early 20th century Constantinople, to Barcelona, Havana, and New York. "This

exquisitely imagined family saga spans cultures and continents." (New York Times, Editor's Choice & 100 Notable Books of 2023).

"Sandwich" by Catherine Newman is a contemporary novel about a woman coming to grips with middle age. She is literally sandwiched between two generations of family — her aging parents and her young adult children. From Amazon: "A moving, hilarious story of a family summer vacation full of secrets, lunch, and learning to let go."

We can all find ourselves and our family's stories in the books that we read. We can laugh and cry along with the characters. We can learn and grow from the sto-

ries they tell, and, hopefully, we can take the time to appreciate, and to be tolerant, forgiving, and compassionate with our family members.

Please join us on Wednesday, Nov. 13, when our CJE Book Club will discuss "Leaving Eastern Parkway," a novel by Matthew Daub. We'll be meeting in Room A110 at 10:30 a.m. at Shalom Park. For more information, please contact sueb.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org Oh, and you guessed it — "family" figures prominently in this novel.



## JCRC

(Continued from page 4)

### JCRC Action Dispatch

In June of this year, the JCRC launched the JCRC Action Dispatch, a bi-weekly newsletter aimed at keeping the community informed and engaged and offering ways to make a difference. Each edition covers pressing topics such as combating antisemitism in schools, updates on the ongoing war in Israel, and enacting legislative reform. The newsletter's primary goal is to provide timely resources and actionable steps for community members to address the challenges and opportunities facing the Jewish community.

### Growth and Restructuring of the JCRC

In recent months, the JCRC has grown significantly. Under the leadership of Steve Menaker, who continues to serve as chair, the council has expanded its membership and restructured into five subcommittees: education, government/political, interfaith/intergroup, media/communications, and business/corporate. This structure allows the JCRC to address a wider range of issues and engage more deeply with various segments of the community. Additional-

ly, JFGC has appointed Douglas Greene as their new JCRC director, allowing for greater connection and communication between the council and its parent organization.

### Looking Ahead: Future Plans for 2025

As the JCRC continues to grow, plans are already underway for 2025. The council is planning a series of events and initiatives including an interfaith seder, programming for Jewish American Heritage Month, and speaker events like the Unpacking Israel Masterclass Series and Project Shema, all designed to foster dialogue and understanding within the greater Charlotte community.

Federation's JCRC's ongoing work is a testament to the resilience and commitment of the greater Charlotte Jewish community. As it continues to address the challenges facing the community today, the JCRC remains a crucial advocate for the values and interests of Jewish people both locally and beyond.



Outshine Hate co-chairs Emily Zimmern (right) and Karen Spiegler (left) with Haviv Rettig Gur, guest speaker for the JCRC's first program in the Unpacking Israel Masterclass Series

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# “What’s the Buzz?” Celebrates the Sweet Start of the High Holiday Season

By Jessica Goldfarb, JFGC Communications Specialist

Families with young children gathered on September 8 at Squirrel Lake park for the “What’s the Buzz?” event, celebrating and preparing for Rosh HaShanah through interactive activities centered around bees and honey. Hosted through the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte’s Center for Jewish Education’s PJ Library program, this mini-festival was the perfect way to buzz into the High Holiday season with a fun-filled af-

ternoon of learning and play.

The highlight of the day was a captivating honeybee demonstration by the beekeeper and owner of local Paddington Honey, Robert Suydan. Families had the unique opportunity to get up close with the hive, learn about the fascinating lives of honeybees, and, of course, sample some delicious honey! Children were buzzing with excitement as they asked questions and learned how bees make the sweet treat traditionally enjoyed during Rosh HaShanah celebrations.

In addition to the bee demo, kids got creative with a variety of crafts. They made honeybee hats, bookmarks, and even their own honeybee bottles to take home and use as a honey jar. Face painting added an artistic touch, and the park’s playground offered plenty of space for everyone to run and play. At the end of the event, High Holiday gift bags helped bring the spirit of the season home. Thank you to the following organizations who helped fill these bags with special gifts: Levine JCC, Charlotte Jewish Preschool, Jewish Preschool on Sardis, Charlotte Jewish Day School, Temple Beth El, Temple Israel, Jewish Council at Lake Norman, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and PJ Library.

Rosh HaShanah, which marks the beginning of the Jewish new year, is a time for reflection, renewal, and wishing for a “sweet” new year ahead. “What’s the Buzz?” provided a wonderful opportunity for families to connect with the community and prepare for this meaningful holiday in a joyous and educational way.



Getting a close up view of a hive



Children and families learned about bees, their hives, and how they make honey.

“Thank you to everyone who joined us for ‘What’s the Buzz?’ It was wonderful to see so many families come together to celebrate and play together,” said Megan Harkavy, director of education and engagement. “We hope you’ll join us for our upcoming events. There’s always something exciting happening at PJ Library!”

PJ Library regularly hosts fun and engaging events, from holiday celebrations to weekly story times and more! With Megan

Harkavy and Sara Solar, youth and family coordinator, leading the way, families can always look forward to meaningful and enriching experiences throughout the year.



# A MORNING WITH MIRI



## PJ Library's Jewish Book Month Celebration with author Miri Leshem-Pelly

Come join us for a morning story time and craft! Miri Leshem-Pelly will read her book *A FEATHER, A PEBBLE, A SHELL* and speak about the beauty of Israel.

After the story, using oil pastels and colored paper, we will be making a hoop, the national bird of Israel. This amazing bird can open and close its feathered crown! How lucky we are to have Miri joining us for this morning of fun!

About Miri: Miri Leshem-Pelly is an author and illustrator of children’s books. She loves to use her imagination to create new worlds out of words and color. She has published 17 children’s books to date. She lives in Hadera, Israel with her husband and two children.

**Date: Sunday, November 10**

**Time: 10:00am – 11:30am**

**Place: Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park**

Miri Leshem-Pelly's books will be available for purchase.

Registration required

All craft supplies will be provided.

Scan QR code to Register





FEDERATION IMPACT: BENEFICIARY AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

BBYO

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 a vast network spanning hundreds of chapters across North America and around the world, BBYO (B'nai B'rith Youth Organization) serves nearly 70,000 Jewish teens annually. BBYO's core mission is to foster an inclusive environment where teens can connect, grow, and develop leadership skills while deepening their connection to their Jewish identity. Locally, our Charlotte BBYO chapters consists of almost 200 teens.

"BBYO operates with the mission of engaging more Jewish teens and offering more meaningful Jewish experienc-



es," says Zack Tabachnikoff, associate director for Eastern Region BBYO. "Here in Charlotte, we are home to four thriving chapters: two Aleph (male-identifying teens) chapters and two BBG (female-identifying teens) chapters. We meet every Tuesday night at the Levine JCC from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and we're always happy to welcome new friends in grades 8 through 12!"

Through these regular meetings and local events, which range from fun social activities like bowling and bonfires to thought-provoking discussions on social justice and leadership, BBYO empowers its members to explore their Jewish heritage while building a strong, supportive community.

By encouraging meaningful engagement with Jewish values and fostering a sense of communal responsibility, BBYO's efforts align seamlessly with Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte's mission to nurture Jewish identity and promote educational experiences. Federation proudly supports BBYO, recognizing its critical role in shaping the next generation of Jewish leaders.



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Purchase pizza from Vita da Pizza Food Truck, 5-7 PM

Community members are also welcome to bring their own favorite board games to share at the event.

Register:



Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte



NextGen



# Disaster Relief

(Continued from front page)

served, providing much-needed relief to those in need.

Meanwhile, across Charlotte, synagogues and Jewish organizations began independently gathering essential supplies like water, food, and toiletries to support those affected by the disaster. Although many were eager to help, state and local officials encouraged those offering aid to work through official channels to ensure that relief efforts were coordinated and reached those in need efficiently and safely.

One of those channels was Myers Park United Methodist Church. Temple Beth El, drawing on its long-standing relationship with the church, contributed an entire pallet of water to their relief efforts. Thousands of pounds of water were delivered to affected areas, some of which reached Congregation Beth HaTephila in Asheville, where it helped support their outdoor Rosh HaShanah service.

As formal relief efforts concentrated on getting supplies to the hardest-hit areas, local community members in Charlotte turned their focus to supporting those displaced by the storm. Synagogues opened their doors for High Holiday services, providing not only spiritual comfort but also much-needed stability during uncertain times. Community members offered their homes

to evacuees — some for a few days, others for much longer.

While supplies were and continue to be essential for many cut-off communities, it was clear from the outset that long-term recovery would require sustained financial support. Financial resources could be directed to those organizations best positioned to assess and address the evolving needs on the ground.

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC) was quick to respond. Federation is uniquely positioned to provide an avenue for donations, drawing on its experience from past crises, including establishing a COVID Relief Fund to support those impacted by the pandemic and the Israel Emergency Fund after the attack by Hamas on Israel last year. Federation CEO Adam Kolett called an emergency meeting on Sunday night, after the storm had barely passed, convening leaders from Jewish organizations in Charlotte to begin assessing needs and responding as a community. One of the first actions taken was the establishment of an Emergency Relief Fund, providing a unified channel for financial support. By Monday morning, this fund was operational, and to date, over \$125,000 has been raised.

JFGC has pulled together an ad-hoc committee that includes representatives from various local

agencies to help assess ongoing needs and make recommendations for how best to allocate the funds raised through the Emergency Relief Fund. Due to proximity and relationships in the impacted areas, Federation remains in close contact with local volunteer and professional leaders, offering support and assessing the most pressing needs.

Additionally, JFGC is serving as a close partner to the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) emergency rebuilding efforts. The JFNA emergency committee has already secured equipment and provided grants totaling \$200,000. From these grants, each agency and synagogue will have discretionary funds to distribute to individual Jewish families as needed. In addition, JFNA provided 11 Starlink internet packs to ensure connectivity and allow each institution to continue operations. Each organization received at least one portable toilet, enabling them to resume functional operations. Grants have also been made available for portable air conditioning units and generators where needed. These funds are made possible through JFNA's Hurricane Relief Fund, launched after Hurricane Helene and now includes support for those impacted by Hurricane Milton.

JFGC is also focused on coor-

dinating volunteer efforts. It has identified vetted volunteer opportunities, including working with North Carolina Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NC VOAD), a consortium of nonprofits managing a warehouse in the Charlotte-Mooresville area that needs daily volunteers, and NECHAMA, which will organize volunteers on behalf of the Jewish community to support Western North Carolina clean-up efforts. Federation is serving as the central resource, consolidating information on its website so that community members have a single, reliable source for updates and opportunities to help. As larger group opportunities become available, Federation plans to organize day trips for up to 50 volunteers, emphasizing their role in supporting both immediate and long-term recovery in Western North Carolina.

Kolett says, "Federation exists in order to respond to our community's most acute needs, and I am proud of how Jewish Charlotte jumped into action and remains committed to relief efforts. We all love our mountains, and being involved in their rehabilitation is not only our Jewish imperative, but it is something we will remember forever."

Jewish Family Services (JFS) and the Levine Jewish Community Center (LJCC) are just two ex-

amples of organizations staying in close contact with their counterparts in Western North Carolina, helping to communicate ongoing needs. Additionally, both JFS and LJCC are making plans to send staff from Charlotte to provide direct support to their peer agencies when the time is right. While many organizations have already stepped up, the efforts mentioned here represent just a portion of the larger, ongoing response.

At the heart of these efforts, however, is the entire Charlotte community. Through the collective actions of individuals — donating supplies, contributing to the relief fund, and offering their support — we have been able to respond to this disaster. This crisis is deeply personal, as so many of us have a special connection to the mountains and the people of Western North Carolina.

The work is far from over. As immediate needs are addressed, the focus is shifting toward long-term stability and resilience for those affected by Hurricane Helene. This marks the beginning of a complex journey to rebuild lives and communities. With deep-rooted connections to Western North Carolina and a steadfast commitment to its recovery, the Jewish community of Charlotte will continue to stand by those impacted by this unprecedented disaster.

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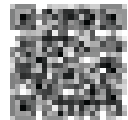
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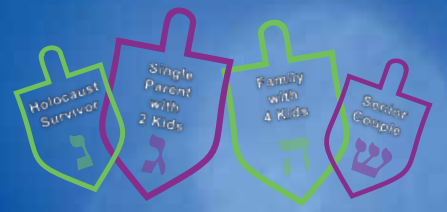
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A FCJC PROGRAM

Women's News

# An Innovative Local Fundraiser for the Israel at War: Hadassah Heals Campaign

By Aileen Greenberg-Kriner

Laurie Sheinhaus, Hadassah Charlotte Metro membership vice president, has been making beaded bracelets since January. Every bracelet is different, but they have one thing in common — each bracelet includes the name of one of the hostages held in Gaza. As of September, Laurie has collected and sent more than \$1,100 to Hadassah's Israel at War: Hadassah Heals campaign. Donations to the national campaign have helped the Hadassah Medical Organization in Israel build two secure, state-of-the-art underground facilities, launch an emergency psychiatric emergency service, and expand emergency and ICU treatment capacity.

"After October 7, I was donating to many causes to help Israel," explains Sheinhaus, "but I wanted to do something through Hadassah. I had to think of something to remember the hostages and keep their names alive. The situation pulls on my heart every day." Laurie came up with the idea of making beaded bracelets, like the Swiftie bracelets popularized by Taylor Swift fans.

"Every time I made a bracelet, I read about the person. When you create a bracelet and look at the person's face, it's not just

making a bracelet. I imagine kids dancing and singing at a music festival, people living and working, their hobbies and passions. No one's family should have to go through that. It's gut-wrenching to me."

Laurie displayed her first bracelets at Hadassah Charlotte's Board Installation in January. Since then, she has brought them to Hadassah Wine & Schmooze evenings at Vintner Wine Market, the community Purim Carnival, Celebrate the TaTas Painting Days, and other events. Instead of selling the bracelets for a set price, she asks for a donation of your choice.

Laurie presented a bracelet with the name of hostage Avinatan Or to his mother when she spoke at Chabad earlier this year. Laurie has made matching mother/daughter bracelets and others that say Am Yisrael Chai. She said, "It's nice when you go to an event and all your friends are wearing their bracelets."

Amy Albertson is a Chinese-American Jew and one of Hadassah's 2023 "18 American Zionist Women You Should Know." Amy, a Jewish advocate and educator with 38,000 Instagram followers, recently listed "5 Ways to Make Sure the Hostages Are Not Forgotten." One of those is to "wear their names."



Proceeds from sales of bracelets bearing the names of hostages benefits Hadassah's Israel at War: Hadassah Heals campaign

Wearing one of Laurie's bracelets is the perfect way to do that.

To make a donation for Hadassah Heals hostage bracelets, send a check to Hadassah Charlotte Metro, 5007 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28226. Include your phone number so Laurie can arrange to meet you when the bracelets are ready. To make other payment arrangements, email HadassahCLT@gmail.com or call (980) 553-1880.

## Autumn Events

### The Reveal

Buy your tickets now for our big fundraiser of the year, the Celebrate the TaTas Reveal Gala, on Saturday, Nov. 16 at 6:30 p.m. The celebratory event, with emcee Patti Mercer, includes dinner with wine/beer (plus a special event cocktail for an extra charge), live and silent auctions, wine pull, and most importantly, the opportunity to honor the amazing women and men in our community engaged in the breast cancer fight. All profits will be donated to cancer research at the Hadassah Medical Organization. Purchase tickets on the Hadassah Charlotte website. Questions? Email Cindy at celebratethetatas.Hadassah@gmail.com.

### Hadassah Directory

Sign up for the 2025-26 Hadassah Charlotte Metro Area Jewish Community Directory. Proceeds go toward funding a pediatric emergency bay at Hadassah's Mt. Scopus Hospital. There is no charge to include your personal listing. You can purchase a printed or online directory or advertise your business. Even if you were listed in previous directories, you must sign up again. Visit our www.hadassahcltevents.org for more information.

### Game Time

It's almost time to order your 2025 Mah Jongg card. Watch for details.

### Monthly Events

Vote and then head to Hadassah Wine & Schmooze on Tues-

day, Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. at Vintner Wine Market in the Arboretum Shopping Center.

*Short Story Discussion Group* meets on Zoom on Nov. 8 at 11:45 a.m. to talk about "The Wedding Photographer's Assistant" by Ilana Stanger-Ross from "Frankly Feminist: Short Stories by Jewish Women."

Join *Hadassah BookTalk* on Tuesday, Nov. 19 at 7 p.m. on Zoom to discuss "Have You Seen Luis Velez?" by Catherine Ryan Hyde.

The next *Hadassah CLT Metro Board meeting* is Monday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. on Zoom.

### Helpful Info

To learn about membership, contact Laurie Sheinhaus at the phone number or email below, or attend one of our events.

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

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# National Caregiver Month: Caring for the Caregiver

By Sheryl Gerrard, MA, GC-G, CDP, JFS Senior Engagement Manager

As Rosalynn Carter famously stated, there are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers. Her point was that caregiving is a nearly universal experience. That's why every November we celebrate National Family Caregivers Month. While caregivers should be celebrated every day, this is a time to recognize and honor caregivers nationally, raise awareness around caregiving issues, educate communities, and work to increase support for our nation's caregivers.

In the United States today, it is estimated that 53 million adults are providing care for a spouse, elderly parent or relative, or a child with disabilities. Many of us provide support or assistance to family members or friends without identifying ourselves as caregivers. We may feel we are just fulfilling the obligations of our role as spouses, adult children, parents, or considerate neighbors. Recognizing that one is a caregiver can be a first step towards reducing the

stressors often associated with this life situation. You may be a family caregiver if you are the person who buys groceries, cooks, cleans the house, or does laundry for someone who needs some help with these things. A caregiver is also the person who helps a friend or family member get dressed, take a shower, or take their medication properly. Or even the person who makes medical appointments, communicates with a loved one's doctors, or drives them to appointments and to run errands. All of these situations describe "caregiving," and if you are doing any or all of these things, you may be feeling drained, exhausted, or burned out.

Often, the caregiving journey is more of a marathon than a sprint and it's important that you equip yourself for the long haul. Whether you are just starting out on your caregiving journey or you've been at it for a while, there are some tools that can be useful along the way.

- Stay on top of your own health and well-being: often, caregivers put their own needs aside while focusing on their loved ones and this can contribute to both physical and emotional issues. Make time to schedule

your own medical appointments, exercise, and participate in self-care activities so you can feel your best during difficult times.

- Let others assist: if someone offers to help, let them, and they will be encouraged to offer again in the future. Remember that a marathon runner gets support and encouragement from others, not to mention drinks and snacks along the way! When you feel like you're on your own, reach out to a friend or family member to help you with some tasks so you can refuel.

- Join a group: there are many options for both in-person and virtual support and educational groups. By participating in a support group, you can decrease your feelings of isolation and learn from others in similar situations. Jewish Family Services offers several programs for family caregivers, such as a Parkinson's Family Caregiver group and our quarterly Caregiver Speaker Series, as well as Caregiver Thrive Learn Connect (TLC), a 6-session psychoeducational group to teach practical coping skills and stress reduction techniques. Check our website for more information.

- Keep humor in your life: laughter really is the best med-

icine. Watch a silly movie or read the comics and find things to laugh about with the loved one in your care as well; everyone needs playfulness in their day.

- Seek professional guidance when needed: whether you're looking for supportive counseling for yourself or resources to help you care for your loved one, reach out to Jewish Family Services to receive knowledgeable direction to make your journey more manageable. Our Counseling Services can help you deal with life's challenges and our Senior Engagement team has a wealth of information to support you as a caregiver.

- Find the joy in caregiving: having the opportunity to provide care for someone who cared for you can be rewarding and gratifying. Looking at your situation with a positive perspective can provide a sense of fulfillment and build self-confidence as you develop the skills needed to be a successful caregiver.

Jewish Family Services recognizes and understands the stresses family caregivers experience, and offers several different supportive services. Caregiver Thrive Learn Connect (TLC) is one of these programs. JFS is one of only a small handful of

professionals with master-level training in this science-backed therapeutic training. This program is a six-week series that provides practical tools, online resources, and participant materials. Participants develop individual action plans each week and build skills and tools to manage stress, depression, frustration, self-care, and isolation. Results of this program show caregivers report a significant reduction in depressive symptoms and increases in self-confidence in relation to caregiving. Other caregiver support services include support groups and connections to resources.

If you or someone you know is feeling stressed or overwhelmed by managing a loved one's care and has questions or would benefit from support, please contact us at (704) 364-6594 or [jfscharlotte.org](http://jfscharlotte.org).



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# The Power of Gratitude: Boosting Your Mental Health

By Howard Olshansky, JFS Executive Director

November is here, bringing with it the holiday season and, of course, Thanksgiving. It's a time when we often reflect on what we're thankful for, with decorations reminding us to be grateful. In fact, November is also National Gratitude Month. But did you know that practicing gratitude can improve your mental health?

According to the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, research shows that gratitude can reduce stress and anxiety. Studies have found that a single act of thoughtful gratitude can lead to a 10% increase in happiness and a 35% decrease in depressive symptoms. However, the benefits are short-lived unless gratitude is practiced regularly. Over time, gratitude builds resilience by helping us reframe difficult situations, focus on the support received, and minimize feelings of helplessness.

Regular gratitude practice lowers stress and enhances emotional resilience, allowing us to bounce back from adversity. Acknowledging the positive aspects of life helps maintain a balanced perspective during challenging times. Gratitude also strengthens relationships by fostering appreciation and reinforcing social connections, which are critical during tough moments.

Gratitude can even improve sleep. Focusing on positive thoughts before bed—such as what you're thankful for—reduces the tendency to dwell on worries. This promotes relaxation, leading to quicker, more restorative sleep. A study from the University of Manchester found that participants who kept a gratitude journal before bed experienced better sleep quality, as gratitude helps reduce negative thoughts and makes it easier to relax.



Self-esteem also benefits from gratitude. By focusing on what we have, rather than what we lack, we develop a more positive self-image. Shifting focus from comparing ourselves to others toward appreciating our achievements and strengths can reduce feelings of inadequacy and boost self-worth. A study in The Journal of Positive Psychology found that regular gratitude practice leads to higher self-esteem and lower rates of depression.

Fortunately, gratitude can be cultivated no matter where you're starting. Here are some simple ways to incorporate it into your daily life:

- **Keep a Gratitude Journal:** Write down three things you're thankful for each day to shift your focus from the negative to the positive.

- **Express Appreciation:** Thank the people in your life—whether through a note, text, or conversation—strengthening your relationships.

- **Mindful Reflection:** Take a few minutes each day to reflect on what went well, no matter

how small, to keep your attention on life's positives.

- **Gratitude Meditation:** Spend a few moments reflecting on a person or experience that brings you joy.

So, when you sit down at the Thanksgiving table to express your thanks, consider making gratitude a daily habit. You might just find that your gratitude leads to a calmer, less stressful life.



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## Jewish Family Services Volunteers & Donors September 2024

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challah: Leah Levin; Baking honey cake: Hadassah; donating challah: Ron Nadal and Golden Grains, Temple Israel men's club; donating meals Shai Fargian and Yafo Kitchen; assembling Rosh HaShanah bags: Ballantyne Jewish Center 6th grade Hebrew School; making Rosh HaShanah cards and apple collection: Charlotte Jewish Day School; delivering "taste of the holiday" Rosh HaShanah bags: Jessica Alfandary, Bonnie Bonomo, Charlotte Jewish Day School, Steffanie Cohen, Erica Davison, Sarah Flynn, Jamie Fram, Anna Geyfman, Hannah Golanski, Richard Goldsmith, Jodie Joseph, Rikki Kinitzky, Etti Krause, Miriam Levenson, Ellen Myers, Rachel Neshner, Noah Pliss, Barbara Rein, Ana Silverstein, Harry Sparks, Lauren Stark, Alan Sussman, Beth and David Thrope

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## Jewish Family Services Tributes September 2024

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# Bal Tashchit and Beyond: The Environmental Impacts of Fast Fashion — A Hidden Crisis

By Lisa Shpritz

Fast fashion has transformed the way we consume clothing. Its business model focuses on rapidly producing trendy, inexpensive garments to meet high consumer demand. Recently, brands have been pumping out new collections at breakneck speeds. However, while this has made fashion more accessible, the environmental toll of fast fashion is staggering. From resource depletion to pollution, fast fashion's environmental impacts are severe, unsustainable, and growing worse by the day.

One of the most significant environmental concerns associated with fast fashion is its water footprint. The textile industry is one of the largest consumers of water worldwide, and fast fashion amplifies this problem. For instance, producing a single cotton t-shirt can require as much as 700 gallons of water, enough to meet the drinking needs of one person for nearly three years.

In addition to consumption, water pollution is another serious issue. Textile dyeing, which gives clothes their vibrant colors, is a major source of water

pollution. The World Bank estimates that 20% of industrial water pollution globally comes from the treatment and dyeing of textiles. Many factories in developing countries release untreated wastewater directly into rivers and oceans. This contamination has a devastating impact on local ecosystems, harming aquatic life and the communities that rely on these water sources.

The fashion industry is a significant contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the fashion industry produces around 10% of global emissions — more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined. A significant reason for this high level of emissions is the industry's reliance on synthetic fibers like polyester, derived from fossil fuels.

Moreover, the fast-paced production cycles of fast fashion brands lead to a throwaway culture, where consumers frequently discard clothing after just a few wears. The average consumer bought 60% more clothing in 2014 than in 2000 but kept each item for half as long. These dis-



carded clothes often end up in landfills or incinerators, further increasing the industry's carbon footprint.

Fast fashion's emphasis on cheap, disposable clothing results in massive textile waste. It's estimated that 92 million tons of textile waste are generated globally each year, much of it ending up in landfills or being incinerated. In landfills, synthetic fibers can take hundreds of years to decompose, while releasing methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

Additionally, the fashion industry relies heavily on resource-intensive production

practices. Cotton, a primary raw material for clothing, is particularly problematic. Not only does cotton farming require massive amounts of water, but it also involves extensive pesticide use. Conventional cotton farming accounts for 16% of all insecticide use globally, despite only using 2.5% of the world's agricultural land.

The production of certain fabrics, like rayon and viscose, contributes to deforestation. These materials are derived from wood pulp, and their demand has led to the destruction of ancient and endangered forests. As forests

are cleared for fiber production, critical ecosystems are destroyed, and wildlife habitats are lost. Additionally, deforestation reduces the planet's ability to sequester carbon, exacerbating climate change.

While the environmental impacts of fast fashion are devastating, the industry's social and ethical implications cannot be ignored. Many fast fashion brands outsource their production to developing countries, where labor is cheap, and environmental regulations are lax or poorly enforced. Workers often face dangerous working conditions, and factories are frequently located in regions where environmental degradation is already an issue. The race to produce cheaper garments faster often leads to unsustainable practices that prioritize profit over the well-being of people and the planet.

Fast fashion's environmental impacts are vast and multifaceted, contributing to water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and waste generation. While fast fashion makes trendy clothing accessible to con-

*(Continued on page 15)*

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# Shalom Green

(Continued from page 14)

sumers, it comes at a high cost to the environment. Addressing this issue requires systemic change — both from fashion brands and consumers. Brands must adopt more sustainable production methods, such as using eco-friendly materials, reducing waste, and committing to fair labor practices. Meanwhile, consumers can help by making more conscious fashion choices, such as buying less, choosing higher-quality items, and supporting sustainable brands. In the end, slowing down fashion’s cycle may be key to protecting the planet for future generations.

Please join Shalom Green on Thursday, Nov. 6, 7-8:30 p.m. in the Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park for a screening of excerpts from “The True Cost,” a powerful documentary about the environmental impacts of fast fashion. Following the film screening, we will host a fireside chat with Candace Taylor (CT) Anderson, founder and creative director of the Charlotte-based circular economy non-profit Springclean and sustainability expert, during which we will discuss the importance of responsible clothing choices, and what you can do to

make a difference.

Springclean operates at the intersection of arts, sustainability, education, and workforce development. The organization’s mission is to divert materials from landfills and to educate and train on the circular economy through partnerships with schools and community organizations. Concentrating on textile waste can aid in decreasing landfill volume, fostering job creation, and bolstering the local economy. For more information about Springclean, please visit [www.springclean.org](http://www.springclean.org).

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



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**The Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center**

## Board of Directors

# 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Please Join Us

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**Monday, December 9, 2024 • 7pm**

**Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts**

Election of Officers and Directors and Staff Recognition

Nominating Committee

**Raizel Kahn, Jenny Sugar, Brian Sterling, Mark Pincus, Gary Starr, Liz Waller, Lauren Althofer, Stan August**

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

Religious Life

# New Jewish Learning Institute Original Course on Nurturing Relationships



By Rabbi Yossi Groner

Nurturing Relationships: Jewish Wisdom for Building Deeper, Richer Connections in All Your Relationships

This six-week course is coming to Charlotte on November 12-13.

“It is not good for the human to be alone” (Genesis 2:18).

An iconic verse from the opening chapters of the Torah resonates deeply within us, revealing a truth that transcends time and culture. Human beings, by their very nature, are social creatures. Pain, when borne in isolation, becomes an unbearable weight, while the joy of success loses its luster without someone to celebrate it with.

In our modern era, a wealth of research supports this ancient insight, demonstrating that robust relationships significantly enhance our quality of life. They contribute to improved health, reduced stress, greater happiness, and even increased longevity. Despite our inherent need for connection, forging and maintaining human relationships is not always straightforward. People can be complicated, making it difficult to connect with them. Especially in today’s fast-paced, technology-driven world, our interpersonal relationships often suffer from a lack of genuine investment.

The Torah, with its timeless wisdom, provides a wealth of

guidance on the topic of relationships that is both profound and practical.

This upcoming course, ‘Nurturing Relationships: Jewish Wisdom for Building Deeper, Richer Connections in All Your Relationships,’ taps this ancient treasure alongside the findings of contemporary psychological research. It aims to benefit the entire spectrum of our adult-to-adult connection: the intimate ties of spouses, the intricate bonds of family, and the diverse relationships with friends, coworkers, and acquaintances.

This new and exciting six-week course will be coming to Charlotte starting November 12 at 7:30 p.m. for the evening class and November 13 at 11 a.m. for the morning class. All classes will be held at the Epstein Chabad Center on Sardis

Road in Charlotte. There will be Zoom availability as well, but it is highly encouraged that you be present for this class.

Central to this course are essential relational skills that form the foundation of healthy connections. Empathy, the cornerstone of meaningful interactions, allows us to truly understand others. Active listening goes beyond hearing, fostering deeper connections. Managing disagreements with respect is crucial for harmony. Seeing the positive in others transforms relationships. The art of influence is central to functioning communication. And forgiveness and reconciliation are often required to heal and restore connections.

In a world where the quality of our relationships profoundly impacts our happiness and

well-being, this course is both timely and essential. By investing in the skills explored in this course, we not only enhance our personal lives but also contribute to a more connected, compassionate, and harmonious society.

The Jewish Learning Institute has revolutionized Jewish adult education and has created a path to knowledge using ancient and contemporary sources paired with modern techniques that appeals to a wide spectrum of people.

To register, please visit [www.myJLI.com](http://www.myJLI.com) or you can call our office at (704) 366-3984.

The Jewish Learning Institute in Charlotte is a project of Chabad of Charlotte.

Everyone who registers receives a colorful & user-friendly textbook & online support.

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## Lifelong Learning for Mind, Body, and Spirit

By Madeline White

As we transition from the High Holidays into a new season, Temple Beth El is excited to offer a fresh lineup of lifelong learning opportunities. Whether you’re interested in exploring Jewish history, gaining insight into modern Jewish issues, or seeking balance in today’s tumultuous world, our programs are designed to nourish your mind and spirit. Led by Rabbi Beth Nichols, Rabbi Asher Knight, and Rabbi Lexi Erdheim, our fall courses are an opportunity to engage, reflect, and grow together.

### Modern Living: Maintaining Balance

We all know life can feel like a balancing act—between juggling work, our family, friends, and personal time, it can be hard to find stability. This fall, Temple Beth El is excited to partner with Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and Temple Israel to bring the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning to Shalom Park.

Beginning Nov. 7, join Rabbi Nichols for Modern Living: Maintaining Balance, and explore how Jewish wisdom can serve as a guide in navigating these challenges. From Juda-

ism’s ancient texts to modern teachings, this course offers insights for finding the calm in our daily lives. This course will meet once a week for six weeks.

### Lunchtime Learning: Jewish Priorities

Ready to dive into something new on your lunch break? Beginning Nov. 15, join Rabbi Erdheim on the third Friday of the month for an online discussion of essays from David Hazony’s “Jewish Priorities: Sixty-Five Proposals for the Future of Our People”. Each session will focus on one essay and offer an opportunity to discuss a wide range of topics, from antisemitism and education to the future of Jewish institutions.

### SAGE: Shaping the Sacred — Disruptive Forces in Jewish History

Are you curious about how pivotal moments in history have affected Judaism as we know it today? Join Rabbi Knight one Wednesday a month (December-May) for an in-depth look at the key moments that have reshaped Judaism throughout history. From ancient upheavals to modern revolutions, this series will offer a thought-provoking exploration of the forces that prompted growth, reflection, and transformation within the Jewish community.

We’re thrilled to offer these enriching learning opportunities and invite you to learn something new this fall. Visit our website at [www.templebethel.org](http://www.templebethel.org) to learn more and register.

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Religious Life

# Why I Am Thankful for B-I-N-G-O

By Pauline and Orchid Childs

"I didn't know Jack Black was Jewish!" "Wait did they say Purim or Passover?" "Who made this salad; it is great." These were a few of the comments overheard on a beautiful September night outside Grace Presbyterian Church in Fort Mill.

Temple Solel holds services inside Grace Presbyterian.

On this beautiful night, Temple members gathered to share a meal and participate in Jewish-themed bingo and a potluck. This was one of the quarterly social activities held by the Temple.

The bingo board, created by a Temple youth member, had five columns.

B was holidays and special events, such as Sukkot, Purim and Yom Kippur

I included words such as chutzpah, schmear, schmuck

N included famous Jews

G included Jewish foods such as latkes, blintzes and matzah ball soup.

O included miscellaneous words

When I got home I started to



Temple Solel members gather for a potluck and to play Bingo.

go through an "after action" noting what had gone well and what hadn't for next time. The night wasn't perfect. There were technical difficulties and loud planes overhead.

But we were together and there was so much to be thankful for:

- Our Temple family — One

night after services, I was talking to my husband and child. A fellow congregant, who is about my mother's age, walked up and said, "Is this a family meeting?" Without missing a beat, we all said "Yes, so come on over." In two years, this group has become an extended family to mine.

- The Temple's inclusivity

and welcoming attitude — My mother is Jewish and my father's father was as well. Growing up, we were a cultural mismatch. While Judaism always made sense to me, I struggled to find a temple where I fit in. I lacked any type of formal Jewish education and always felt "less than" at other temples I visited as an adult. At Temple Solel, there were several interfaith couples, and they were accepted. No one quizzed me. Instead, they noted my skill level and guided me. Members would throw Yiddish words I may not know into conversation. Or repeat words in Hebrew when I struggled. Above all, they were kind and it was and is contagious.

- Tikkun olam — As a small congregation, I am always amazed by the amount of social action we do. We help with community café, host a night at Bethel Men's shelter almost monthly, and make manna bags for our less fortunate neighbors

- A beautiful partnership with Grace Presbyterian Church — Although technically the Temple is a tenant which meets

inside Grace's building, we are so much more than that. We invited Grace members to our Passover Seder and enjoyed the comradery. Recently, we held an interfaith night of service for the youth.


- Just enough — With services twice monthly, and some social action or social fun in-between, it fits with our family's lifestyle.

- Low key — No one cares what you wear. One 80-year-old member frequently wears yellow crocs! Other people get a little more "dressed up."

- Innovation — Jewish bingo... 'nuf said.

Temple Solel is a small, inclusive congregation in Fort Mill, SC. For more information, visit our website, [templesolelsc.org](http://templesolelsc.org), email [info@templesolelsc.org](mailto:info@templesolelsc.org), or call (803) 610-1707.

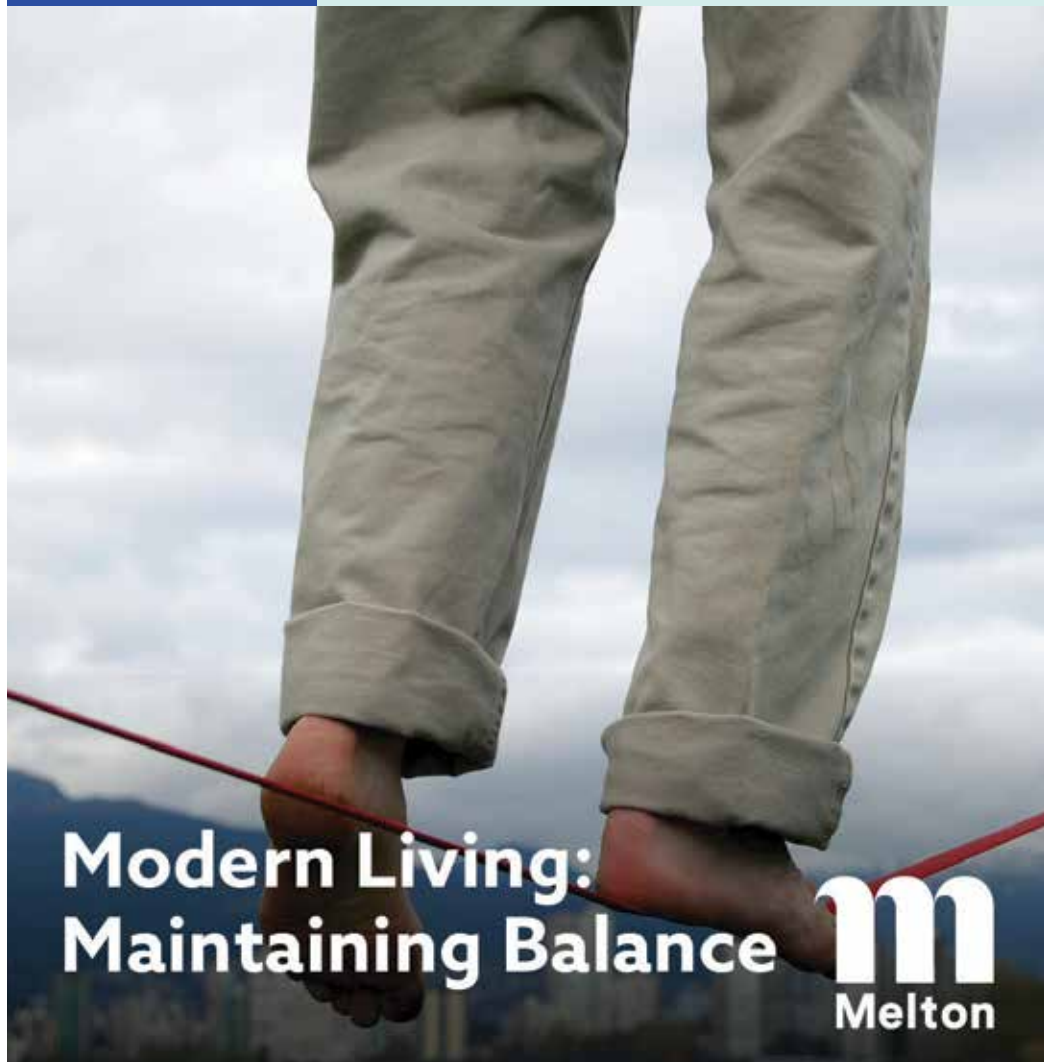





**Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning**  
FOR THOSE SEEKING A MORE MEANINGFUL JEWISH LIFE.

**Fall Semester**

**Modern Living: Maintaining Balance**  
taught by Rabbi Beth Nichols  
Thursday 10-11:30 AM  
November 7, 14, 21  
December 5, 12, 19

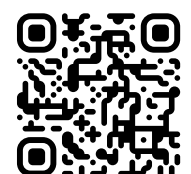


**Modern Living: Maintaining Balance**



Modern Living: Maintaining Balance — Finding balance is a constant challenge in modern life. From managing jobs and family commitments to engaging in our communities and carving out time for self-care, it can feel overwhelming. Did you know that Jewish wisdom, from classical teachings to modern texts, provides valuable guidance for navigating these pressures? This six-week course delves into Jewish perspectives on achieving balance amidst the demands of daily life.

**Tuition for each course is \$179, but thanks to a generous grant by Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, this class, along with a printed book, is offered at a reduced rate of \$99. Please use the following discount code CJCC99 before you register for the class.**



# Temple Israel's 6th Annual Fundraiser

*Together We Rise*

Save the Date!

December 15th, 2024

Join us for an uplifting evening of philanthropy! Enjoy a selection of heavy hors d'oeuvres and meaningful performances by Cantor Shira Lissek and special guest, Israeli Cantor Magda Fishman. Don't miss our exciting paddle raise, where your generosity will make a lasting impact!

In recognition of their lifetime dedication to Temple Israel, we are honored to present Lynne and Morey Sheffer with the Shofar Award.

Scan to Register & for Sponsorship Opportunities!





**MAJOR DONORS** who contribute a combined minimum gift of \$10,000

as of 09-12-2024

**Thank you for your generous support of our greater Charlotte Jewish community. This year's success would not have been possible without the help of over 1,500 donors, especially the major donors listed below, who came together to empower our Federation in strengthening our Jewish community, fighting antisemitism, funding vital initiatives, and supporting over 70 beneficiary agencies in the greater Charlotte area and in Israel.**

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**A legacy gift is a demonstration of your belief in the continuity of Jewish life for generations to come. By leaving financial resources to Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, the Jewish causes you care deeply about can ensure future generations have an opportunity to embrace our heritage.**

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### A NOTE TO OUR DONORS:

You deserve to be properly and accurately recognized. If you find an error in your listing, please contact our office at 704.944.6757.

# MEN'S ANNUAL CAMPAIGN as of 09-12-2024

## Int'l Leadership Reunion \$250,000 and Above

The Leon Levine Foundation	
Leon Levine (of blessed memory)	500,000
The Howard R. Levine Foundation	
Howard Levine	475,000
Eric Sklut	270,100

## Prime Minister's Cabinet \$100,000 - \$249,999

Blumenthal Foundation	220,000
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Patty & Bill Gorelick Foundation	
Bill Gorelick	125,000

## King David Society \$25,000 - \$99,999

Luski & Associates	50,000
Todd Gorelick	40,000
Herb Morse	25,000

## Joshua Society \$10,000 - \$24,999

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Hal Levinson	15,100
Paul Edelstein	15,000
Stanley Greenspon	15,000
Harry Lerner	15,000
Jerome Levin	15,000
Larry Polsky	15,000
Marc Silverman	15,000
Jeff Gorelick	13,018
Jonathan Kulbersh	12,500
Donald Bernstein	11,000
Samuel Zimmern	11,000
David Epstein	10,072
Philip Berman	10,000
Scott Gorelick	10,000
Alan Kronovet	10,000
Mark Roth	10,000
Bernard Sandler	10,000
Melvin Segal	10,000



## Theodore Herzl Society \$5,000 - \$9,999

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## Yitzhak Rabin Society \$1,800 - \$3,599

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Steven Yaffe  
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Jack Allweil  
Anonymous  
David Asofsky  
Joshua Berg  
Jason Black  
James Boon  
Noah Brown  
Gilbert Browne  
Rick Buss  
Howard Clark  
Stephen Copulsky  
John Dillon  
Jeffrey Eggert  
Greg Endy  
Alex Feterovskiy  
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**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Charlotte

# Stan Greenspon Center Standing Strong: Behind-the-Scenes Unity in Action To Combat Hate

By Mary Eshet

We are reminded all too often that hate incidents and antisemitism are not things that only happen elsewhere — sadly, they can strike close to home, too. Just a few months ago, antisemitic and racist books, disguised as Dr. Seuss’s genre, were planted in free little libraries in the Charlotte area. The book uses historical antisemitic tropes to advance the belief that Jews are a biologically separate race of people. Close on the heels of this disturbing development, antisemitism and blatant hatred hit close to home again, when swastikas and other graffiti were found at a Charlotte YMCA. Only a few days later, hateful graffiti and swastikas were also found in the bathroom of a local high school.

Individuals and organizations rushed to respond to all three of these incidents. It is not easy to find the line between being too silent and being inflammatory, possibly making matters worse. While the Holocaust is a tragic reminder of why such incidents can never be ignored, incendiary social media posts can hinder progress.

At the Stan Greenspon Holocaust and Social Justice Education Center (Greenspon Cen-

ter), we certainly don’t have all the answers. What we do know is that the issues underlying hate are complex and require thoughtful, multi-faceted, and sustained efforts. We know that partnerships and collaborative approaches amplify our impact and give our work more meaning.

To that end, the Greenspon Center has partnered locally, regionally, and nationally with organizations that help us enrich programs and reach key audiences. For example, the Greenspon Center partnered closely with the NC Department of Public Instruction to create curricula to teach about the Holocaust. Katie Cunningham, Greenspon Center assistant director with 13 years of education experience, authored an 80-lesson elective framework on the Holocaust, which became available for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) students in grades 9–12 in the 2024-2025 school year. The Greenspon Center offers training and support for teachers of this unit and provides one-on-one and group coaching for educators. Cunningham was recently asked by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to lend her curriculum expertise to an



expert panel/team overseeing the structure and implementation of the ‘24-‘25 iteration of Campus Antisemitism Report Cards.

Our goals and interests are aligned with the Levine JCC’s Butterfly Project and Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte’s (JFGC) Outshine Hate program. For example, in October, we jointly hosted with Federation, the Executive Leaders Conference in Education, the first conference focused on antisemitism for education leaders (superintendents, principals, and other leaders) in the Charlotte area. The goal was to provide leaders with tools to effectively respond to antisemitism and en-

sure a supportive learning environment for all.

Fundamental to our approach as an organization related to Queens University is our commitment to thorough research and study. In a world often operating at alarming speed with social media providing a microphone to everyone, we are committed to well-researched facts and carefully crafted material to reach people with different needs and perspectives.

The Greenspon Center’s mission is to develop informed and

engaged global citizens who are prepared to respond to prejudice and discrimination with actions advocating human rights for all. Our educational and certification programs are aimed at this mission.

“We aspire to stop antisemitism before it even begins,” said Judy LaPietra, Greenspon Center director. “A great example of this effort is our Student to Student program, where Jewish high school students share Jewish beliefs and culture with middle and high school students. There is not an easy or singular answer to the hatred and antisemitism we face in today’s world and here at home, but we take heart in the good, and often unseen, work we are doing with community partners.”

If you are interested in having the Stan Greenspon Center present or hold a workshop at your place of work or at your child’s educational space, please email Katie Cunningham, assistant director, at [cunninghamk@queens.edu](mailto:cunninghamk@queens.edu).

(Continued on page 29)



Stan Greenspon Holocaust and Social Justice Education Center

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# Greenspon Center

(Continued from page 28)

The Stan Greenspon Center for Holocaust and Social Justice Education recommends the following steps to responding to antisemitic incidents in the greater Charlotte area.

1. As soon as an incident comes to your attention, report it to Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC) through their online reporting tool, which is always posted on their homepage. JFGC is the go-to institution in the area for response and works closely with law enforcement and the Jewish community at large. The data collected through this form is shared and tracked in partnership with the ADL.

2. Trust your local institutions to respond. Once you have reported the incident to JFGC, allow their team time to enact the proper response. JFGC is swift in its work and knows who to contact. Multiple calls or emails

to the places where the incident took place may possibly cause an unintended delay in response. JFGC will work with law enforcement and the location/organization/school where the incident took place to respond with reactive measures, along with offering educational opportunities so that there can be more proactive steps taken in the future. The Greenspon Center is proud to be one of the organizations that offers educational responses in the Charlotte area.

3. When engaging in online spaces and social media, use best practices: post educational (not emotional) responses linked to vetted resources, do not repost hateful or triggering images that compound the trauma, and lift up messages of solidarity and allyship over ignorance and fear. Hate can only win when it is louder than those who oppose it.

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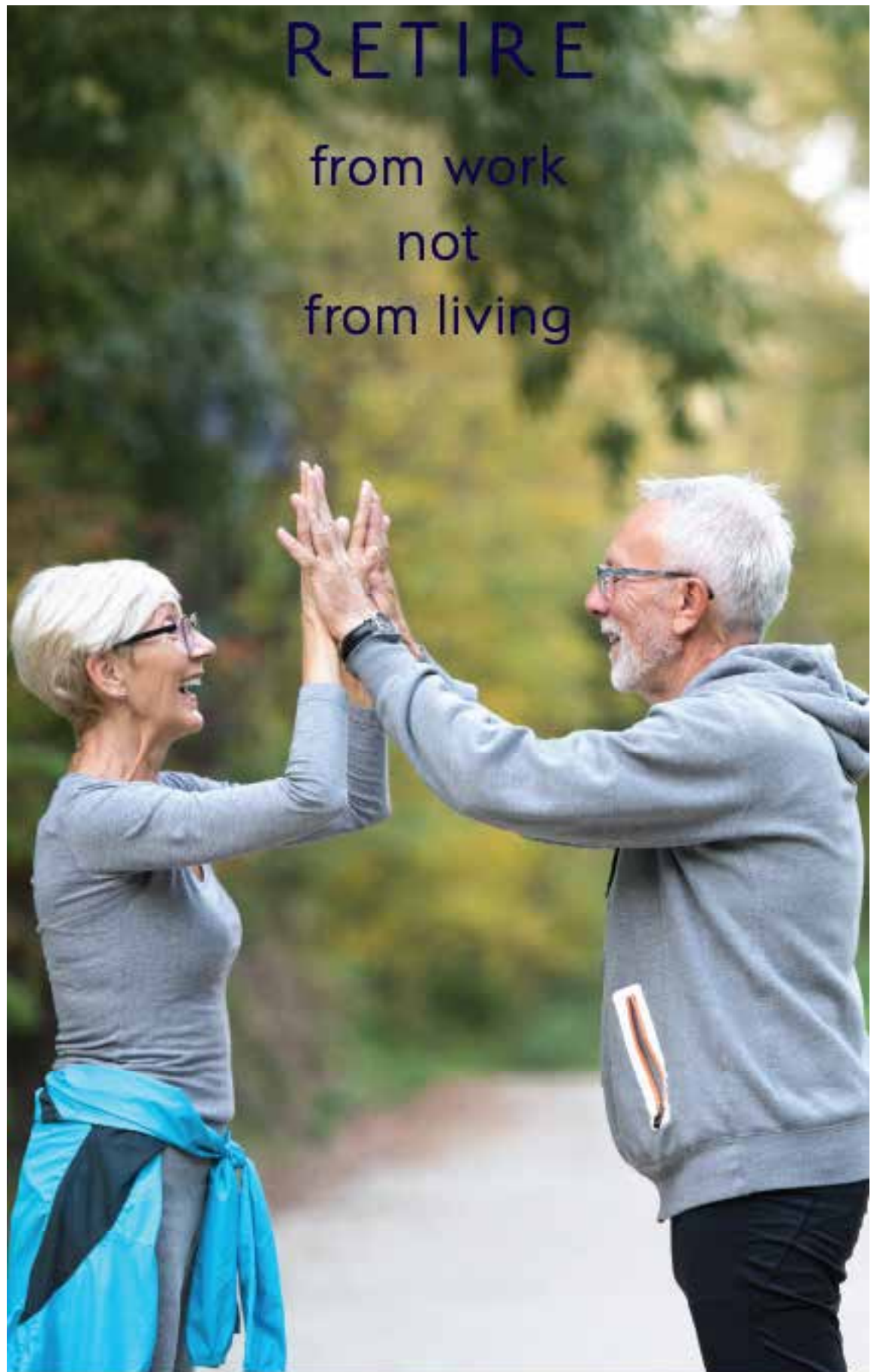
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Education and Youth

# So Much To Be Grateful For at Jewish Preschool on Sardis

By Hiley Davis

November is a month dedicated to celebrating everything we're thankful for, and the kids and teachers of Jewish Preschool on Sardis have plenty of gratitude to go around! The teachers expressed their thankfulness for each other and the support system provided by every staff member. "Everyone is willing to jump in and help with anything at any time," Ms. Olivia from the 3's class explained. Of course, we're also thankful to see the kids having so much fun each day.

As for the kids who brighten the halls with their smiles, I was worried I wouldn't

have enough room to write down everything they're grateful for at school! Many of them spoke about how much fun they have every day and that they were always glad to be at school. "My favorite thing about school is getting to read books with my friends," said Mia from the 3's class. Some were grateful for the chance to learn new things, though the majority talked more about being able to see their friends and play on the playground. "I like playing hide and seek," said Max from Ms. Alyson's 2's class.

The older kids also talked about their families. "I love it when Mama picks me

up at the end of the day, and sometimes my brother comes, too!" said Demi from Ms. Olivia's 3's class. They said they were thankful for their parents and how exciting it is to see them at the end of the day.

We are grateful for the opportunity to reflect on the things in our lives we appreciate, and to express our gratitude.



Grateful for our incredible teachers.



Grateful for our first friendships!



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Grateful for our sweet JPS family.



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ב"ה

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Education and Youth

# Empowering Jewish Youth: The Charlotte Jewish Day School Educational Philosophy

By Mariashi Groner, Director

At Charlotte Jewish Day School (CJDS), our TK-8 program takes a long-term view of education, focusing on the skills students need to navigate the 21st century successfully. We recognize that traditional metrics like rote memorization, penmanship, or mastery of outdated systems are no longer indicators of future success. Instead, CJDS emphasizes the development of problem-solving skills in real-world environments, providing a foundation that prepares students for an ever-changing world.

In today's rapidly evolving landscape, every 21st-century student should possess certain key skills. At CJDS, we focus on cultivating:

1. A strong moral compass - doing the right thing and being a mensch (an overall good person)
2. Self-confidence and a strong sense of identity
3. Critical thinking skills - the ability to apply reasoning and logic to unfamiliar ideas and situations
4. Multilingual abilities, which enhance problem-solving and creative thinking

5. A deep understanding of Jewish history and Israel, enabling students to navigate contemporary challenges with informed confidence

CJDS empowers our students to strive for excellence, lead by example, and embrace curiosity by providing an outstanding academic experience grounded in Jewish beliefs and values. We provide a rigorous, up-to-date curriculum in a nurturing and stimulating environment with an exemplary foundation in mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum teaches self-regulation, communication, and interpersonal skills. Studies have shown that students with social and emotional well-being are academically able to learn more easily.

As strong as the CJDS General Studies curriculum is, there is no doubt that everything on this list is strengthened by our Judaica curriculum. Using an ancient text to keep students grounded in this modern world is a learning tool like no other. The Torah (The Jewish Bible)



A group of fifth grade math students. (From left to right) Amilia Shuster, Rivka Cohen, Ari Stone, Alex Serbin, Eli Manuel, Cyrus Rasowsky, Beatrice Brink and Ellie Loewensteiner

gives us a blueprint for living to our highest potential. Judaism focuses on relationships between us and G-d, between G-d and the Jewish people, between the Jewish people and the land of Israel, and between human beings. Between their belief in G-d and their connection to their Jewish soul, our kids develop a stronger sense of "self" than most kids their age. They learn from the

Torah stories that time and time again, the Jews stood strong and persevered through the best and worst of times. And that standing up to "do the right thing" is just what we do. Our children's strong moral compass and high self-esteem blossom from their Torah study.

In grades 4 and 5, when our Judaica teachers introduce Rashi (a medieval commentary) and

teach the kids to dissect Jewish text, their critical thinking skills are challenged in a way that they don't even realize. They are taught to think until their little brains "hurt," exercising the brain in a way that is not typical of elementary school children. Beginning in grade 5 and continuing to grade 8, the students begin an intensive study of Israel and its history and conflicts.

And, of course, the Hebrew immersion that our students are exposed to at such a young age has been proven to dramatically impact mental agility and creative problem-solving. Evidence shows that time spent on another language strongly reinforces the core subject areas of reading, language literacy, social studies, and math and promotes creative development and awareness of cultural diversity. Our middle school students will receive foreign language credit for their Hebrew language classes, fulfilling the foreign language high school credit.

Just recently, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte brought

(Continued on page 33)

B"H

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Education and Youth

# CJDS

(Continued from page 32)

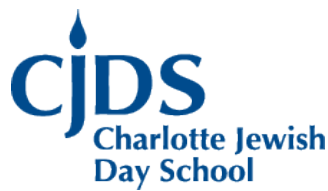
out a speaker on Israel, Haviv Rettig Gur, a journalist, who emphatically left us with the message that if we want our children, our youth, to survive and thrive through the challenges that the world is setting out for the Jewish people today, we MUST educate them on their story! A Jewish day school is where that happens.

Every child is loved at CJDS. And because we love every child, we cannot and will not rest until we find the path to success for each one. We have 144 children at the school this year, and there are 144 different paths. We spend more time talking, meeting, discussing, and strategizing how to best meet each child's needs than doing anything else, and we are most proud of that.

CJDS graduates leave our school and thrive wherever they go, whether it be a large public school, a charter school, or another private school. Transition? What transition?!? There is no doubt that our strong, secular curriculum prepares them for

the road ahead, but it is the gift of a Jewish Day School that is giving them so much more than that. We truly believe it is the combination of the dual curriculum and a strong spiritual center that makes our graduates successful in this ever-changing world.

We are a community day school open to all Jewish children, regardless of affiliation. Our mission is to provide a Jewish education to all families of all levels of observance, from unaffiliated to orthodox. CJDS is a school driven by providing the best educational experience for each child, challenging them at every level, and providing a safe environment for children to take risks, learn, and grow from the journey of exploration.



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CJP builds the foundation of children's learning and bridges relationships in our Jewish community.

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# Around the Table: Was Thanksgiving Modeled on Sukkot?



By Charlotte Rouchouze

Recently, I was reading through a small volume entitled “Judaism,” which I picked up at some point over the years from my grandmother’s bookshelf. The book was published in 1957 for the “instruction of proselytes” by the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Reform rabbinic leadership organization, and appears to be a brief introduction to Jewish concepts. As I read over the entry on Sukkot, one passage caught my attention. The book tells us, “In contrast to the solemn days that precede it, Sukkos is a joyous season at which we voice our gratitude for the bounties of nature and gifts

of the harvest. The American Thanksgiving Day was suggested by Sukkos.” Thanksgiving modeled on Sukkot? This is something I had never heard before and I wondered if there was any truth to it. “That sounds like a load of BS,” was my husband’s encouraging response when I ran the idea by him, but I decided to go on a little search to see what I could find.

It’s important to note that historically, one of the features of Reform Judaism is undoubtedly its embrace of universalist values and, by extension, enthusiasm for diaspora life. One should be completely American and not focus excessively on the Jewish nation as distinct. This has changed a bit over the years, but the 1950s was the heyday for this assimilationist thinking that sought to make Judaism as palatable as possible to American and gentile tastes. So, it makes sense in this context that Reform Jewish rabbis would be making any possible connections between American and Jewish customs. It turns out that this connection between Sukkot and Thanksgiving pops up fairly frequently in popular articles and such, so

Reform rabbis are not the only ones suggesting the link. So, is there a link? Let’s take a dive into history.

As most of us probably know, Thanksgiving itself is a commemoration of a banquet held long before the actual observance of Thanksgiving as a holiday. The festival itself was held in 1621 to give thanks for a good harvest, at a time when year-to-year survival was not a guarantee in the colonies. The native Wampanoag people and the Pilgrims came together and gave thanks for a productive harvest. There is no doubt that rituals honoring a successful harvest are an ancient practice in most societies, particularly agrarian ones, but this one is described as a multi-day observance of outdoor feasting and prayer.

Early Protestants, unlike earlier generations of Catholics, read the Bible, including the “Old Testament,” and were well-versed in its stories. It is known that they identified with the children of Israel wandering in the desert for years in search of freedom. They, too, were wandering in a foreign land, entirely at the mercy of a land they knew little about, in


the hopes of settling a Promised Land. Like the Israelites, they saw themselves as liberated by G-d and elected to complete a historic task, forming an ideal Christian society. It is likely that Puritans knew of the Festival of Tabernacles as a model for a celebration of gratitude to G-d in times of abundance.

But the Puritans themselves did not commemorate Thanksgiving, or any other holiday for that matter, as they strongly rejected annual feasts and festivals, which they associated with Catholicism and legalism. They went so far as to consider holidays ritualistic and even idolatrous, as they encouraged the belief that their observance played a role in salvation, which reformed Protestants saw as strictly a matter of G-d’s grace through Jesus’ sacrifice. This legacy continues today in the rather sparse holiday calendar of American Protestants (especially from the perspective of Jews!), which is basically limited to Easter and

Christmas.

At the same time, Puritans were partial to impromptu days of thanksgiving and even more so “fasting and humiliation,” depending on whether thanks or repentance was in order, and believed that G-d could bring abundance or suffering on a whim. These days were announced on a local level, and all church members were expected to participate, with violators suffering various fines and punishments. The main reason for this strict enforcement of public displays of faith is that the Puritans were committed to the concept of “covenant,” derived from the Jewish idea, and they enacted all sorts of covenants that shaped colonial life and governance. At the very heart of all these was the covenant between G-d and the settlers, the success of which would indicate G-d’s grace. This tradition of calling a day of thanksgiving (it seems that Americans have left

*(Continued on page 35)*

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# Around the Table

(Continued from page 34)

the other days — fasting and humiliation — in the dustbin of history) comes from this practice of impromptu collective prayer.

For several hundred years, Thanksgiving Day was commemorated on and off, with some presidents recognizing it and some not. It was not until 1863, after two grueling years of the Civil War, that Abraham Lincoln declared it a national holiday in an effort to create unity in a catastrophically divided America. It slowly morphed into the secular holiday we know today, where we eat foods native to the Americas, give thanks, and remember the highly mythologized version of the shared meal between the

Pilgrims and the Native Americans.

At the risk of sounding like the conclusion of an Antique Roadshow episode where we find out that the ancient figurine the Johnson family has been cherishing for generations was actually from Woolworth, sadly, I found no compelling evidence that either the Puritans or the Founding Fathers had the Jewish festival of Sukkot directly in mind when they initiated Thanksgiving. Puritans, like all Protestants, are mostly opposed to the observance of Torah holidays, which they consider fully replaced by the new covenant of Jesus. But the symbolic connection between

the Puritan settlers and the children of Israel was most certainly one that the Puritans held dear, and even today, this connection has been amply discussed by anti-Zionist activists wishing to connect the intellectual dots between the American and Zionist projects. I think it is reasonable to assume that a day of Thanksgiving held during the harvest season was, for many Americans, reminiscent of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Torah.

In honor of this connection, I offer a recipe that would go well on a Sukkot or a Thanksgiving Table. We all know that sweet potatoes are a New World crop that are a staple Thanksgiving,

and this twist on a knish features them nicely. Stuffed foods are common at Sukkot as a symbol of the hidden blessings of life. I have added za'atar for a modern touch which goes brilliantly with sweet potatoes. These have a touch of sweetness from the sweet potatoes but are still savory.

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

## Sweet Potato Za'atar Knishes

**Dough:**  
 ½ cup vegetable oil  
 ½ cup warm water  
 1 tsp salt  
 2 cups all-purpose flour

**Filling:**  
 1 large sweet potato, cooked and peeled  
 3 tbsp olive oil  
 1 tsp crushed garlic  
 ½ tsp kosher salt  
 1 tsp za'atar seasoning  
 1 egg, beaten  
 Sesame seeds for topping (optional)

Mix the dough ingredients in a bowl and knead for 2 or 3 minutes until well-incorporated. Set aside. In a small bowl, mash the sweet potato and add the olive oil, garlic, salt, and za'atar. Next roll out the dough to about 1/8 inch. Cut into 2 ½ -3-inch squares. Place a tablespoon of filling in the center of each square and then pull in the edges to the center and pinch to make a pouch.

Brush each pouch with beaten egg, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake at 350 for about 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Makes 12 small knishes



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# Jewish Community Refugee Initiative Welcomes the Stranger with 150 Totes Full of Food

By Amy Lefkof

Back in 2020, with COVID raging and the price of food rising, the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative (JCRI) decided it would host a Drive Through Sukkah for Refugees, where local refugee families would receive (outdoors) a tote chock-full of dry staples, fresh produce, and some household supplies. As COVID continued, the Drive Through Sukkah for Refugees became a tradition, and on Sept.

17, 2024, (a month earlier than Sukkot because of the upcoming presidential election), more than twenty volunteers — at least half newcomers to the event — met at Camp Mindy at Shalom Park to fill totes for 125 refugee families, which were then delivered the next day to Refugee Support Services (RSS), a local post-resettlement agency.

Jonathan Lee, food and community information coordinator for RSS, reported, “Everyone

who picked up a tote bag was incredibly grateful. The biggest complaint we got was that the bags were too heavy for some of our program participants to carry, which is always a good thing! Thank you all so much for all your hard work putting these bags together, all your efforts are greatly appreciated.”

Between Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRRA) (a local liaison of HIAS, formerly known as the Hebrew Immigrant

Aid Society) and Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte, 700 refugees have been resettled in Charlotte this past year from such countries as Afghanistan, Venezuela, Syria, Congo, Burma and the Central American countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Temple Israel’s Rabbi Michael Wolk explained to the group of JCRI volunteers how the Jewish holiday of Sukkot ties into the precarious situation of millions of vulnerable refugees around the world and those who have recently resettled in Charlotte. He introduced us to the Hebrew word *ger*, which means stranger, and how in biblical times, as today, people had to flee their homeland because of persecution, famine, and the promise of opportunity in a new land. The Torah teaches us to be compassionate toward the *ger*, to welcome the stranger. Eventually, the stranger, the immigrant, becomes a member of our community. During Sukkot when we gather with friends and family in our sukkah to enjoy the autumn harvest, it is good to provide a tote full of food to strangers who have escaped a perilous journey and have set up new roots in our city.

A big shout out to Publix for once again donating the 125 reusable canvas totes, Amelie’s Bakery for generously providing 125 delicious loaves of sourdough bread for the second year in a row, head volunteer buyers Ruth Pordes and Kim Wilkoff for purchasing dry staples and fresh produce: bananas, apples, onions, potatoes, peppers, garlic, ginger, flour, and sugar. We also extend a big thanks to our assistant buyers: Melissa Raphael, Jean Moats, Flo Lefkof, Kim

Wilkoff, and Elizabeth Weinstein, who procured bottles of hand sanitizer, pot scrubbers, dry milk, dish soap, and tins of pepper, many of which were in-kind donations! JCRI could not accomplish this without all the volunteers on the “assembly line” and our drivers who delivered the totes.

The JCRI team also owes many thanks to Emily Russell at the Levine Jewish Community Center (LJCC) who helped with all of the logistics (including the printing of a colorful Sukkot card that was tucked into each tote) and Temple Beth El, which serves as JCRI’s fiduciary agent processing all donations, both monetary and in-kind.



Connecting with JCRI’s resettlement and post-resettlement partners:

If you were unable to attend the Drive Through Sukkah for Refugees, but would like to work in partnership with resettlement or post-resettlement agencies here in Charlotte or directly with refugees, or make a donation to one of these local organizations, here is the contact info:

**Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy**  
Immigration Justice Program  
<https://charlottelegaladvocacy.org/what-we-do/immigration/>

**Refugee Support Services**  
[www.refugeesupportservices.org](http://www.refugeesupportservices.org)  
Volunteers needed for their Fruitful Friend program which requires a 1 year minimum commitment and a minimum of 4 cumulative hours per month.

**Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency**  
[www.Carolinarefugee.org](http://www.Carolinarefugee.org)  
There is an ongoing need for beds, kitchen chairs, coats and scarves/hats for winter.

**HIAS**  
[www.hiasorg/getinvolved](http://www.hiasorg/getinvolved)

**Jewish Community Refugee Initiative**  
You can donate to JCRI 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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# Jewish Officials Handling Hurricane Response Face Antisemitic Harassment

By Ron Kampeas  
(JTA) — WASHINGTON, October 7, 2024

Jewish government officials are being targeted with antisemitic attacks in a misinformation blitz hampering efforts to get critical information out to victims of Hurricane Helene in North Carolina.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer and Jaclyn Rothenberg, the spokeswoman for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, have been the subject of an onslaught of antisemitic abuse on the social media platform X.

The antisemitism has appeared among a welter of misinformation that has complicated efforts to deliver aid and services to victims of the hurricane. FEMA three days ago created a rumor-refuting page website, and Rothenberg's professional X feed now reads like a Whac-A-Mole game of knocking away misinformation. One thread last week refuted false rumors that FEMA stole donations delivered to nonprofits.

"There are many dangerous, misleading rumors spreading



In an aerial view, a person rides past a destroyed church in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene flooding, Swannanoa, North Carolina, Oct. 6, 2024. (Mario Tama/Getty Images)

about #Helene response, which can actively prevent survivors from getting help," she said on Thursday. "Our top priority is ensuring that disaster assistance is reaching people in need."

Her replies overflowed with antisemitic comments. "Hey look, a lying Jew," said one typical commenter. "Oh look you're Jewish," said another.

The Biden White House called on politicians to condemn the smears and the falsehoods.

"It is already heinous to attack a bipartisan disaster response with conspiracy theories that put vulnerable Americans — people who have lost loved ones and homes — in even more danger and cheat them out of the aid they deserve," Andrew Bates, an administration spokesman, said in an email. "Now those lies are also infected with revolting antisemitic smears, targeting a mayor who's doing everything in her power to help her community stand together, and federal

responders working around the clock to save lives and deliver critical necessities like food, water, and medical supplies."

Manheimer, the Asheville mayor, is the subject of one of the most viral posts on X. "The Mayor of Asheville, North Carolina is Esther E. Manheimer," said a post on Friday that accumulated more than 13 million views by Monday. "If you're wondering: yes, she is." (The implication, in social media parlance common on the far right, is that yes, Manheimer is Jewish.)

Another post that has acquired close to a million views features photos of Manheimer, Rothenberg and Mayorkas and identifies each as "jew." Manheimer and the Department of Homeland Security did not return requests for comment.

Rothenberg, a political communications veteran who worked for former New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio's administration and then for the 2020 Biden campaign, said she has seen nothing like the current round of abuse and misinformation.

"My job is to put out information that helps people during a really difficult time," she told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency

on Sunday. "We're here to help people on their worst day, and so it's been really surprising to see the reaction from people on social media who have made it here to do a job, and that's to help people recover from Hurricane Helene."

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has peddled some of the false claims, including that money meant for hurricane relief is diverted to migrants — though he has not trafficked in any antisemitic rhetoric when discussing the hurricane.

Lawmakers of both parties say that the misinformation is diverting energies needed to get relief to those who need it.

"Please don't let these crazy stories consume you or have you continually contact your elected officials to see if they are true," Kevin Corbin, a Republican state senator in North Carolina, pleaded with his constituents on Facebook. "I've been working on this 12 hours a day since it started and I'm growing a bit weary of intentional distractions from the main job."

Corbin cited the conspiracy theory that officials or bad actors

(Continued on page 41)



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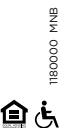
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Education and Youth

# Carolina Athletes Shine at 2024 JCC Maccabi Games in Detroit

By Stephanie Garner, Director of Athletics and Jason Spiegler

More than 1200 Jewish athletes from all over the world, ages 12 to 16, competed in the JCC Maccabi Games in Detroit this summer, July 28 through Aug. 2.

Along with delegation head, Stephanie Garner, and basketball coach, Stephen Garfinkle, the following Carolina Maccabi Delegation athletes participated. From Charlotte, NC: Benjamin Spiegler (U16 Swimming), Liam Batt (U16 3x3 Basketball), Charles Batt (U14 Tennis), and Jacob Widelitz (U14 3x3 Basketball). From Charleston, SC, Eryn Lee (U14 Swimming). From Columbia, SC, Adam Thur (U16 Soccer) and Max Saltzman (U14 Baseball). From Raleigh, NC, Liam Cohen (U16 Ice Hockey). Although this summer we had one of the smaller delegations with eight athletes, Carolina Maccabi represented well.

In swimming, Benjamin and



Carolina Maccabi delegation

Eryn were two standout swimmers. Benjamin won four gold medals (500 Freestyle, 200 Individual Medley (IM), 400 IM, 200 Backstroke) and 12 silver medals. Eryn won three gold medals (50 Freestyle, 100 Free-

style, 100 Butterfly (Fly)), five silver and three bronze medals. Adam's mixed soccer team won the silver medal and Max's mixed baseball team won the bronze medal.

The JCC Maccabi Games

started in 1982 with objectives to:

- provide Jewish youth with a supportive environment that fosters mutual respect and sportsmanship, where they can interact in an atmosphere of fun, democ-

racy, and peace;

- cultivate a deeper understanding and instill an appreciation of Jewish values;

- promote and encourage the health, physical fitness, and well-being of Jewish youth through participation in recreational and athletic activities; and

- learn the values of teamwork, integrity, cultural pride, community service, and lifelong friendship.

For information on the 2025 JCC Maccabi Games, please contact Stephanie Garner, Carolina Maccabi Delegation head at (704) 944-6743 or stephanie.garner@charlottejcc.org

In addition to the JCC Maccabi Games in 2025, teens can try out and compete in the 2025 Maccabiah Games, which are held every four years in Israel.

For information on the 2025 Israeli Maccabiah Games, <https://maccabiusa.com/maccabiah-2025/>.

# Shayna Weiss Reflects on Lifelong Lessons and Friendships

By Nick Perez

Shayna Weiss, a former teen friend at Friendship Circle, recently reflected on her experience with the organization and the influence it had on her life. Now a student at App State University, Weiss continues to carry the lessons and relationships she formed during her time with Friendship Circle, which she describes as "life-changing."

In a narrative essay she wrote for a literary course at App State,

Weiss explained the pivotal role Friendship Circle played in shaping her passion for community involvement. Weiss reflected on her experience, writing, "I knew it was something that I had to be a part of. I went online and filled out an interest form, and soon after, Ms. Sue [Schreiber] reached out, welcoming me into the program ... I could not wait to start going to programs and meeting everyone. I slowly started attending programs and decided I

would enjoy doing Friends Together, which is built in through Friendship Circle where I would be paired with someone with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and spend an hour with them every week. And that is where I met my lifelong friend Lexi."

During her time with Friendship Circle, Weiss developed a deep connection with Lexi. "Lexi is a ray of sunshine who will always bring a smile to my



Shayna and Lexi playing one of their favorite games, Monopoly.

face," Weiss recalls. Their bond extended beyond the Friendship Circle events, often meeting outside of the program for ice cream or dinner, playing with each other's dogs, and sharing moments that Weiss describes as "lifelong memories."

As Weiss transitioned into her senior year of high school, the impact of Friendship Circle remained ever-present. She took her experience a step further, becoming a teaching assistant in her school's Exceptional Children (EC) department. This experience, paired with her involvement in Friendship Circle, reinforced her passion for working with individuals with IDD, highlighting the fulfillment she found in building relationships and supporting her classmates.

Weiss continues to stay involved through clubs like Best Buddies, a program similar to Friendship Circle. Despite the physical distance from her

(Continued on page 42)

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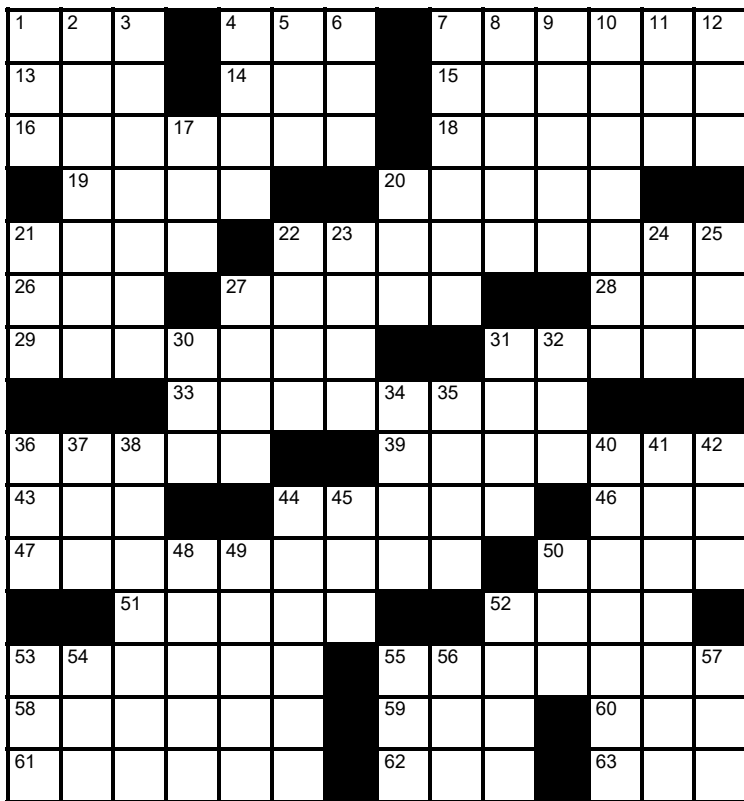
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# Leading Ladies



**Across**

- 1. Straight from the factory
- 4. Light touch
- 7. Part of a Seder
- 13. Brew the wrong way?
- 14. Former intelligence org.
- 15. Weather report warnings
- 16. First woman to lead the Jewish people
- 18. Mini mother

- 19. Britain's last King Henry
- 20. Magen David Adom destination, perhaps
- 21. Rashi says she was a judge in the days of 16-Across
- 22. Last (independent) Queen of the Jewish people
- 26. Sci-fi beings
- 27. Some blades
- 28. Finish for "court" or "her"

- 29. Not quite surrender
- 31. Acid used in antiseptics
- 33. Evil Queen of Judah
- 36. They can be pumped or bumped
- 39. Avoidance
- 43. Ben \_\_\_ Chai
- 44. Some baseball games end with them
- 46. Hebron to Jericho dir.
- 47. Leader of Israel
- 50. Husband of 55-Across
- 51. You might make one with an app
- 52. Foe of Saul
- 53. Where you can find 22-Across's Street in Jerusalem
- 55. Evil Queen of Israel
- 58. Crispin of "Back to the Future"
- 59. Before city or state
- 60. Rage
- 61. Stephen King horror classic without supernatural or alien beings
- 62. Talks, colloquially
- 63. Org. that might confiscate a bottle

**Down**

- 1. Beatty or Kelly
- 2. Raise up

- 3. Most squiggly
- 4. A famous Amos
- 5. He ruled long before 33-Across
- 6. Sound you might hear after an aliyah
- 7. Short appearances
- 8. Give notice
- 9. It's a hint
- 10. Head of a Canadian province
- 11. Georgia airport, for short
- 12. Haifa to Efrat dir.
- 17. Stuff in a drum
- 20. Holy Land letters
- 21. Slangy pronoun
- 22. He ran from Iran
- 23. \_\_\_ sore spot
- 24. Pro-Bowl defensive end Umenyiora
- 25. It's home to 47-Across Sq.
- 27. French Open divisions
- 30. Subway resident
- 31. Calls from the flock
- 32. Circular cereal
- 34. 22-Across married into this tribe

- 35. Indie folk band Bon
- 36. One of the holier fruits
- 37. "Equal" prefix
- 38. Katz and Artzi
- 40. Dwell
- 41. Donkey relatives in Asia
- 42. Cornhusker St.
- 44. Like messed-up makeup
- 45. Carrier Lingus
- 48. Automatic transmission gear
- 49. Grace's last name, on "Will & Grace"
- 50. Timeline unit
- 52. Comic Ansari
- 53. Grand Casino letters
- 54. Winner of the Thrilla in Manila
- 55. Where Rav Saul Lieberman taught, for short
- 56. Old intro to "long" or "now"
- 57. Sheep meadow

(Answers on page 42)

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# Moishe House Unveils New Location in NoDa: A Fresh Chapter in Community Building for Charlotte's Young Adults

By Dave Press

Moishe House is thrilled to announce the opening of Moishe Pod Charlotte, which officially launched on Oct. 1, 2024, in the vibrant NoDa neighborhood. This latest iteration of Moishe House programming in Charlotte provides a welcoming space for young adults to connect, engage, and build lasting friendships within our Jewish community.

At the heart of this new Pod are residents Alexa Hulse and Arianna Fronzaglia, both 22 years old and longtime friends from Waxhaw, N.C. Their commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive community will shape the future of Jewish life in Charlotte.

## Meet the Residents:

Alexa Hulse is a social media manager for "Lilith Magazine" and "jGirls+ Magazine." A recent graduate of Hollins University, where she majored in Gender and Women's Studies, Alexa discovered her passion for community building through her involvement in Near East Fine Arts and the Jewish Students Alliance. "I began connecting with my Jewish identity during my internship with 'Lilith Magazine' and fell in love with Jewish tradition," she reflects. Alexa has also worked as a teen mentor at Beth Israel Synagogue in Roanoke, Virginia, leading discussions on

the weekly Parshah, and is now a religious school teacher at Temple Beth El. Currently learning Hebrew, she hopes to learn Yiddish soon. In her free time, Alexa enjoys matcha lattes, writing poetry, swimming, and stargazing.

Arianna Fronzaglia, also from Waxhaw, recently graduated from Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She is starting her career in a nurse residency program at a hospital in uptown Charlotte, where she will work in various adult acute care units. "I was raised in an interfaith household and a predominantly Christian community," Arianna shares. "I am eager to connect more with my Jewish roots and build a network among other Jewish people who have had similar experiences." In her free time, Arianna enjoys reading and exploring new hobbies as she settles into her new role.

Alexa and Arianna are dedicated to creating an inclusive environment for young Jewish adults, where individuals can gather, celebrate Jewish traditions, and forge meaningful connections. They envision hosting events that cater to diverse interests and backgrounds, ensuring that everyone feels welcome in this new community.

Moishe House is committed to engaging Jewish young adults in



Alexa Hulse



Arianna Fronzaglia

meaningful ways, empowering them to be the creators of their own communities. Through an ecosystem of interconnected programs — Moishe Houses and Pods, Immersive Jewish Learning, and Moishe House Without Walls MHWOW) — this model ensures that Jewish young adults around the world have access to gatherings nearly every night of the week.

Since establishing a presence in Charlotte in 2013, Moishe House has reached over 16,000 young adults across the Carolinas through more than 1,100 diverse programs. This has enabled emerging Jewish leaders in the region to create meaningful, welcoming communities for themselves and their peers by hosting ongoing events.

The opening of this new Moishe Pod in Charlotte comes

at an important time, as many young Jewish adults seek spaces to explore their identities and build connections. In light of rising antisemitism and social divisions, this Pod symbolizes a commitment to cultivating a resilient and vibrant Jewish community in the Queen City.

Alexa and Arianna expressed their excitement for this new chapter, emphasizing their desire to create a home that embodies warmth, support, and inclusivity. "We want to make our space feel like a true community hub, where everyone can come together and celebrate our shared values and traditions," they said.

Moishe Pod Charlotte has already begun fostering community connections through its initial events. The residents kicked off their programming with a "New Year, New Pod" Rosh HaShanah

Happy Hour at Rosie's Coffee & Wine Garden, where attendees enjoyed wine, apples, honey, and challah to celebrate the new year and the start of this exciting venture. They also hosted a Sukkot-themed Sunday picnic at First Ward Park, featuring festive fall snacks and crafts, bringing people together in a joyous atmosphere.

Looking ahead, Moishe Pod Charlotte has plans for various programs, including Shabbat dinners, cultural events, and opportunities for volunteerism. This initiative aims to enrich the lives of its residents while positively impacting the broader Charlotte Jewish community.

As Moishe Pod Charlotte begins this journey, we invite the community to support its mission. To learn more about upcoming events, connect with residents, or contribute to the Pod's activities, visit [moishehouse.org](http://moishehouse.org). Your involvement can help strengthen and enrich our Jewish community, ensuring that young adults have a place to gather, celebrate, and express their identities. Together, let's build a bright future for Jewish life in Charlotte!



## Hurricane

(Continued from page 34)

control the weather, an antisemitic trope peddled by Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, who has apologized for her past embrace of the theory that the Rothschild family used space lasers to cause wildfires. She echoed the trope again last week.

"Yes they can control the weather," she said Thursday on X. "It's ridiculous for anyone to lie and say it can't be done."

Within two days, her tweet became a joke on Saturday Night Live. "I don't know who 'they' is, but it has been a suspiciously nice Rosh HaShanah weekend," said comedian Michael Che during the "Weekend Update" segment.

Government officials say X remains one of the most efficient means for the government to get out information to the public, but it has also become a nexus for falsehoods, antisemitism and other forms of bigotry — particularly since Elon Musk bought the platform formerly known as Twitter in 2022 and weakened or removed guardrails around hate speech and disinformation.

Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the Anti-Defamation League, mentioned the attacks on Man-

heimer and others when he appeared on Sunday on CNN to discuss the spike in antisemitism in the year since the Oct. 7, 2023 Hamas invasion of Israel.

"There has been an avalanche of antisemitic conspiracies directed at the mayor, directed at FEMA, as if somehow the Mossad is involved in distributing disaster relief," he said.

Amy Spitalnick, the CEO of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, a national public policy group, said antisemitism and efforts to undermine government went hand in hand. "Antisemitic conspiracy theories are intended to sow distrust in our government and our democracy — leading directly to harassment and threats against Jews and ultimately making all of us unsafe," she said.

Rothenberg said the only role her Judaism played was in motivating her to public service.

"Judaism teaches you the importance of helping others," she said. "And I am determined to continue helping people and making sure they have access to support from our agency."

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# Friendship Circle

(Continued from page 38)

hometown, she remains connected to the friends she made during her time with Friendship Circle. Weiss explains, "I am always tempted to visit because of how welcoming and friendly everyone is. I also love being able to hang out with Lexi and so many other friends!"

Looking ahead, Weiss plans to apply her experiences with Friendship Circle to her future career path. "Overall, being a part of these organizations has helped make me who I am today and has helped me grow as a person. I have made so many long-lasting friendships and connections throughout my time in these organizations, and I am so

thankful for all of these experiences. I can confidently say that this is the line of work I will do in the future," she expressed with passion and certainty.

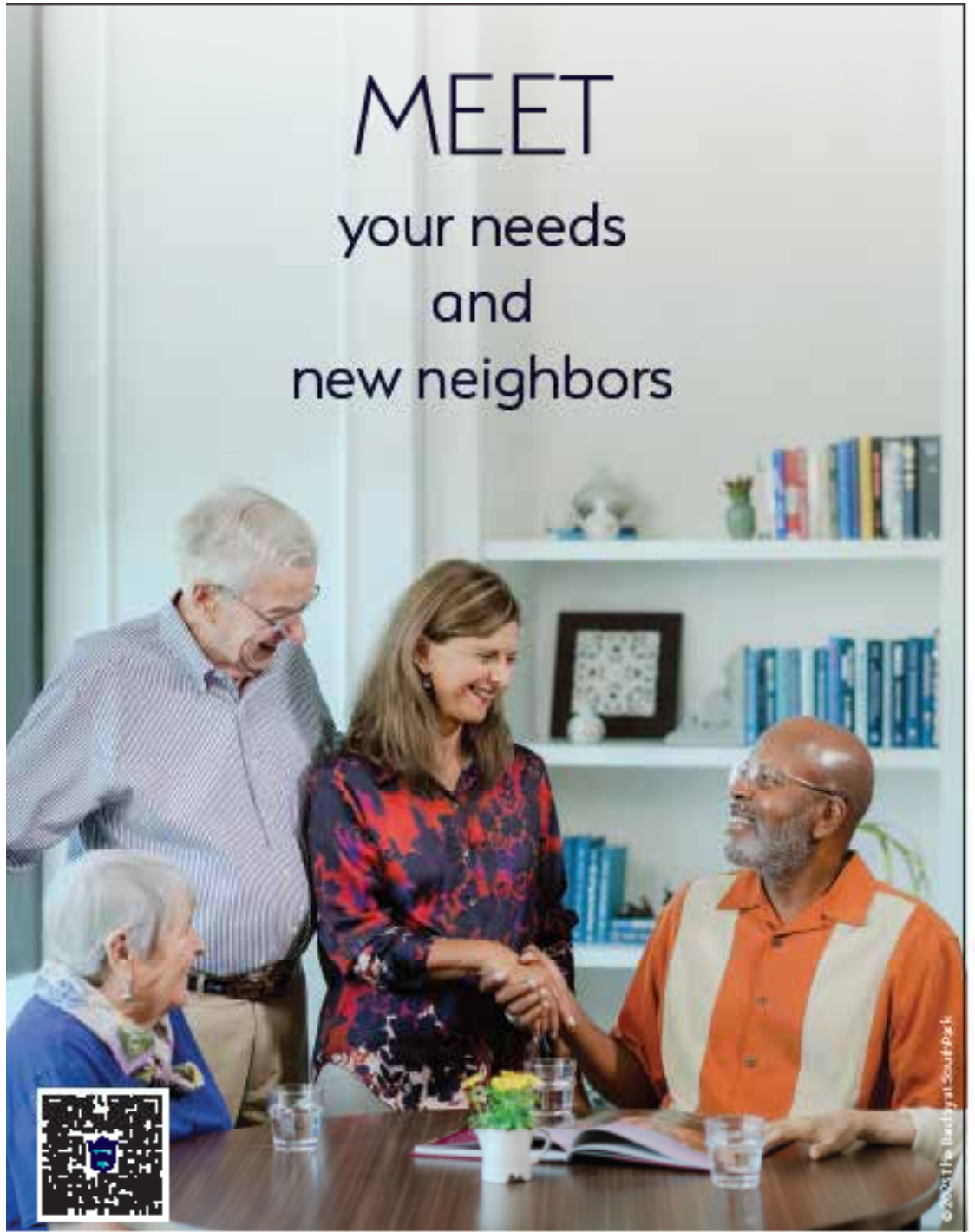
Weiss's story is a testament to the long-lasting impact that Friendship Circle has on its participants, proving that the friendships and lessons learned extend far beyond the program, shaping futures and strengthening communities.

*Friendship Circle is a beneficiary agency of Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. To learn more, visit [friendshipcircelenc.org](http://friendshipcircelenc.org).*



(Puzzle on page 39)

1	N	E	W		4	T	A	P		7	C	A	R	10	P	A	S				
13	E	L	A		14	O	S	S		15	A	L	E	R	T	S					
16	D	E	V	17	O	R	A	H		18	M	A	M	E	L	E					
	19	V	I	I					20	T	E	R	E	M							
21	Y	A	E	L		22	S	H	L	O	M	Z	I	24	O	N					
26	E	T	S		27	S	H	I	V	S				28	E	S	Y				
29	R	E	T	30	R	E	A	T						31	B	O	R	I	C		
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36	F	37	I	S	38	T	S			39	E	V	A	S	40	I	O	42	N		
43	I	S	H					44	S	A	V	E	S		46	N	N	E			
47	G	O	L	48	A	M	E	I	R					50	A	H	A	B			
				51	O	R	D	E	R					52	A	G	A	G			
53	M	54	A	M	I	L	A			55	J	E	Z	E	B	E	L	57			
58	G	L	O	V	E	R				59	T	R	I					60	I	R	E
61	M	I	S	E	R	Y				62	S	E	Z					63	T	S	A



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16,500 blankets have been donated to the Levine Children's Hospital, Hemby Children's Hospital and the Shriners Hospital (Greenville, SC) and 10,000 chemo hats have been donated to facilities for cancer patients around Charlotte.

Join Us!

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

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, November, 1989. 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 1989

### Helping Hands Offered During Hurricane Hugo's Havoc

By Rita Mond

Everyone has experienced firsthand the havoc that Hurricane Hugo brought to the Carolinas. The only good thing that came out of it was the "brotherhood" that was shown to all its victims. Neighbors helped neighbors, work crews came in from near and far. Food, clothing, and money were distributed to those in need. People are still helping in many capacities, and it will probably take a year or years in some cases to get back to normal. All those who have given unselfishly of their time and resources must be commended for all that they have done.

Among the many individuals and groups who have aided residents in Charlotte and Charleston has been B'nai B'rith Women.

Here in Charlotte, BBW's Charlotte Chapter had its

members call other members, friends, and neighbors to determine whom they could help. They collected food and clothing for our community and have been sending necessities to Charleston. Abbe Bryan, a steering committee member of the chapter, said, "We're working with other groups that have rented 18-wheelers to take clothes, food, and baby food to centers." The members have donated the food, clothing, and money to the effort.

BBW's HaLailah Chapter has sent gift baskets of food and staples to Jewish families in Charleston which helped them celebrate Rosh HaShanah. Randy DeFilipp, chairman of the project, said that gift baskets were prepared with the contributions of Jewish merchants across the country and sent to families within two days after

the hurricane. The baskets included salamis, challahs, honey cakes, and sabbath candles. Other Jewish merchants across the country have been contacted for further contributions.

Members of BBW's Columbia, S.C. chapter made hundreds of phone calls in conjunction with local synagogue sisterhoods to determine what was needed in Charleston. Three van loads of food and supplies were delivered to Charleston within a week after the hurricane. Leaders of the effort drove five hours to bring eight cases of wine, 300 challahs, bushels of apples, batteries, charcoal, and bandages to the Charleston Jewish Community Center. "It was wonderful to see how fast people came and brought," Heidi Lovit, president of Columbia Chapter said. "We felt strong, espe-

cially because of the Jewish holidays. I think they needed a little spirit lifting. Just showing them we cared and helped."

The Charlotte Jewish Community Center played an important role during the electrical outages by providing shower facilities for all in the community who needed it. They also had food available for the many people who availed themselves of the JCC's facilities. Special camps were held for the children while school was out. The JCC was like a "home away from home."

The Jewish Family Services was busy collecting food and money for families who were hard hit during Hugo's reign. The temples also put out please for donations of food and collected tons for the needy.

We had many heroes and

heroines during the storm. Too many to recognize and thank individually. There were some who took families into their homes; others who gave their time to cook meals, babysit, cut down trees, and put tarps on roofs. Our hats go off to the tireless efforts of Duke Power. Southern Bell, Cablevision and their crews as well as the work crews from out of town. They have an are still doing a magnificent job in all this upheaval.

With all the bad that is happening in this world, all the destruction that transpires, there is still a glimmer of hope when we see "neighbor helping neighbor" and the "brotherly love" that still prevails.

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# VOTE

## DATES & DEADLINES

**OCT. 11: VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE (5 P.M.).\***

**OCT. 17: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING BEGINS; SAME-DAY REGISTRATION AVAILABLE.**

**OCT. 29: ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST DEADLINE (5 P.M.).\***

**NOV. 2: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING ENDS (3 P.M.).**

**NOV. 5: GENERAL ELECTION DAY. POLLS WILL BE OPEN FROM 6:30AM - 7:30PM.**

**NOV. 5: ABSENTEE BALLOT RETURN DEADLINE (7:30 P.M.).\***

Offices up for election in 2024 include the following:

U.S. President/Vice President, U.S. House of Representatives, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Attorney General, Agriculture Commissioner, Labor Commissioner, Insurance Commissioner, State Senator, State Representative, N.C. Supreme Court Justice, N.C. Court of Appeals Judge, Superior Court Judge, District Court Judge, District Attorney, County Commissioner, Clerk of Superior Court, Register of Deeds

Many counties have elections for boards of commissioners and boards of education. A number of municipalities also have elections for mayor and seats on the municipal governing board.



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### MECKLENBURG COUNTY

Mecklenburg County Specific Voting Information

[WWW.VOTE.MECKNC.GOV](http://WWW.VOTE.MECKNC.GOV)



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