

The Charlotte JEWISH news

An Affiliate of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

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April 2018

Join Federation, and Be the Start of Something Powerful!

Through our Annual Campaign, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte joins with 153 Federations across North America to answer the needs of the Jewish world.

When a child needs a Jewish education, a subsidy to participate in a Jewish experience like Jewish summer camp or a BBYO leadership conference, Federation is there. When a family loses its income or an entire community is devastated by a disaster, Federation is there. It's a pledge we live by.

Whether nurturing and sustaining Jewish identity for future generations or supporting our brothers and sisters in Israel, Federation is where our community comes together as one; where we, as a community, develop innovative responses to critical issues; where anyone who needs help can get it; where an energized Jewish community grows and celebrates; and where everyone can make a difference.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte has been supporting, sustaining and revitalizing Jewish life for more than 75 years. Today our work is far from finished – and we need your support to meet our 2018 Campaign Goal of \$4,000,000 ... much needed dollars to help us meet the

needs of our entire Jewish community.

Your contribution enables us to use your gift wherever it's needed most. 70% of our Annual Campaign is allocated to nearly 50 local agencies and programs in Charlotte; while 30% of the campaign is allocated to our partner agencies in Israel, and in 70 countries around the world.

Help us answer the needs of the Jewish world by making your pledge to Federation today.

We pledge to answer the needs but we can only do that with your help. If you have already pledged to the 2018 Annual Campaign, we thank you. If not, please consider a meaningful pledge today. For a complete list of our 2018 allocations, or to donate online, please visit www.jewishcharlotte.org. All pledges are payable and due December 31.

So join us, and be the start of something powerful. We can't do it without you. ☆

CAMPAIGN 2018: AT A GLANCE

Goal: \$4,000,000

950 Donors

45% Complete

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\$1,812,084 as of 3-16-18



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AIPAC Policy Conference 2018: The View from Participants



Robert Stephen Ford, former ambassador to Syria, with Charlotte delegation head, Sam Zimmern. Photo by Alyson Traw

Alyson Grossman Traw: On March 4-6, an energized pro-Israel group headed out from Charlotte to join 18,000 of our closest friends for the AIPAC Policy Conference. AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee), the largest pro-Israel bi-partisan lobbying group in the United States, works to strengthen and advocate for the United States – Israel relationship in ways that benefit both countries. Policy Conference brings together people of all political stripes and from all walks of life.

This year, we had the privilege of hearing pro-Israel messages from sitting and former members of Congress from both parties, current and former ambassadors (including Ambassador to the U.N., Nikki Haley), Vice President Mike Pence, members of the Knesset from Israel, along with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. We attended breakout sessions on important topics such as BDS, Syria, and the threat that Iran poses to Israel and the United States. We also had the opportunity to learn about many of the amazing technological, humanitarian, and medical innovations in

Israel and how Israel contributes around the world. This included meeting Winston, a guide dog trained at the Israeli Guide Dog Center – the only nationally accredited guide dog center in the Middle East. As a lover of olive oil, I particularly enjoyed meeting with the senior scientists from Volcani – a division of the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture – to learn about olive oil production and how they are working to make hummus even healthier. AIPAC National Council member Cindy Montanez, the youngest woman ever elected to the CA legislature, shared the important contribution Israel made to Mexico after the 7.1 earthquake hit on September 19. This story is not unique, as there are countless other instances

pending legislation with Rep. Pittenger, Rep. Adams, Rep. McHenry, Rep. Foxx, and Senators Tillis and Burr. Our representatives and senators engaged in thoughtful dialogue and seemed genuinely committed to maintaining the strong bond Israel has with the United States.

For those of us who love Israel and support the special bond Israel has with the United States, Policy Conference is a truly amazing experience. As a small town Jew who grew up in Kingstree, SC, I am moved beyond words each time I attend. I met people of every generation and from all parts of the world. I feel privileged to be part of this diverse, bi-partisan AIPAC community, and I cannot wait until my children are old enough to join me in this unique experience.



Conference attendance was 18,000 strong. Photo by Shelley Pawlyk

of Israeli aid workers quietly helping around the world (including in their own backyard in Syria) and engaging in tikkun olam. Policy Conference always concludes with a day of lobbying our Congressional delegation on Capitol Hill. Our group, led by Sam Zimmern, had the opportunity to have meaningful conversations about

Ginny Rosenberg: The 2018 AIPAC Policy Conference, "Choose to Lead," featured the positive aspects of the U.S.-Israeli relationship and highlights of AIPAC's current lobbying efforts on behalf of Israel.

The conference also featured the best of Israeli technology,

(Continued on page 24)

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Sue's Book Shelf

By Sue Littauer



My recommendations this month offer a “behind the scene” look into the lives of circus performers and magicians ... the plots however are hardly the scenarios you would expect. One is about a circus family during the Holocaust; the other about four siblings haunted by a gypsy’s prediction of the dates of their deaths.

The Immortalists by Chloe Benjamin

If you knew the date of your death, how would you live your life? It’s 1969 in New York City’s Lower East Side, and word has spread of the arrival of a mystical woman, a traveling psychic who claims to be able to tell anyone the day they will die. The Gold chil-

dren — four adolescents on the cusp of self-awareness — sneak out to hear their fortunes. Their prophecies inform their next five decades. Golden-boy Simon escapes to the West Coast, searching for love in ‘80s San Francisco; dreamy Klara becomes a Las Vegas magician, obsessed with blurring reality and fantasy; eldest son Daniel seeks security as an army doctor post-9/11 hoping to control fate; and bookish Varya throws herself into longevity research, where she tests the boundary between science and immortality. A sweeping novel of remarkable ambition and depth, *The Immortalists* is a deeply moving testament to the power of story, the nature of belief, and the unre-



lenting pull of familial bonds. (Book Browse) I found *The Immortalists* to be an unusual, intriguing and compelling book which raises multiple questions about the power of suggestion, choice vs. destiny, and reality vs. illusion.

The Orphan’s Tale
by Pam Jenoff

The Orphan’s Tale is a powerful novel of friendship set in a traveling circus during World War II. This work of historical fiction is an unusual Holocaust story about hidden Jews and righteous gentiles, and the struggles they faced to ensure the safety of their circus “family.”

The Orphan’s Tale introduces Noa and Astrid, two extraordinary women and their harrowing stories of sacrifice and survival. Sixteen-year-old Noa is cast out of her family in disgrace after becoming pregnant by a Nazi soldier and is forced to give up her baby. In a moment that will change the course of her life, she discovers a boxcar containing dozens of Jewish infants bound for a concentration camp, snatches one of the babies and flees into the snowy night. Noa finds refuge with a Ger-

man circus, but she must learn the flying trapeze act so she can blend in undetected, spurning the resentment of the lead aerialist, Astrid. At first rivals, Noa and Astrid soon forge a powerful bond. But as the facade that protects them proves increasingly tenuous, Noa and Astrid must decide whether their friendship is enough to save one another — or if the secrets that burn between them will destroy everything.

Each of these books can be found in the Center for Jewish Education.

CJE Book Club News

The CJE Book Club meets the third Wednesday of the month from 10:30 AM– 12 noon in the Center for Jewish Education.

April 18 - *All the Rivers*, Dorit Rabinyan

May 16 - *Don’t Let My Baby Do Rodeo*, Boris Fishman ☆

Check out what's happening this month at the CJE ?

CJE CALENDAR: APRIL 2018

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
The Center for Jewish Education (CJE) enhances community engagement, promotes lifelong Jewish learning, and creates pathways to Jewish identity. LIBRARY HOURS: Monday - Thursday, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm; Friday, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm; and Sunday, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm LIBRARY WILL BE CLOSED FOR PASSOVER; Sunday, APRIL 1 & Friday, APRIL 6 (NO STORYTIME ON APRIL 4)						
7	8	9	10 Hebrew Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	11 Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	12	13 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library
14	15	16	17	18 CJE Book Club 10:30AM Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	19	20 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library
21	22	23	24	25 Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	26	27 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library
28 PJ Library & TBE Lag B'Omer @ Wise Acre Farms 4:00 pm	29	30	SAVE THE DATE: MAY 24, 7:00 PM SAM LERNER CENTER Jewish-American Heritage Month Book and Author Program with Leonard Rogoff, author of <i>Gertrude Weil: Jewish Progressive in the New South</i>			

SHABBAT AND HOLIDAYCANDLE
LIGHTING FOR APRIL 2018

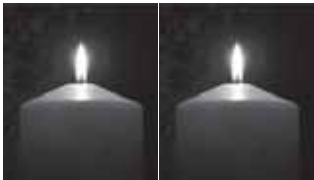
Thursday, April 5, 7th night of Pesach, 7:30 PM

Friday, April 6, 7:30 PM

Friday, April 13, 7:36 PM

Friday, April 20, 7:42 PM

Friday, April 27, 7:47 PM



The Charlotte Jewish News

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SYNAGOGUES & CONGREGATIONS

Celebrate Israel @ 70 with the Jewish Community of Lake Norman

The Jewish Council of Lake Norman invites all to participate in our Israel @ 70 celebration, Sunday, April 22 at Temple Kol Tikvah, 605 South St., Davidson, NC, 11:30 AM-1:30 PM.

We will have Israeli foods, music, dancing, games, prizes, and camaraderie.

Enjoy a selection of authentic Israeli delicacies: falafel, hum-

mus, pitas, Israeli salad, tachina, hamutzim, macaroni and cheese, pizza, fruit, nourekas, pastries, etc.

Adults: \$14; Children: \$6. Save \$2 per adult if purchased before April 20.

For tickets, go to www.JewishCouncilofLakeNorman.org or www.JCLKN.ORG. ✱



Lake Norman Jewish Council to Hold a Deli Day May 6

12 noon-2:30 PM at Temple Kol Tikvah, 605 South Street, Davidson, NC

For those of us “transplanted Yankees,” a common topic of conversation is how we miss the authentic, traditional, delicious New York Deli. The council will make it possible to indulge in some of those favorites. The council is made up of Congregation Emanuel in Statesville, Temple Kol Tikvah in Davidson, the Lake Norman Chapter of Hadasah, and a few independent board members, along with generous funding from the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte to bring Jewish cultural events to the area.

A little background history of why Jewish deli became so popular:

Pastrami, corned beef, and other kosher and kosher-style deli meats (salami, bologna, tongue, even some forms of roast beef) are meat products that are cured in various ways to preserve freshness in the absence of refrigeration. This was particularly important, generations ago, for

Jewish people who lived in Eastern Europe and in precarious circumstances. As families were constantly prepared to leave in a hurry, it was of prime importance to create an inexpensive protein that lasted a long time and traveled well.



During the 19th and 20th centuries, when many of us from Eastern Europe immigrated to the United States, they quite naturally brought their dietary preferences with them. Thus was born, in New York City and elsewhere, the Kosher Jewish delicatessen, where pastrami, corned beef, and similar delicacies would be thinly carved and piled high on Jewish-style rye bread, with a few dollops of yellow mustard, of course, and

a pickle on the side (maybe even some sauerkraut).

Many volunteers are adding their preferences for favorites as this day is being planned. A kosher style deli day would not be complete without potato knishes and hot dogs.

The sisterhoods are already volunteering to add their baking expertise to the day. And special interest for our competitive *bullabustas*: a noodle kugel tasting competition will be part of the event.

To pre-order online, visit: www.jewishcounciloflakenorman.org/deli-day.

Pre-orders must be placed by April 8 and will benefit from a 10% discount.

You can either eat-in or take-out your deli delights. There will be other surprises to make the day complete. Save the date and have fun with your family and friends. This event will be bigger and better than the success we saw last year at our Inaugural Deli Day Fest.

You can act now by pre-ordering, to avoid sandwich-related disappointment later. ✱

Groundbreaking for the Selkin Friendship Circle Youth Center at Chabad of Charlotte

Where can you find over 250 people braving the rain on a Sunday afternoon and feeling inspired, uplifted, and motivated? This was the scene on Sunday, March 11, on the Chabad Sardis Road campus where friends, supporters and donors gathered under a large tent to break ground of the new Chabad youth building. A surprise announcement electrified the crowd that Bobby and Stacy Selkin have dedicated the building as the Selkin Friendship Circle Youth Center.

The new building will be home to Friendship Circle, Cteens, and Chabad Talmud Torah. ✱



Left to right: Rabbi Ben Tzion Groner, Bobby Selkin, Skyler Selkin, Stacy Selkin, and Rochel Groner.

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THE SEQUEL

Goodness is not a single act. It's the sum of many parts. Which is why Federation is always at work, powering the Jewish community in ways you might not think of, in places you'd never suspect. We're there in times of crisis, sowing the seeds of hope. We're there in quiet moments that transform lives and strengthen our legacy. Right now, thousands of people need us in a multitude of ways. This is your moment to help. Join us, and be the start of something powerful.

DONATE. VOLUNTEER. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

APRIL 29, 2018

www.jewishcharlotte.org

JLI in Charlotte Presents New Course: What Is? Deeper Thinking, Deeper Living in Charlotte

A new way of Jewish thinking comes to Charlotte. Beginning Tuesday April 24, JLI of Charlotte will be offering *What Is? Rethinking Everything We Know About Our Universe* — a fascinating, new six-session course from the famed Rohr Jewish Learning Institute.

The authors description of the course reads: Drawing on the wisdom of Chassidic teaching, the most basic building blocks of existence are reexamined from the bottom up, revolutionizing our understanding of life, reality, and our place in the world.

"I find that many people today are looking to deepen their experience of life," explains Rabbi Yossi Groner of Chabad of Charlotte, the JLI Instructor of the evening classes. "This JLI course invites participants to live more deeply, by deepening their thinking, insight, awareness of the fundamentals of life and of our universe."

What Is? explores six of the most intriguing questions that have ever plagued mankind, such as: Is the world real? Is time travel possible? Why does evil exist? Who is God? And what is consciousness?

Everything that we experience, we experience inside our heads, leading to the intriguing question: Maybe there is no existence outside of our minds? But perhaps a

more fundamental question would be: What practical difference does it make if the world is real or not?

Are we bound by fate? If God already knows what we will do tomorrow, is our "free choice" nothing more than an illusion? And with so many powerful influences outside of our control — or even our awareness — influencing our choices, how "free" could they possibly be?

"Our goal is to invite participants to seek out a deeper understanding of their world," explained Rabbi Zalman Abraham, of JLI's editorial team. "In doing so, we hope to give people the tools to experience a richer, deeper, and more meaningful life."

Like all JLI programs, this course is designed to appeal to people at all levels of knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the wider Charlotte Jewish community, and accepts students from all Jewish backgrounds.

Interested in taking the class? Please call our office at 704-366-3984 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and for other course-related information. JLI courses are presented in Charlotte as part of the ongoing educational effort of Chabad in Charlotte.

Evening classes will be on six



consecutive Tuesdays, beginning on April 24, at 7:30 PM, and led by Rabbi Yossi Groner. Morning classes will begin on Wednesday April 25, 11 AM, and will be led by Rabbi Shlomo Cohen. Fee for course is \$99 (textbook included). Couples discount is \$180.☆

This Lag B'Omer Celebration Is One of Significance

On Thursday, May 3, at 6 PM, Chabad of Charlotte will host a Lag B'Omer dinner and bonfire at the Chabad Campus on Sardis Road. Lag B'Omer is traditionally a time when people enjoy the outdoors and gather and share the special holiday that originated in Talmudic times, with stories of the famous Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. This year's Lag B'Omer celebration is especially significant for Chabad of Charlotte, as the grassy area in the front of the campus will soon be developed into the New Chabad Center. Chabad is inviting

the entire community to relish the moment of enjoying the grassy area one more time before the new facility construction begins. The event will be complete with children's activities, Israeli music, a Kosher Barbecue dinner, roasting marshmallows and more. The bonfire will be the perfect setting for singing "Hinei MaTov," "Am Yisroel Chai," and other songs as well as stories told by our expert story teller, Rabbi Binyomin Weiss. For more information or to make a reservation, go to chabadnc.org or call 704-366-3984. The cost to join the dinner is \$15 per adult, \$8 per child or \$45 per family. ☆



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Temple Solel Promotes Cultural Outreach

Temple Solel's Event Chair and local business owner, Tanya Trachtenberg, is an active professional and mother of three young sons. Social communications and engaging the local community is a strength of hers, connecting people of multiple faiths and background. This shouldn't be a surprise knowing the legacy of her family. Her father and uncle were the only holocaust survivors in the Trachtenberg family. Beginning as a young child, Tanya heard her dad account the stories of their family and how they perished in Auschwitz. As so many others experienced during the Holocaust, he was labeled with a number imprinted on his forearm. We are reminded especially during this timeframe the importance of education and remembering our history, so these atrocities do not repeat themselves.

With Tanya's three boys currently enrolled in Fort Mill schools, opportunities to speak at Tega Cay and Gold Hill Middle Schools happen frequently. Most recently she spoke to six classes of fifth graders at Tega Cay Elementary School about the history of Chanukah and taught them Hebrew letters and how to play dreidel. Soon, she will be speaking to the 7th grade class at Gold Hill Middle School in Fort Mill about Holocaust Memorial Day.

She will share her family's firsthand experience, the history behind the holocaust, and



Max and Shirley Trachtenberg (parents).

engage the students in realizing the person standing in front of their class is a direct descendant of a family that fell victim to the Holocaust. She explains how real this historical event was and in an act to drive change, we all have a responsibility to intentionally get to know each other in a deeper way. Tanya Trachtenberg said, "It is key we prevent these monstrosities from recurring again by reminding all who will listen to our voices right now - today."

What a "living" legacy opportunity each of us have in the Jewish community to share our stories. Tanya sets an example for us all to not be afraid to speak about our customs, history, and practices to help others in our sphere of influence understand

that how we live is relevant culturally and historically. Promoting cultural outreach in our local communities achieves friendship and understanding of our commonalities and how we can embrace our differences as well.

It is easy to remain within our comfort zone, but reaching out to those who are different from ourselves sets an example in hopes of reciprocity. Demonstrating our sense of community in person continues to be a successful approach for Temple Solel members whether it is serving food on another person's holiday like our team did for the Rock Hill Children's Attention Home during Christmas, or collecting goods for local food banks to feed our neighbors. We recently delivered 15 bags of groceries to the UMC Belair Food Panty in Indian Land and regularly donate food and non-perishables to the Fort Mill



Tanya Trachtenberg with sons William, Ethan and Cooper.

Care Center.

We had a large effort come together flawlessly through the leadership of Caring Committee Chair, Carol Hahn, in partnership with representatives from Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church and School. Thanks to the help of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte 2018 Impact and Innovation Fund Grant, we were able to hold an educational Children's Seder on March 18 with approximately 200 high school students and 16 teachers. Russ Cobe, lay leader and Ritual Officer of Temple Solel taught about our Pesach rituals. The Sisterhood worked together to prepare the Seder plates while Brotherhood volunteers



Tanya Trachtenberg with brothers Harry and Sam



helped set up. There were people from our synagogue at each table to help guide the teachers and young people in the abbreviated Haggadah reading. This is a new opportunity that has developed over a two-year period that was so successful it could become an annual event.

Many times we can drive change by further developing our community relationships, promoting education, and identifying harmony while in the midst of embracing our differences. Tanya's story is an excellent reminder that we need to speak up in our circles of influence, explain who we are, and help our neighbors understand that the people who stand before them are living testaments to the generations we almost lost and to never forget those who were lost so their lives may be a blessing. The Trachtenberg family lives because of Max Trachtenberg. Let our lives be a blessing now and for the generations to come.

For more information visit us on Facebook, our website at: www.templesolelsc.org or call 803-619-9707.✳

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Commemorate and Celebrate

Tuesday, April 17

YOM HAZIKARON

Israel Memorial Day

7:00 PM, Memorial Ceremony

**Sam Lerner Center
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Jewish Federation
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Sunday, April 22

YOM HA'ATZMAUT FESTIVAL

Israel Independence Day

Shalom Park

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Israeli food, music, children's
activities, crafts and more.....



Registration: 10:00 am
at Jefferson Drive
entrance, walk starts
at 11:00 am



For more information visit www.jewishcharlotte.org or call 704.944.6757

Havurat Tikvah Kicks Off Spring with Services and Learning Opportunity

Havurat Tikvah will hold a Community Shabbat Service on April 14, 10 AM, at Avondale Presbyterian Church, Vanguard Classroom, 2821 Park Rd. Following services, kiddush, along

with challah and blessings will be held.

Then on April 22, the congregation will engage in viewing and studying the work of Amy-Jill Levine at its Brunch and Learn. Details on the location and time are still be finalized as of press time. Visit the website for more information.

The congregation continues its monthly third Wednesday minyanim on April 18 at the Saxe residence.

Havurat Tikvah is a warm, supportive and nurturing Jewish Reconstructionist congregation with

Shabbat services and a full spectrum of holiday observances, as well as religious educational options for both adults and children. We are a diverse group of families, singles, and Jewish and interfaith couples who participate in projects that promote social justice.

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

Havurat Tikvah is an affiliate of the Reconstructing Judaism movement. This new name was adopted and announced to the worldwide membership during January.

For more information on upcoming services, programs, mem-



bership or other queries, call 980-225-5330, write to Havurat Tikvah, P.O. Box 12684, Charlotte, NC 28220, email membership@havurattikvah.org or visit havurattikvah.org. Havurat Tikvah is also on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/havurattikvah/.✧

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Purim Was a Blast at Temple Kol Ami

Every year, Purim is a much anticipated holiday at Temple Kol Ami of Fort Mill, SC. As Jewish kids have done for many generations, our children (and some adults) look forward to dressing up, hamantaschen, and the Purim Carnival. This year did not disappoint. We started off the festivities with our annual Purim Shpiel during Friday night service on March 2. The TKA Not Quite Ready for Primetime Players did a wonderful improv of the Purim story that had the congregation laughing and, of course, booing the evil Haman. Then, on Sunday, March 4, it was time for the Purim Carnival held at Ivybrook Academy in Fort Mill. Close to 50 children from Temple Kol Ami as well as the York County Jewish community enjoyed games, a bouncy house, face painting, a fortune teller, prizes, hamantaschen, and cotton candy. A fantastic time was had by



Students of TKA Religious School making mishloach manot gift bags.

all and it was the biggest carnival to date for Temple Kol Ami. As TKA has grown, we have been able to bring more of these experiences to the Jewish community of Greater York County and South Charlotte.

Although we look forward to all the fun traditionally associated with Purim, it is always important to educate our children about the lessons of the Purim story as well as the mitzvah of giving mishloach manot. The kids of TKA Religious School decorated and filled bags with snacks and toiletries to donate to the Clover Area Community Assistance organization. They made 86 bags in all, and the children learned the importance of helping those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

If you live in York County or the Ballantyne area, Temple Kol Ami might be the place for you. We are a warm and inclusive congregation comprised of Jews from diverse backgrounds. There are so

(Continued on next page)



Esther wins the beauty pageant during TKA's Purim Shpiel

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Focus on Tikkun Olam This Passover

By Moira Quinn Klein, Past President, Temple Beth El

I so look forward to Passover and the Seder even with all the work to clean, cook, set the table with my best, bring out the Passover plate and Haggadahs ... and my favorite: the bag of plagues. I take off from work and begin the marathon of preparation, table set-up, cooking, the Seder itself, and cleanup. We have games that are unique to our family ... reinvigorated with grandchildren ... it's the way of the Seder.

And I actually like matzah. Sue me.

But, today, the Seder has become more. It is a perfect frame for social justice and action in homes across our community and the world. The symbols on the Seder plate can be tied to any number of vital issues and causes. This is the ideal teaching moment and a time to really live our ideals, especially the ideal of Tikkun Olam.

One of the overarching themes of Passover is generosity, a time to open our hearts and tents wide to welcome the stranger into our homes and tables. We are reminded clearly that we were once the slaves and the strangers. We think of those less fortunate and are implored to act.

As Jews, we believe strongly in Tikkun Olam. Is this the Passover we might focus on those among us with no "tents" to open? Might we think about our homeless or near homeless neighbors including those with a fragile, barely affordable "tent"?

But, as Jews who believe in Tikkun Olam, we can do something about many of these issues.

At all of our Jewish institutions, including Temple Beth El, we can address affordable housing and homelessness. Have you joined a Habitat for Humanity build? I am thrilled to be part of the Baby Boomer group that helped build an affordable housing Habitat for Humanity home for a deserving family.

Room in the Inn is another way to help. I know many of you participate, as my husband and I do. It provides a temporary respite for those with no homes...at least for a few nights. At a recent Room in the Inn at another house of worship, my boss served a meal, then sat to break bread with the guests.



Moira Quinn Klein

Everyone at his table...everyone...had a job. This is the changing profile of the homeless in our community. They are working poor for whom affordable housing is out of reach. At the next Room in the Inn, volunteer and sit...ask questions and learn.

In my day job, I am a manager for Housing First Charlotte Mecklenburg. We have housed 617 chronically homeless neighbors into permanent housing since 2015. There are still more than 315 on our registry. The Urban Ministry Center, Men's Shelter, and Salvation Army Women's Shelter need your volunteer and philanthropic help. The Men's Shelter is undergoing a four-month major renovation starting in April and needs groups to provide bag lunches for the men who stay there. Contact any of those organizations to step up.

In my day job, I also support the Evergreen Team Affordable Housing Task Force. This group is exploring innovative and sustainable affordable housing strategies that reduce free market barriers and more fully enable the capacity of the private sector, as well as existing affordable housing developers and agencies, to meet the housing needs of every family in the Charlotte region. One of the hot button issues for us is preserving the naturally occurring affordable housing or NOAH. It is becoming scarce. When institutional investors buy and improve aging apartments, rents are increased and become unaffordable. The natural outcome is homelessness. It's a vicious cycle.

As a caring and engaged Jew-

ish community, we need to help get housing built for all members of our community. We can educate ourselves about projects in our communities before we object. Then, if warranted, we can advocate for affordable housing projects when they come before City Council. We can support the Housing Trust Fund Bond coming

up on the November ballot.

This Passover, incorporate social justice and action into your Seder and talk as a family about how you can get more involved. If you want help, Google is your friend. Your synagogue or Federation are also sources of information.

Tikkun Olam must be more than talk. It must be action. This Passover, as you pass the bread of



affliction, let it feel real. And act.

At Mitzvah Day on May 6, Temple Beth El will participate in some of these projects and more. ☆

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Purim at Temple Kol Ami

(Continued from previous page)

many wonderful advantages to being a member of TKA, not the least of which is being a part of the revitalization of the Jewish community of this area. We hope you will come play and pray with us sometime soon. For more information about Temple Kol Ami, check out our website at www.templekolamisc.org. ☆



Kids and adults enjoyed the Purim Carnival



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School

Lessons from Seuss

By Kathy Otte

This past February, Kindergarten completed a month-long author's study of Dr. Seuss. My class read and discussed many Dr. Seuss books, such as *The Lorax*, *The Cat in the Hat*, and *Horton Hears a Who*. We talked about the reasons he wrote each book, whether it was to help children learn to read, or to find a deeper meaning, such as the importance of caring for the earth or that everyone has worth and should be treated equally.

One day, towards the end of the month, we were sitting at circle time and were about to read the very first book Dr. Seuss ever wrote, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. I explained to my students that after an author writes a book, he then needs to send it to someone so they can publish it for people to read. After Dr. Seuss wrote his first book, he sent it away to a publisher. I asked if they thought the publisher said, "Yes, we will publish it!" My students loved listening to and reading Dr. Seuss' books, so they all gave an enthusiastic "Yes!" I responded by saying, "Guess what? The publisher actually said no." They were all very surprised by this. I asked, "Do you think because the publisher said no, Dr. Seuss gave up, and decided not to be an author? Or do you think he decided to try again?" One student said that he must have tried again. I said, "Dr. Seuss sent it away to another publisher and waited to hear from them. Do you think they said 'Yes, we will publish your

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book'?" This time most of my students said yes, but I heard a few no's as well. I continued telling them, "That publisher said no, too. Do you think Dr. Seuss gave up then?" I put my hand up in the air, raising two fingers. "Two publishers said no. And then he sent it away again to another. Do you think they said yes? No, they also said no." I put three fingers in the air. "He sent it again and they said no. And the next publisher said no, too." Four fingers, five fingers, six fingers, seven fingers ... I kept repeating this over and over until we had counted twenty-six times that Dr. Seuss tried to get his first book published. On the twenty-seventh time I asked my students one more time, "The twenty seventh publisher wrote back and what do you think they said?" Most of the children said, "They said no." I smiled then and said, "They said yes, that they will publish Dr. Seuss' book." My students all cheered. I then asked them, "What do you think would have happened if Dr. Seuss would have given up on the first try? Or the second try? Or the twenty-sixth try?" One student said, "We wouldn't have been able to read all of those books he has written." I said, "Dr. Seuss ended up writing

over 60 books, and he has sold over 600 million books since then and is considered the most well known and loved children's author ever. If you really want to do

something in your life, do not ever give up. Keep trying and trying and trying, until you make it happen, just like Dr. Seuss."

That day, I believe that I had

sixteen students leave my classroom determined that nothing will stand in the way of any dream that they have for themselves. ☆

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Special Attention to Students Makes The Jewish Preschool on Sardis a Very Special Place

By Marlo Fox, JPS Mom

We moved to North Carolina four years ago. I scheduled meetings with three preschools on our visit. It wasn't until I found the right school that we decided to move. The Jewish Preschool on Sardis was my last stop on my whirlwind preschool tour. The old adage, "save the best for last," was an understatement. As soon as I walked into Dedee Goldsmith's office, I knew we were "home." It was just a feeling; maybe it was the sincere, warm greeting, maybe it was her openness, or maybe it was her immediate interest in hearing our story. Whatever the reason, it gave me a sense of comfort which enabled me to bare all of my insecurities regarding preschool. She has a gift of sharing her expertise, insight, and guidance with a twist of positivity. The curriculum was unique, intimate and customized to meet every child's (and parent's) needs. I just knew it was the perfect place for my kids.

JPS became our "safe" place for many reasons. It is overwhelming and emotional to recall all of these many special stories but I will capture the ones that stand out most for me. As a family, we were faced with personal challenges during our tenure at JPS. The entire staff supported us and helped us get through some rough days. They were partners in raising our twins, gently advising us when needed, and when they saw something, they said something. Nothing comes between their devotion to the children and the families; it is a true commu-

nity.

I remember one morning poking my head in the office, and the office manager said, "What's up with the binkys?" And I scheduled an appointment with Dedee to discuss "losing the binky." She sat down with us, gave us advice, and we followed it. The kids willingly mailed their binkys to the babies who needed them. It was a big day and it didn't take the kids long to adjust. JPS does not sit back when change is needed and we were open to the partnership they offered.

Ms. Ellen and Ms. Galia welcomed us with open arms in the toddler class. My son cried almost every day at first; I was a wreck and both teachers would tell me, "as soon as you leave, he stops crying" – I found this out when I stood by the door spying on my two-year-old son. The teachers gave him love, comforted him, and refocused him with morning activities. These teachers go above and beyond; they are not only about the words, their actions are loud and clear.

One day, I received a call that my son was not himself, he was lethargic and crying. I raced to the school to find him in the arms of Chaya, the Judaica specialist. She was holding him and did not let go until I showed up. In that moment, I felt her concern and there was no better place for him but in her arms.

During that same year, we found out that our daughter had life-threatening food allergies. The entire staff at JPS is vigilant in keeping her safe; they communicate with us regarding any new foods offered, conduct the proper research, reaching out whenever there is a question.



Another wonderful aspect of our JPS experience is Judaica. The gift Morah Jayme has given my kids is priceless. Her teaching style encompasses patience, love, compassion and the kids are eager to learn about Judaism. I credit her for their love and pride for their religion. My son, now five years old, pretends to be a Rabbi and only requests Judaica for his birthday. He recites Morah Jayme's stories using puppets with such excitement and enthusiasm, bringing such joy to our family.

The final story I'll share is about my daughter. One day, during pick-up in the 3s class, I was greeted by Ms. Wanda, the lead teacher. She pointed out something of concern and recommended exploring it with our pediatrician. Due to Ms. Wanda's sense of care and awareness, we were able to diagnose an important health issue immediately. This is something that we did not notice and due to Ms. Wanda seeing something and saying something prevented my daughter from any lapse in treatment. Our family is forever grateful and will never forget her role in our journey.

There are no words good enough to capture my gratitude for Dedee and the entire staff at JPS. Thank you for the love, compassion, security and for rallying around us during these past four years. I am forever grateful and we will miss you all so much. ✨

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Left: Preparing to pass the next Aleph Champ Level

Below: Cooking experiments



Above: Teaching each other the significance of light

Right: We made these Shofars ourselves



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Purim at The Charlotte Jewish Preschool

By Becca Weiner, *Judaica Specialist*

Charlotte Jewish Preschool students love Purim because it is the silliest holiday of the year. But, it is also an opportunity to learn about the story of Esther as her story teaches all of us to be proud of being Jewish. The story of Queen Esther also showcases the unity of the Jewish people and the way that we have always taken care of each other - and still do to this day.

In celebration of Purim our students completed three of the mitzvot for the holiday: they heard the Purim story, donated food to tzedakah, and made shalach manot bags for their friends. In Judaica class, students listened to the Purim story and then used puppets, felt boards, costumes, and masks to tell their own Purim story. Students used blocks to build King Ahashverosh's palace in Shushan. They also used various instruments to see which one would make the best gragger so we wouldn't be able to hear the wicked Haman's name.

Some of our classes used Purim

as an opportunity to do a mitzvah for Jewish Family Services (JFS). They asked their parents to send in donations for the JFS food pantry and then took a field trip to put the items on the shelf. Todah rabah to Roberta Rodgers at JFS for helping us coordinate our visits and teaching our students about giving to others. Our classes loved the authentic experience and were able to meaningfully contribute food to members of our community.

Additionally, JFS gave us the opportunity to participate in inter-generational programming this Purim. At their Oasis Purim Party our students sang and provided entertainment for the attendees. This was the second time we have participated in programming with them, and both experiences have demonstrated the Judaic value L'dor V'dor for our students.

In their classrooms, each student decorated a shalach manot bag. Some kids used paint, some used markers, others used stickers and gemstones. Once the bags were decorated they were filled with freshly-baked hamantaschen



(made by the students in their classrooms), candy, and a toy. Students traded them with friends in their classroom, and some students brought them home to give to their parents. They learned that our shalach manot bags are for treats and candy so that we can truly indulge in the holiday.

Our Purim experience culminated with our fabulous Purim Parade on Friday, March 2. Our students and teachers marched through the CJP hallways and the Levine JCC dressed in costumes and shaking graggers. The halls were filled with hockey players, PJ masks, superheroes, police officers - and even a Ms. Patty. ☆



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Who Doesn't Like To Laugh? Don't Miss JFS' "Live Laugh Give" Comedy Night

No suits and ties, no cocktail dresses or ball gowns. Just come as you are; it's a jeans and comfort-wear type of night. No, this is not your everyday fundraising gala. It is Greater Charlotte's Live Laugh Give Comedy Night, to benefit Jewish Family Services. The event is being held on Sunday, June 3 at Temple Beth El, and features Gary Gulman, one of only a handful of comics to perform on every single late-night TV talk show.

Live Laugh Give Comedy Night is being touted as a night of food, fun, and philanthropy. It benefits Jewish Family Services, an organization dedicated to helping everybody, especially those who need a helping hand with mental health challenges and food sufficiency. An organization that outreaches to seniors and Holocaust Survivors, and provides educational forums, workshops, and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for everyone in the community.

So, why a Comedy Night and why JFS? We checked in with our three co-chairs for this evening of fun and fundraising: Suzy Cate-



Comedy night co-chairs, left to right: Andrea Cronson, Diana Ades, Suzy Catenazzo

nazzo, Andrea Cronson, and Diana Ades who offered their perspectives.

"Well, who doesn't like to laugh? Laughter makes me feel good. It sets the tone and has the ability to shift me when I need to be shifted," says Andrea Cronson. "I grew up loving comedy clubs, loving to laugh, and being happy. I am committed to doing my part to heal the world. It makes great sense to me to heal the world with an organization that is already poised to do that," Cronson said.

Suzy Catenazzo shared her perspective. "I started volunteering

with JFS when my kids were little. I was a full time mom and my hours were limited, but I wanted to give back. I wanted to contribute in a meaningful way. So I became a driver for JFS. I realized I could drive people to the supermarket or wherever they needed to go, have my kids in the car with me and still be able to help someone who needed it. And it worked. A comedy night is a great concept for JFS. I look at it as an outgrowth of the Mental Health Initiative that JFS is spearheading for the Jewish Community and the other agencies of

Shalom Park. And personally? I learned a long time ago that if you laugh about things that would otherwise make you angry or anxious, the problem doesn't seem to be quite so problematic," said Catenazzo.

They say laughter is the best medicine but it is actually true. Evidence shows that laughter draws people together in ways that trigger healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. It has the ability to strengthen the immune system, boost mood, and diminish pain. And the best part? This priceless medicine is fun, free, and easy to use.

"Laughter is the lotion for the sunburn of Life", says Diana Ades. "Throughout the years, I have been blessed to work with amazing organizations doing wonderful things for the less fortunate, the terminally ill, and the disabled. Regardless of your own situation, I have found that there is always someone who is suffering worse than you are. Giving from the heart is what matters and when you do, it somehow heals you," said Ades. "This Comedy Night is a great idea. It's a new concept, with new committee



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members. In addition to having fun, I hope we can educate our audience about JFS - who they are, what they do and what they bring to the community," Ades said.

Humor has the ability to lighten your burden, inspire hope, and connect you to others, while helping to release anger and be more forgiving. "JFS is all about strengthening and empowering individuals and families. A comedy night is a natural fit for us," said JFS' Executive Director, Howard Olshansky.

We hope you will join us for the Live Laugh Give Comedy Night. Sponsorship opportunities, tickets and VIP Ticket Specials, are available Now. For more information on Live Laugh Give Comedy Night, go to jfscharlotte.org.



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Hadassah Cooks: Cathy Bogus, Ilene Cantor, Sharon Cavanaugh, Donna Greenspon, June Hirschmann, Judy Kaufman, Penny Krieger, Phyllis Romaine, Fran Schuler, Joyce Stoll, Robin Zimmerman

Special Recognition: Temple

Beth El Baby Boomer group for baking Hamantashen: Sharri and Peter Benjamin, Merle and Alan Gottheim, Mindy Marvel, Susan and Bob Abroms, Ann and Eddie Baumgarten, Liz Wahls and David Weinrib, Jeff Bierer, Andrea and George Cronson. The Women of Temple Israel for Baking Hamantashen: Debbi Moore, Jan Weiner, Ruth Paul, Ada Shapiro, Judy Miller, Janice Zacks, Shellie Barer. Hebrew High for making masks for Purim Celebration. ☆



**Jewish Family
SERVICES**
the heart of our community

IN HONOR OF

Barry Bobrow for your presentation at the meeting from Samuel and Linda Levy

IN MEMORY OF

Anna Sherman to Lillian Bienstock from Estelle Rosen

Gerald Greenspan to Mollie Cohen from Austin and Roberta Rodgers

Bernice Sherman to Merridith Glazer from Sandra Weinstein

Gene Schaffer to Carol L. Katz from Billy and Fran Schwartz

Morton Levine to Mimi Levine from Bob Jacobson

Marshall Lindner to Andrew and Gwendolyn Lindner and Faylinda Lindner from Jonathan and Stephanie Simon, Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Brandon Fabes to Peggy Rovman from Bob Jacobson, Harold and Lisa Kaufman

Larry Elliott Widis to Florence Widis from Robert and Ann Abel, Marshall and Barbara Rosenfeld

MAZEL TOV ON

Your Bar Mitzvah to Everett Collman from Ross and Jennifer Levin

The birth of Sophie Beth Cohen to Donald and Susan Jacobs from Steven and Susan Meyer

Your Bat Mitzvah to Mara Levin from Ross and Jennifer Levin

WISHING A FULL AND SPEEDY RECOVERY TO

Laurie Dennis from Lynn Edelstein, Judy Marco

Harriet Perlin from Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Patty Weisman from Paul and Lynn Edelstein

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Jill Newman from Paul and Lynn Edelstein, Gary and Donna Lerner

Betsy Olinger from Susan Meyer

Bernice Roberts from Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Eric Sklut from Howard and Julie Levine ☆



**Jewish Family
SERVICES**
the heart of our community

“When a person eats and drinks at the festive meal he is obligated to provide food for the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, along with the rest of the poor and despondent. But whoever locks the doors of his courtyard, and eats and drinks with his wife and children, and does not provide food and drinks for poor or suffering people, this is not a ‘mitzvah celebration’ but a ‘celebration of his belly’ ... and this kind of celebration is a disgrace for them.”

—Maimonides, Mishnei Torah: Law of Festivals 6:18

BEN-GURION SOCIETY* MISSION TO

ARGENTINA

NOVEMBER 2 - 6, 2018

From tango in the streets of Buenos Aires to the best Malbec in the world, Argentina evokes countless vibrant images.

Home to the largest Jewish population in Latin America, it's also been a hub for Jewish life for more than 150 years.

Join us as we visit the thriving Jewish community of Buenos Aires, tour dazzling historic sites, and engage with Jewish community members who are charting a bright course for Argentina's future.

MISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Visit with one of the largest and most unique Jewish communities in the world today.
- Experience the beauty and culture of the "Paris of South America" at the Colon Opera House, La Boca and the birthplace of the Tango.
- Get up close and personal with Jewish life in South America.

COST: \$2,255 per person (includes \$500 Federation subsidy) Land cost only. Double occupancy. Single rooms available by request. Single supplement is \$1,062.

MISSION CHAIRS: Julie & David Sheffer and Bill & Angie Zimmern

QUESTIONS? Contact Tair Giudice at 704.944.6759 or tair.giudice@jewishcharlotte.org.

* The Ben-Gurion Society (BGS) is a national donor recognition society for young adults, ages 25 - 45, who make a contribution of \$1,000 or more to the Jewish Federation Annual Campaign.



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

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- ◆ Great Room: Special rates available for Friday night dinner



Photo courtesy of ArtShots Photography

For more information, contact:
Erin.Dennis@hilton.com

Hampton Inn & Suites SouthPark at Phillips Place,
Charlotte, NC 28210 704-319-5700
www.hamptonsouthpark.com



Youth Visions

Hebrew High Purim 2018

In honor of Purim, Hebrew High students came together as one group to celebrate and give back to our community. We had a variety of stations set up to celebrate Purim including making Mishloach Manot for our friends at Oasis and for the agencies on Shalom Park. We then made and decorated masks for the seniors to wear at their Jewish Family Services/Oasis Purim lunch. At our last station, we made our very own gooey, decorative, and one-of-a-kind hamantaschen. Following all the fun at the stations, we moved on to our scavenger hunt. The Hebrew High Student Council

put together a fun, challenging hunt to find items around Shalom Park and students broke out into teams to race to the finish. Prizes were given to the winning team.

To complete the evening, we had a costume competition. Students voted on their favorite costumes and a winner was selected and awarded a prize. The costumes were as unique as the students who wore them ... even our teachers came dressed as their alter egos. Fun, merriment, and laughter kept us in high spirits and made our Purim Party unforgettable. Hebrew High students left happy, full, and inspired. ☆



Charlotte BBYOers Attend International Convention

Sixty teens from Charlotte BBYO, along with 100 of their Eastern Region friends, travelled to Orlando, FL from Thursday, February 15 to Monday, February 19 for the largest gathering of Jewish teens. With over 3,000 teens from 36 countries, and thousands of educators, thought leaders, celebrities, political figures, and philanthropists coming together for BBYO International Convention (IC) over Presidents weekend, this epic event allowed Jewish teens to connect with their peers and consider how to make the future their own. Teens from all four Charlotte BBYO chapters were excited to take part in the single-largest gathering of Jewish teen leaders worldwide.

Among the many speakers, were Aly Raisman, world champion gymnast; Jason Kander,



Lilah Peck, Sophie Levy, Julianna Kantor, and Abby Meyer.

CNN and Missouri's 39th Secretary of State; Caryl Stern, President and CEO of UNICEF USA; Josh Peck, actor and social media influencer; Susan Bro, mother of Heather Heyer and co-founder of The Heather Heyer Foundation; Abby Wambach, Olympic gold medalist and FIFA Women's World Cup champion; and MK Omer Barlev, member of the Israeli Knesset. There were also video addresses from Nikki Haley, U.S. Ambassador to the



BBYO Eastern Region kids at IC.

United Nations, and Justin Trudeau, Canadian Prime Minister.

This year's convention theme, "Together We Will," speaks to today's vital need and incredible opportunity for young people to unite communities of all faiths, races, and cultures toward shaping a stronger, fairer, and more democratic society for all people.

IC 2018 had a range of programming throughout the weekend that focused on empowering and energizing teens to partner with each other to bring new ideas to fruition, including nearly 60 direct service projects and leadership labs at sites throughout the Orlando area. Additionally, the conference showcased the diversity of the

BBYO community, with 235 delegates from 36 countries attending the iconic event. For the first time, delegates from Australia, China, Colombia, Mexico, and Spain joined the conference, enhancing BBYO's celebration of Jewish culture in a way that only BBYO can.

Charlotte BBYO has four chapters with 215 members. If you are a Jewish teen in 8th-12th grade and interested in finding out more about what BBYO offers, reach out to Jamie Bryan or Lindsay Trapani, Charlotte BBYO City Directors for more information at Charlotte@bbyo.org.

If you are looking for a wonderful opportunity to mentor teens and give back to the Jewish community, join our team of volunteer advisors. For more information, contact charlotte@bbyo.org. ☆



Seven Local Runners Run Miami Marathon for Friendship Circle

It was 4 AM on a Sunday morning. The temperature was hovering at around 65° but the wind was at least 25 mph. Thousands were gathering around the American Airlines Arena in Miami to run the Fitbit Miami Marathon. The energy was palpable. If you didn't have a watch or phone, you'd think it was the prelude to a Saturday Rock Concert.

Over 250 of those gathered were decked out in bright teal Friendship Circle Jerseys. These runners were training for months to make difference in the lives of children with special needs. They were trying to change the status quo. Friendship is a necessity. And every child deserves a friend.

"Every step I run, I'm thinking of the child who isn't invited to birthday parties or doesn't have any playdates" - says one runner from Montreal.

Seven of the Friendship Circle

runners are running for our local Friendship Circle Chapter in Charlotte. They all finished. And while many sore or bruised, they were elated.

Congratulations to Gabriella Catenazzo, Colby Foster, Rochel Groner, Sophie Molinari, Tzvi Nussbaum, Alexander Shporer, and Sara Weiss.

Friendship Circle is a local organization that pairs children with special needs and teen friends for genuine friendships and social opportunities. Friendship Circle is a beneficiary of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. ☆



Above: The runners are ready to go!

Below: The team with their supporters.



Free Community Event: The Art of Friendship and Ability

Feast your eyes and blow your mind with the most amazing art exhibition ever. Join us for a free community event on Monday, May 7 at 6 PM, celebrating the art of children and young adults with special needs (or "special abilities" as we prefer to call them). The Art of Friendship and Ability exhibition will feature original artwork created by the children and young adults of Friendship Circle and ZABS Place.

After many months of working on their creations, these special artists now invite the community to marvel at their work displayed in one of Charlotte's most creative spaces, C3 Lab in South End. The creations will include: silkscreen

paintings, sculpture, Jewish still art, and photography. The event will also feature entertainment from the World's Fastest Speed Painter, D. Westry, who will create unique painted portraits for our guests.

The joy a young artist receives from seeing their work go from concept to reality – hanging on a gallery wall, being admired by family, friends and the greater community – is priceless. This is the driving force behind this event and the mission of one of our sponsors, The Bear Givers Foundation. Your attendance will help ensure the success of this event.

Special thanks to the Bear Givers Foundation and the Em-

power Art Program for Partnering with us to make this exhibition possible.

Details:

* Monday May 7 at 7PM.

* C3 Labs - 2525 Distribution St, Charlotte, NC 28270

* Hors d'oeuvre, wine tasting and cocktails.

* All community members interested are encouraged to attend. Adults only, please.

* Free Admission

* To learn more and to RSVP visit www.ZABSPlace.org/ArtofAbility or call 704-366-5983.

Friendship Circle and ZABS Place are beneficiary agencies of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. ☆



Gabby and Anna expressing friendship through art



Luke, Josh and Sammy working on Face-mask Art



Molly and Jillian pairing up to create a masterpiece



Seth and Kyle bringing out the joy in painting

Community News

Are You Prepared for the Changes and Challenges Your Teenager Faces?

Teenagers have not always had the kind of life they do today. The expectations and requirements have changed considerably over the course of time. Before the 15th century, the primary role of a parent was to look after their children until they could survive on their own and then they were considered adults and responsible for their own well-being. The next few centuries brought about the prevailing opinion that showing affection and fussing over children was considered to be harmful; a recipe for poorly behaved children. It wasn't until the 20th century, that a science-based understanding of teens replaced the old commonly held beliefs and teenagers emerged pretty much as we know them today.

These days expanding technology and social media has changed the way our teens communicate, how they relate to each other and how they learn. Social media has significantly elevated the level of stress that our youth live with on a daily basis and has brought increased levels of exposure to bullying and emotional abuse. The result is a rising number of teens suffering from depression and anxiety and who are at an even greater risk of suicide, the second largest cause of death for teens ages 12-16.

Many teens get through these years with only mild conflicts with their parents. Struggle and conflict is not necessarily the rite of passage it once was. Most teens are positive, caring, and enthusiastic. Most do not feel alienated, do not get in trouble and do not cause problems. With 92% of teens saying their behavior is shaped by how they were brought up, now more than ever it is important for parents, teachers, and other influencers to be hyper-vigilant and knowledgeable about what teens face and how best to support them.

The recent shootings at the High School in Parkland, FL are contributing to even greater levels of anxiety and fear in our youth, which of course impacts emotional health, school performance, on the job success, and how families function. Understandably, parents and teens have become anxious about just going to school.

Research suggests that negative childhood experiences are linked to heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and a stepped up usage of tobacco and alcohol.

So, what can we do as parents, educators and influencers to help our youth manage today's current climate? We know that feeling connected is one of the most sig-

nificant indicators for how well severe mental health issues are managed. And while not true in every situation, warning signs are indeed present with severe mental breakdowns and suicide attempts.

Recent programs offered through The Mental Health Initiative have addressed some very important, sometimes controversial subjects that we may not typically want to expose our youth to, such as Teen Dating Violence, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and the effects traumatic childhood experiences may have on our youth. The content and conversations discussed at these events remind us of the importance of continuous learning as the adult in the life of a developing teen.

Communications barriers must be broken down. A deeper understanding and intervention must occur if we are to help our youth, even if those conversations are uncomfortable. Convincing yourself that "it's just a phase" won't work. Transparency, consistency, and involvement is vital, especially when your gut tells you something is not right. Look at what is happening in your loved ones' life, check out their social media, and don't be afraid to confront the situation and have that difficult conversation. Staying connected, recognizing warning signs, and



making time for the difficult conversations has the potential to reduce or eliminate a crisis situation from occurring.

We invite you to take action. Learn, grow, ask questions and get the support or intervention

needed. Just as our physical health requires attention so too, does our emotional health. For more information on programs and resources for mental health, go to jfscharlotte.org. ☆

"Now, more than any time in previous human history, we must arm ourselves with an ethical code so that each of us will be aware that he is protecting the moral merchandise absent of which life is not worth living."

—Sholem Asch, *What I Believe*

Happy Passover!

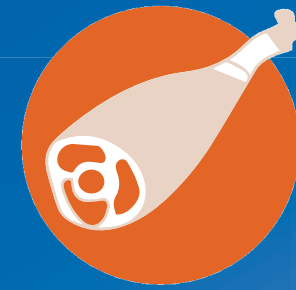
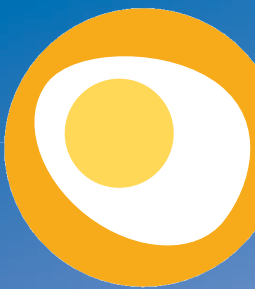


Charlotte Jewish Preschool

GROW

LEARN

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Now Registering for Fall!

Schedule a Tour Today!

704-944-6776

charlottejewishpreschool.org

CJP is a partnership of Temple Beth El, Temple Israel & Levine JCC

Funded by Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

**THURSDAY, APRIL 5****Preschool Passover Program, 10 a.m.**

Join Rabbi Kornsgold for a fun-filled morning of shira (music), snacks and an art project related to Passover. Location: Leon & Sandra Levine Social Hall.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 28****Torah Tots Shabbat Service, 10 a.m.**

Join Temple Israel Clergy and Miss Nancy for Temple Israel's high-energy Shabbat program for families with preschoolers! Welcome in Shabbat with songs, prayers and movement, a Torah parade, a story or puppet show, and a fun craft. This will be followed by a healthy, bountiful Kiddush snack.

YOUTH**GESHER TALENT SHOW & ISRAELI DINNER**
(8th-12th Grades)

Wednesday, April 11, 6-7 p.m.

Come hang with your friends at Gesher's first Talent Show. Bring your talent or just come to support your friends in a night of fun and laughter. There will also be a delicious Israeli dinner.

Location: Levine JCC Teen Lounge. Cost: \$5/Gesher Members; \$10/Non-Members. RSVP by Tuesday, April 10 to adidonato@templeisraelinc.org.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**POST PASSOVER PANCAKES**

Sunday, April 8, 10 a.m.

Come join Torah on Tap as we break Passover with delicious pancakes at the Original Pancake House, located at 4736 Sharon Road. Please RSVP to torahontapclt@gmail.com so we can reserve enough seats.

SOCIAL CLUB**JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY TOUR AND LUNCH**

Tuesday, April 17, 10:30 a.m.

Join us for a special tour of the culinary school, followed by an all-you-can-eat buffet lunch in their dining hall, at a cost of \$12/per person, payable by check at the restaurant. To sign up for J&W tour, please send in tear-off portion of Social Club flyer or write a note confirming your interest and mail it to: Temple Israel Social Club, 4901 Providence Rd., Charlotte, NC 28226. There will also be transportation available if needed, via an LJCC van departing at 9:30 a.m., for \$12 per person - payable in advance. If interested, please send check (payable to Temple Israel Social Club) to Temple Israel by April 9, 2018.

EVENTS**FAMILY BINGO WITH BUNNY**

Sunday, APRIL 15, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

The Women of Temple Israel invite you to this fun FAMILY EVENT on Sunday, April 15. The cost is \$5 cash per person (payable at the door) and includes a Bingo card with 6 games and light refreshments. Please RSVP to Wendy Rosen at WJRosen@aol.com by Sunday, April 8.

**EDUCATOR APPRECIATION SHABBAT**

Saturday, April 21, 9:30 a.m.

Please join us as we celebrate and honor our Jewish educators for a very special Shabbat. A delicious Kiddush will follow.

**COMMUNITY-WIDE ISRAEL @ 70 FESTIVAL**

Sunday, April 22, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Please join the Jewish community at Campy Mindy for an afternoon of food, fun and games in honor of Yom Ha'atzmaut at 70!

**THE ROSE ROOM - WOMEN OF TEMPLE ISRAEL GIFT SHOP**

Gift Shop Hours

Sunday: 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Tuesday - Thursday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Friday: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Proceeds support Temple Israel, Women of Temple Israel, Temple Israel Youth Programs, and Social Action Initiatives.

Special appointments available: Call Cindy Jennes at 704-443-7643.

PASSOVER SERVICE SCHEDULE 2018/5778**THURSDAY, MARCH 29**

Search for the Hametz

FRIDAY, MARCH 30

Fast of the First Born (Office Closes, 1 p.m.)

Siyyum Bekhorim (study session), followed by breakfast, 7:30 a.m.

Candle Lighting, 7:25 p.m.

No Evening Service

First Seder

SATURDAY, MARCH 31

1st Day Pesach

Shabbat/Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.

Pesach Evening Service, 5:30 p.m.

Temple Israel Community Cooperative Seder, 6 p.m.

(by reservation only)

SUNDAY, APRIL 1

2nd Day Pesach

Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.

Minyan, 5:30 p.m.

MONDAY, APRIL 2

Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, APRIL 3

Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5

Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Minyan, 7:30 a.m.

Pesach Evening Service, 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 6

7th Day Pesach

(Office closed)

Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.

Shabbat/Pesach Evening Service, 6:15 p.m.

Candle Lighting, 7:31 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7

8th Day Pesach

Shabbat/Pesach Morning Service (Yizkor), 9:30 a.m.

Minyan, 5:30 p.m.

Passover ends/Havdallah, 8:40 p.m.

*All Candle Lighting Times

are based on GPS location

for Temple Israel.

JOIN US

When you join the Temple Israel family, you become linked to a community and traditions that are more than 120 years old and you also become part of the story of a strong and vibrant congregation that will be a pillar of the Charlotte Jewish community for generations to come. Temple Israel is on the cutting edge of Conservative Judaism, balancing both traditional and innovative expressions of Judaism in a progressive, inclusive community.

TEMPLE ISRAEL PRESENTS:
Israeli Art Show & Gala
 by Safrai Fine Art Gallery of Jerusalem
April 26-29



In celebration of Israel's 70th Birthday, Temple Israel will be transformed into a gallery featuring the finest in Israeli art. Temple Israel will host Menachem Safrai and the Safrai Fine Art Gallery, an important resource of Israeli art to museums and private collections, and an authority on Israeli art.

The Israeli Art Show will include a comprehensive collection of original oil paintings, watercolors, original lithographs and etchings by over 100 different Israeli artists. Over 1,000 works of art will be available for exhibition and sale.

Thursday, April 26 - OPENING NIGHT GALA
6 p.m. - Private Reception for Patron of the Arts and Jerusalem of Gold Donors
7:30 p.m. - Gala Event

Ticket Prices:

\$36/Gala Ticket - \$72/Jerusalem of Gold Donor Ticket - \$180/Patron of the Arts Donor Ticket

Event tickets may be secured by purchasing tickets online at templeisraelinc.org. All responses must be received by Friday, April 13, 2018.

OPEN GALLERY HOURS

Friday, April 27: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Sunday, April 29: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

JTENNIS. JSTEPS. JDAD. JMENSCH. JFIT. JTOTS. JSWIM. JSTAGE. JRUN.

April 2018

Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center
5007 Providence Road | Charlotte, NC 28226
704-366-5007 | charlottejcc.org | facebook.com/levinejcc



JCHILDCARE*

7 weeks – 7 years old

Children will enjoy a nurturing environment to explore and have fun with crafts and activities, while parents workout.

Mon-Fri AM..... 8am-1pm

Mon-Thu PM.....4pm-7:30pm

Saturday 12pm-3pm

Sunday.....8:30am-2pm

Per Hour: M/\$4.50 NM/ \$5.50

Grades K-5th

A great, supervised space for your elementary age child to have fun and hang out with friends, while you workout!

Sundays, 8:30am-1pm

Location: Check with LJCC Customer Service

M/\$2/hour

NM/\$5.50 per hour

Reservations Required! 704-366-5007, or visit LJCC Customer Service.

April Holiday Hours



LJCC Passover Building Hours

Friday, March 30 Erev Passover 5:30am-4:00pm

Saturday, March 31 ... 1st Day Passover 1:00pm-7:00pm

Sunday, April 1 2nd Day Passover 1:00pm-7:00pm

Friday, April 6 7th Day Passover 1:00pm-5:00pm

Saturday, April 7 End of Passover 1:00pm-7:00pm

SUMMER Employment

NOW SEEKING SUMMER SWIM INSTRUCTORS & LIFEGUARDS

*An ideal position for school teachers
and college students ages 15 & up!*

Q? Levine JCC Aquatics Director Josh Steinberger
joshua.steinberger@charlottejcc.org
704-944-6746



LJCC Department Directory

Please contact us you have questions!

Membership

Susan Lerner 704-944-6741
susan.lerner@charlottejcc.org

Early Childhood

Patty Torcellini 704-944-6891
patty.torcellini@charlottejcc.org

K-5th Grade Programs

Mitch Ormand 704-944-6733
mitch.ormand@charlottejcc.org

Adults & Seniors/Oasis

Jill Lipson 704-944-6792
jill.lipson@charlottejcc.org

Sports

Stephanie Garner 704-944-6743
stephanie.garner@charlottejcc.org

Aquatics / Swim Team

Joshua Steinberger 704-944-6746
joshua.steinberger@charlottejcc.org

LJCC Tennis / CRUSH

Greg O'Connor 704-944-6748
gregory.oconnor@charlottejcc.org

Visual/Performing Arts

Susan Gundersheim 704-944-6778
susan.gundersheim@charlottejcc.org

J-Childcare

Amie Gray 704-944-6726
amie.gray@charlottejcc.org

Social Action

Julie Rizzo 704-944-6730
julie.rizzo@charlottejcc.org

NEW GROUP EX CLASS

BOOT CAMP & BREWS



Join Adam

1st Thursday each month

6:15-7pm Boot Camp

7-7:30pm Brews

Brews provided courtesy of New Belgium Brewing

BOOT CAMP not your thing?

Take ANY LJCC Group Ex Class

(we offer 90+) & join us for a free Brew!

Sign Up at LJCC Customer Service

Q? jenny.crow@charlottejcc.org

FLAG Football

The Renaldo Turnbull Preseason Flag Football Camp

August 20 – 24 • 9am-4pm

LJCC Members: 2-day camp \$120 5-day Camp \$260

Non-Members: 2-day Camp \$140 5-day Camp \$300

Q? stephanie.garner@charlottejcc.org • 704-944-6743



**Ages 11-14
5 Days in August**

JSOCCER*JPILATES*JCLAY*JHOOPS* JTEAM*JBABY*JMOM*JMASSAGE*

Early Childhood

Playdates with Perks

Looking to meet other moms and have some organized fun-filled summer play dates with your toddler? Come join us for crafts, songs, sprayground time, snacks, and circle time loaded with music, movement, instruments, and stories! On Fridays, we celebrate Shabbat together!

Wednesdays & Fridays

9:15–10:45am

June 20 – 29 M/\$95 NM/\$115

July 6 – 13 M/\$75 NM/\$95

July 18 – 27 M/\$95 NM/\$115

June 20 – July 13 M/\$170 NM/\$210

July 6 – 27 M/\$170 NM/\$210

June 20 – July 27 M/\$265 NM/\$325

704-944-6891 or patty.torcellini@charlottejcc.org

Teens

American Red Cross® Lifeguard Class

► Lifeguard Training (During Spring Break)

Monday, April 2 – Thursday, April 5

8am–1pm

► Lifeguard Recertification

Wednesday, April 25 – Thursday, April 26

4–9pm

704-944-6746 or joshua.steinberger@charlottejcc.org

Adults

Cardio Tennis 18+

A great way to get the blood pumping! An aerobic workout on the tennis court, complete with basic tennis skills, medium to high impact cardio training.

Wednesdays, 6–7pm

June 13 – August 15 (9 weeks) No Class 7/4

M/\$171 B/\$135 NM/\$225 per 9 week session

Fridays, 9–10am

June 15 – August 17 (9 weeks) No Class 7/6

M/\$171 B/\$135 NM/\$225 per 9 week session

Men's Drill 18+

18 yrs+ (3.0 – 4.0 USTA rated)

A drill & play session with the Pro. Emphasis on point play, drills, and match strategies.

Wednesdays, 6–7pm

June 13 – August 15 (9 weeks) No Class 7/4

M/\$171 B/\$135 NM/\$225 per 9 week session

704-944-6748 or gregory.oconnor@charlottejcc.org

ADULTS

Ballroom Dance

with instructor Bob Peltzer

Swing
TUESDAY, APRIL 17

Rumba
THURSDAY, APRIL 19

Disco
TUESDAY, APRIL 24

Cha Cha
THURSDAY, APRIL 26

Tue/Thu • 7–9pm
Swimmer Family Aerobics Studio

*NOTE: You must sign up with a partner
M/\$20 B/\$18 NM/\$25 per person per class
Q? sharri.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

Symphony 101

Enjoy this special series designed to be light, engaging insights into the world of orchestras and classical music of upcoming performances of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra this season.

April's topic: An Introduction to 20th Century Musical Dialects

This lecture will be centered around Ravel's Piano Concerto for the left hand and a brief history of composers and performers who continued to write and perform with disabilities during their careers.

Friday, April 27 • 1pm

Gorelick Hall • Free

For information contact Sharri Benjamin

704-944-6753 or sharri.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

Living Healthy with Chronic Pain

If you suffer from chronic pain, then this class is for you. Learn how to take control of your ongoing health condition rather than letting it control you.

NOTE: Participants must be able to attend all 6 sessions.

Thursdays, 9:30am–12pm

April 12, 19, 26

May 3, 10, 17

Free, but limited space

Register by Thursday March 29 with Sharri Benjamin at

704-944-6753 or sharri.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

SHIIP

Seniors' Health Insurance

Information Program

Free Medicare Counseling Available year round! Please call Senior & Adult Director Jill Lipson at 704-944-6792 for information



Meet Our Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

Chantal Otelsberg

MS, RDN, LDN
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2018 AIPAC Policy Conference

(Continued from page 24)

business innovations and non-profit work.

Hailed as the only bi-partisan issue in Congress, Israel's security was promoted by U.N. U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley, Senator Chuck Schumer, and Vice-President Mike Pence, as well as Knes-

The AIPAC policy conference brought together the best and brightest- political thinkers, technological innovators, and enthusiastic participants to advocate for Israel's safety and security.

The conference made clear that the public face of AIPAC is to



The Charlotte delegation at dinner (not shown: Alyson Traw and Emily Zimmern). Photo by Alyson Traw

set members of various parties, mid-east policy experts, and U.S. and Israeli military commanders. Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu spoke to an enthusiastic crowd on the final day.

18,000 attendees visited AIPAC's Village Festival to meet the Israeli entrepreneurs who create some of the best innovations in the world. It was particularly impressive to learn how Israelis are using technology to reduce water usage in crop fields, locate victims of natural disasters with drone capability, and create technology to safely destroy Gaza tunnels.

Conference attendees went to Capitol Hill to lobby Congress on

love Israel unconditionally. But loving Israel can be complicated, and embracing U.S. policy without public discourse can be dangerous. As a first-time conference participant, I loved nurturing my Zionist soul. I also wished there was room to express doubt and concern about the direction of Israeli and American policy.

Scott Menaker: The AIPAC Policy Conference was held in Washington DC from March 4-6 with over 18,000 delegates attending from all

50 states and from

around the world.

One exciting component was the over 4,000 student delegates from colleges all over the country. The Charlotte contingent, led by Sam Zimmern, numbered over 25 people.

The conference showcased leaders from all walks of life - whites, blacks, and Latinos, Jews and non-Jews, conservatives and progressives all committed to a vibrant and strong Israel. Discussion topics included

the amazing innovation, technology, agriculture, and water conservation programs that Israel is developing that is helping the world. We heard from Israeli leaders from numerous political par-

ties as well as republican and democratic leaders from the US Congress. All of them asserted their commitment to a strong and secure Israel. The major speakers were Ambassador Nikki Haley, Senator Charles Schumer, and Vice President Mike Pence. And Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke live to the meeting on Tuesday morning and concluded the meeting with a moving and exciting speech.

The final afternoon was spent lobbying our local senators and representatives about three key items:

- 1) Continued US financial and military support to Israel
- 2) Concerns about the dangerous effects of a growing Iran presence and their nuclear program
- 3) The growing negative actions of the BDS movement.

While lobbying, we expressed our appreciation to our congressional leaders for their past support for Israel and asked them to continue to stand with the only

ing their schedules, meetings, speakers, and maps while trying to find each other and their seats at the same time. How can one ade-

ture of natural gas in Israel with overarching goals of energy independence. AIPAC Legal Academy had an informative lecture on The Law of Territorial Sovereignty and Boundaries, including the Law of Armed Conflict. Of great interest to me was hearing from a panel of four experts in the Challenges of Cyberspace and the new fronts presented by the absence of law and international agreements in the areas of cyber-security. I can sum up my experience by stating the most valuable aspects of AIPAC's

influence is through education, which begins with those of us who were able to hear about the mission to strengthen, protect and promote the US-Israel Relationship in ways that enhance the security of the United States and Israel. This is accomplished many ways, but our focus was educating our legislators and encouraging them to support security assistance to Israel, oppose Iranian aggression and nuclear ambitions and oppose boycotts of Israel, while protecting US companies. My overall impression was inclusion, bi-partisanship and feeling like we can all be influencers as constitutes in our districts. ✨

quately describe what it feels like to be a spec in a sea of 18,000 people streaming through a handful of doors and metal detectors to attend the 2018 AIPAC Policy Conference representing multiple sects of Judaism, Christianity, and other faiths who come together as "Pro-Israel"? The General Sessions were filled with inspiring examples of American-Israeli cooperation and stories of innovation such as the CROPX "Grow More, Water Less" farming solutions or EDGYBEES software to locate distress signals during disasters - to humanitarian highlights such as seeing eye dogs like Winston with his blind owner Saleem Sharif to navigate streets and meet different support requirements than we have in America. There was an excellent balance between being cause-focused and more formal politically-based partnerships such as the IDF explaining the criticality of Underground Warfare, warm welcomes to

Ambassadors and Dignitaries from many countries, along with our own US Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, who was given a "rock star" standing ovation with clapping and cheering that went on for minutes. Speakers also included Vice President Pence, members of the senate armed service committee, media news anchors, and legislators representing bi-partisan efforts with hand-shakes across the aisle. Highly qualified speakers did not disappoint in the afternoon breakout sessions I attended, accounting the history and fu-



In the office of Congressman Robert Pittenger. Photo courtesy Alyson Traw



In the office of Congresswoman Virginia Foxx. Photo courtesy Alyson Traw

true democracy and friend in the Middle East. The decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem and recognizing it as Israel's capital was met with a tremendous amount of support and enthusiasm by all.

We invite you to join us in future years. No matter your political inclination in the US or toward the Israeli government, it is crucial to have a strong and secure Israel and that is what the AIPAC conference was all about.

Shelley Pawlyk: The energy was electrifying observing thousands of people with their heads down looking at their special AIPAC iPhone application hous-



Winston, trained at the Israeli Guide Dog Center, and his owner. Photo by Alyson Traw



UN Ambassador Nikki Haley. Photo by Shelley Pawlyk

pending legislation to condemn the BDS movement, oppose Iran's increasing aggressions as a sponsor of terrorism, and ensure the United States' security assistance to Israel.



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— Abba Eban, Address, 1952

Hebrew Cemetery

By Michael Littauer, President

Spring will soon be upon us and as the Bradford Pears are in bloom and buds begin to appear on trees and shrubs it reminds us of the beauty that will soon surround us. The cold temperatures will turn warm, the later sunsets give us more time to enjoy the outdoors, and the sounds of spring and summer will soon be here.

Spring is also a time we look forward to at the Hebrew Cemetery. The work we did last fall in preparation for winter now pays off in green grass, flowering trees, and shrubs. It is the warm colors and the serene beauty we have come to enjoy over the past years. The new Silverman Circle featuring the one of a kind "Tree of Life" sculpture is now complete and adds another dimension to our Cemetery and to our city. If you've not been to the Cemetery in a while or if you've never visited, I invite you to come by now. If you would like a personal tour, please contact Sandra Goldman our Cemetery Director and she will coordinate with you.

It is also a time of innovation. Among our projects for 2018 are development and implementation of a new Cemetery Management System and the addition new computers and peripherals. This system will allow us to convert from manual to electronic operation that will give us better control, back up, and security of our data as well as easier access to records.

This will include geo mapping that will provide visualization that is engaging and user-friendly. Our community will have new and simplified access to cemetery history and family records. A planned kiosk in our Memorial Building lobby will provide a window to additional gravesite information, family history, and location for visitors. A new audio and video system that allows congregants to view services in the Gorelick Gathering Room when Chapel seating is insufficient will be installed over the next few months. We will also begin development of a new user friendly web-site.

The Hebrew Cemetery Association Board elections were held in February and we are pleased to announce Lisa Strause Levinson has been elected to our Board of Trustees. Lisa brings her life experience, knowledge, and commitment to our community and the energy and skills to make a tremendous contribution to our Board and to our community.

We want to take a moment to thank Shari Sokolowicz for her contributions to our Board and community over the past three years. Shari has been an active board member and tremendous influence on our future. Shari will continue her role on our Finance and Technology Committee. Thank you, Shari.

I want to remind you

that if you haven't yet joined the Hebrew Cemetery Association please consider a membership. Membership includes reduced pricing on plots and additional services and helps to ensure that the Cemetery remains a place you and your family can be proud of. You can join for \$72 annually or just \$6 per month. We also offer a lifetime family membership for just \$1,800. Temple or LJCC membership does not include Hebrew Cemetery Membership. If you have any questions regarding membership please contact Sandra Goldman.

In closing, many thanks to all of you for your continued support. We couldn't do it without you.

To schedule an appointment or to receive further information about preplanning or how to leave a legacy gift, please contact Sandra Goldman at 704-576-1859 or email her at director@hebrew-cemetery.org.



Rivlin, JDC Leaders Gather to Mark Israel's 70th Anniversary

By David Schizer

(JNS.org) - More than 100 Jewish community leaders with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, a humanitarian group working in more than 70 countries, met with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin at his residence in Jerusalem to mark the 70th anniversary of the state of Israel and to recognize the organization's contribution to the Jewish state.

"We are honored to join President Rivlin and celebrate seven decades of Israeli independence and the hundred-plus-year commitment of JDC, and diaspora Jews, to empower Israel's most vulnerable and provide opportunity for those on the margins of Israeli society," said JDC President Stanley Rabin, a prominent Jewish leader and philanthropist from Dallas, and JDC CEO. "Through these efforts—empowering Jews and Arabs, seniors and youth, the poor and new immigrants—we are proud to strengthen Israel and ensure a bright future for all its citizens."

At the meeting, the JDC presented Rivlin with a recently discovered JDC archival document, a 1920 letter from a cousin of the

president's father, Rabbi Moshe Rivlin, requesting JDC assistance for matzah and food for needy Jerusalem Jews at Passover.

"This year Israel is marking 70 years of independence, but the [JDC] has been standing behind Israel for even longer," said Rivlin. "For more than 100 years, since World War I, you have been a safety net for our people."

He added that "your dedication and commitment show that the connection between the state of Israel and the Jewish communities around the world is deep, important and cannot be broken."

In Israel, the JDC develops social services in conjunction with the Israeli government, the local authorities and nonprofits, and other partners for the benefit of Israel's most vulnerable populations: children at risk, the elderly population, the unemployed, and people with disabilities. ✧



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The Youngest Schindler's List Survivor Is Still Telling Her Story

By Ben Sales

New York (JTA) — Eva Lavi's earliest memories are of the Holocaust.

She remembers how her mother made her hide outside in below-zero weather, clutching a standing pipe, as Nazis searched her home in Poland. She remembers her father telling her to swallow a spoonful of cyanide — better than death at the hands of the Nazis — only to have her mother object at the last minute. She remembers seeing her twin cousins shot to death as they ran up a hill at a labor camp.

Lavi was two years old when Nazi Germany took over her hometown of Krakow in September 1939. Now 80, she wants to make sure her stories aren't lost after she's gone.

"There was no childhood for children my age," she said last week in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly following International Holocaust Remembrance Day. "Regularly,

we saw, heard, and understood everything the Nazis were doing to us. At six years old, children were cynical old people trying to survive."

Lavi is the youngest survivor to have been on Schindler's list, the Jews saved by German industrialist Oskar Schindler and immortalized in Steven Spielberg's 1993 film. Lavi was put in a ghetto in Poland with her family immediately after the Nazi takeover, transferred to a labor camp and then to Auschwitz.

After being saved by Schindler, who sheltered hundreds of Jews who worked in his kitchen goods and armament factories, Lavi lived a quiet life in Israel. She served in the army, lived on a kibbutz, worked as an administrative assistant and raised a family. She remembers the early years in Israel when survivors were disparaged as weak and passive. But as interest in the Holocaust increased, she became more vocal in recounting her experience. Now

she speaks to groups at Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust authority, and travels to Poland every year with a group of high school students.

"It's true testimony from someone who was there. It's not a story," she told JTA in a separate interview last week, adding that once Israelis became interested in the Holocaust, "the survivors opened their mouths and began to tell the story. It's not just a story. It's the worst and cruelest thing that happened in the world."

Although Lavi now regularly returns to Auschwitz, she says the experience still isn't easy. Each time, she finds herself looking around in horror and crying. But by now she's used to it.

"Every time I go, I cry here and there because it's a terrible thing," she told JTA. "Every person that went there saw the ovens, the gas chambers. Everything was real. It's very scary, but because I've gone so many times, I take it differently. I don't think about my-

self. I think about how the kids are reacting."

Lavi also feels a sense of urgency in telling her story because she thinks the world hasn't gotten better since she was liberated. There are groups that still seek to annihilate Jews and other minorities, she says.

And she called the Polish bill that would criminalize those who blame Poland for the Holocaust a "disaster." Yes, she says, Poles were killed, too, at the Nazi death camps. But she adds that the Poles were no angels, citing Polish violence against Jews during and after the war.

"I was in Auschwitz, and there were Polish prisoners," she said. "But what they say, that the Poles were all sweetness and light? No. In any case, they didn't really like the Jews."

As the Holocaust survivor population shrinks — Lavi was born just two years before the war — she sounds conflicted about how best to perpetuate Holocaust



Eva Lavi, who was two years old when the Nazis invaded Poland, addressing the United Nations last week. (Courtesy of the Israeli mission to the U.N.)

memory. On the one hand, she acknowledges that survivors' stories are extensively documented. On the other hand, she knows nothing is more powerful than a firsthand account.

One way to transmit the experience, she says, is movies. She's grateful for the research work that Spielberg did while making "Schindler's List," which won the Academy Award for best picture. One scene featuring her as a child, she says, is mostly accurate: Nazis separated her from her mother, but Schindler saved her by telling the guards he needed her small fingers to operate machinery. She believes that movie and those that have followed play a positive role in educating people about what happened — even if some are fictional.

"They did a lot of movies that had influence," she told JTA. "They engaged the heart, even if they're not true, but they have to be faithful to truth."

Israeli U.N. Ambassador Danny Danon, who invited Lavi to address the United Nations, said the speech was an increasingly rare opportunity for international diplomats to hear about the atrocities of the Holocaust firsthand.

"With the number of Holocaust survivors who can testify to the horrors they witnessed dwindling every day, it is of utmost importance that we ensure that their story is told before it is too late," he said in a statement, adding that with the speech, he and his office "hope to have played a small part in relaying her important message and focusing the U.N. on fulfilling its original mandate from when it was founded in the aftermath of World War Two."

After decades of telling her story around the world, Lavi says addressing the United Nations gave her a sense of closure. For years she has carried guilt for surviving where so many perished. But with this speech, she said, she achieved something to justify her life.

"It was very hard to be a child survivor," she told JTA. "I felt guilty. I began to talk to God: Why did he save me? I imagined my Jewish brothers, me and them together, we're walking, and then God pulls me out. Now that they've sent me to the U.N. to speak in front of the world, it's as if I did something to satisfy God after my death." ☆

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Celebrating a festive Purim with The Totally Rad '80s Purim Spiel at Temple Beth El. Photo Credit: Jenna Dalli

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6:00 pm Dinner honoring survivors and liberators with RSVP

7:00 pm Program and performance of "Etty" by actress and educator, Susan Stein
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An Incredible Holocaust Escape Story, Proven by Science

By Tom Tugend

Los Angeles (JTA) — A one-hour TV program that aired on PBS last year links an incredible Holocaust escape story to advanced scientific techniques.

“Holocaust Escape Tunnel,” a “Nova” production, sheds new light on the attempt by 80 imprisoned men and women — mostly Lithuanian Jews — to make a break for freedom in the face of Nazi bullets. The show documents the application of scientific methods to verify what would otherwise be a nearly unbelievable story.

The documentary is set in and around Vilna, the Yiddish and Hebrew designation for Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. At its peak, before World War II and the Holocaust, Vilna was known as “The Jerusalem of the North” and described as the focal point of Jewish civilization, with famous yeshivas, rabbis, and scholars. As the film notes, the city boasted a Jewish population of some 77,000, had 105 synagogues, the largest Jewish library in the world

and six daily Jewish newspapers.

The vigorous Jewish life in Vilna started to decline in 1940, when the Soviet Union absorbed Lithuania. It was almost completely destroyed after German armies attacked Russia in 1941, quickly conquering Lithuania.

Within a year Nazi bullets — in the days before Auschwitz-type gas chambers — killed most of the Jews and tossed their corpses into huge pits in the nearby Ponar Forest, initially dug by the Soviets to store fuel and ammunition. One pit alone held 20,000 to 25,000 corpses.

In late 1943, with Russian armies advancing from the east and partisans attacking German supply lines in surrounding forests, Hitler’s headquarters in Berlin decided to cover up the monumental massacre by ordering that all the bodies be cremated.

The Germans ordered the region’s surviving Jews, along with some Russian prisoners of war, to first chop down large trees in the forests, cut them into planks, form huge layers of wood, spread the

bodies between the layers and then set them aflame. Methodically, the Germans formed 10 “burning brigades,” each consisting of 80 prisoners, mainly Jewish.

After a day’s work, the “burners” were held in pits and their feet shackled. One such unit, consisting of 76 men and four women, decided it was duty bound to pass on the truth to the world and future generations.

The prisoners freed their legs by cutting the shackles with a smuggled-in file and, for the next 76 days, using only spoons and their hands, carved out a 2-by-2-foot-wide tunnel extending 130 feet.

April 15, 1944, the last day of Passover, was set for the escape. As the first prisoners left the tunnel, guards opened fire and killed almost the entire group. But 12 made it out and cut through the wire fence. They joined a detachment of partisans commanded by the legendary Abba Kovner.

At the end of the war, all but one of the escapees were still alive

and eventually settled elsewhere, mainly in pre-state Israel and the United States.

Among the thousands, if not millions, of post-Holocaust remembrances, the story of the Vilna escapees was met with widespread skepticism even by the future wives and children of the 11 survivors, said historian Richard Freund, who is prominently featured in the documentary.

The skepticism was fueled by the absence of any physical evidence of the alleged tunnel.

Lithuania — already beleaguered by charges of its wartime collaboration with the Germans — showed little enthusiasm for further investigations.

In recent years, however, with a change of attitude by a new generation of Lithuanians, their government was ready to seek the truth about the Holocaust and invite outside experts to participate in the endeavor.

An initial contact was Jon Seligman, a leading researcher with the Israel Antiquities

Authority.

Freund, of the University of Hartford, also was interested — he had directed archaeological projects at the Sobibor extermination camp in Poland, as well as at six ancient sites in Israel. In 2014, the two scholars decided to cooperate on the project, spurred by their similar ancestral descent from Vilna Jews. A third member of the documentary team with Jewish roots in Eastern Europe was Paula Apsell, the senior producer for “Nova.”

Seligman and Freund had initially set their sight on exploring the fate of the Great Synagogue of Vilna, once the center of Jewish worship and scholarship, which had been destroyed by the Germans. The Soviets later razed the remains and built a school there.

The two scholars — backed by other experts and teams of young volunteers — made some dramatic discoveries at the Great Synagogue site, but also were intrigued by reports on the escape tunnel.

In approaching the latter, the project leaders ruled out using the traditional method of digging into an archaeological site with spades and machines.

“Traditional archaeology uses a highly destructive method,” Freund told JTA. “You only have one chance to get it right and you can’t repeat an experiment. Additionally, in our case, we were determined not to desecrate the site and victimize the dead a second time.”

Instead, the teams used two noninvasive techniques that are widely employed in gas and oil explorations. One approach was through Ground Penetrating Radar, or GPR, which uses radar pulses to return images of objects found beneath the earth’s surface. The results were analyzed in Los Angeles by geophysicist Dean Goodman, who developed the GPR software.

In the second approach, called Electrical Resistivity Tomography, or ETR, scientists investigate sub-surface materials through their electrical properties. The same technique is widely used in medical imaging of the human body.

Thanks to these techniques, in 2016 the investigators were able to scientifically confirm the existence and dimensions of a wartime escape tunnel, as JTA reported at the time. *The New York Times* listed the feat as one of the top science stories of the year.

One of the successful tunnel escapees was Shlomo Gol, whose son Abraham (Abe) was born in a displaced persons camp in Munich, Germany. The elder Gol died in 1986 at the age of 77, and his son will be 69 in July. The family initially immigrated to Israel, then moved to the United States.

Abe Gol, who lives in Pembroke Pines, FL, told JTA that friends recalled his father as a young man being full of life and a natural leader. However, the father young Abe knew “withdrew within himself” and did not speak of his experiences.

The little he learned of his

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(Continued on page 35)

At This Jewish camp, a 95-Year-Old Holocaust Survivor Teaches Kids Yiddish

By Ben Sales

Hopewell Junction, NY (JTA) — The kids at Camp Kinder Ring mostly do what kids do at any Jewish summer camp. They hang out by the lake, play sports, goof off, find discreet places to, um, go on walks.

But for an hour each day, groups of Jewish adolescents here eagerly do what few others will: They cram into a small, oblong pagoda near the lake and sit quietly as Mikhl Baran, a 95-year-old man, teaches them Jewish history in an old-world Yiddish accent.

“So, he finally settled in Cairo, which is the capital city of ...” Baran waits for a kid to say “Egypt.” On this August afternoon, he is teaching the campers about Maimonides, the 12th-century Jewish sage, but talking about him as if he were a personal acquaintance.

“In Cairo, over there, there’s a university at that time, and he managed to be very good friends with all the people around there, whether they were Arabs or Jews or Christians,” Baran says. “And he became very popular and famous, and he never took money from the poor people there. He only took money from the rich.”

The Eastern European native, born in 1922, isn’t quite old enough to have known Maimonides, but the campers and staff at Kinder Ring respect him as a fount of knowledge from a fad-



Mikhl Baran, who leads Jewish culture programming at Camp Kinder Ring, speaking at a Friday evening program. (Sharon Strongin/Camp Kinder Ring)

ing world. And the barrel-chested Baran, often sporting a tucked-in Kinder Ring polo shirt, has embraced that role with energy. He sees himself as the transmitter not only of Yiddish language, but also of Jewish history and culture to a new generation.

“I grew up speaking only Yiddish,” he said, sitting on a cozy screened-in porch at the camp with Millie, his wife of 72 years. “My mother taught me, and my bubbe taught it, and for 80 generations my people spoke it.”

It’s a fitting task at Kinder Ring, which was originally a Yiddish-language camp started in 1927 by the Workmen’s Circle — a society founded in 1900 as a socialist aid organization for European Jewish immigrants. Nowadays, with spoken Yiddish

largely relegated in the United States to haredi Orthodox neighborhoods and a small community of Yiddishists, not much of the “mamaloshn” is left at Kinder Ring, which has 325 campers aged 7 to 16. The camp anthem and a couple other songs are sung in Yiddish, the Friday night service is called “Shtiller” (Yiddish for “quiet”) and that’s about it.

“I ask them to call me Mikhl,” Baran says, noting that the name is the Yiddish form of Michael. “That’s already, in a sense, imbuing the idea that Yiddish is a great national treasure of the Jewish people.”



Mikhl Baran blessing the wine on a Friday night. (Sharon Strongin/Camp Kinder Ring)

Even before the Yiddish-speaking world was depleted in the Holocaust, Baran was a defender of the language. He grew up in Oshmiany, a shtetl near Vilnius, where there was a rift between Yiddish and Hebrew speakers. So



Mikhl Baran with some Kinder Ring campers. (Sharon Strongin/Camp Kinder Ring)

when Baran was moved from a Yiddish cheder school to a Hebrew school as a teen, he simply refused to speak the language. Two years later, his parents gave up and switched him back to a Yiddish school.

Baran was 17 when the Nazis took over in Lithuania. He managed to escape the ghetto and fled to the east, where he joined the Soviet Army and became, for lack of a better word, a badass. For four months, he served in a unit that went behind enemy lines and maneuvered through the snowy mountains on skis to capture Nazi officers. He was subsequently transferred to another unit fighting the Nazis.

After the war, he found and married Millie, his childhood sweetheart, and in 1949 the survivor couple moved to New York. He took a position at a Workmen’s Circle school teaching Yiddish,

and spent his first summer teaching at Kinder Ring in 1956. He also frequently appeared on the Yiddish radio station of the Forward, the Yiddish newspaper.

“At that time it was still a generation that could manage functionally through Yiddish,” he said. “There was a great deal of emphasis on perpetuating the Yiddish culture.”

Times have changed, however. Baran still teaches the kids Yiddish stories (in English), like Y.L. Peretz’s “The Seven Good Years,” about a peasant who gets a message from Elijah the prophet about seven coming years of abundance. But now much of his mission is to teach the fundamentals of Jewish culture, history and identity to kids who mostly don’t attend Jewish day school during the year.

“For me it’s very important to teach them at least the basic things of what Jewish values are, like tzedakah, the Spanish Inquisition,” he says, using the Hebrew word for charity. “I’m trying to impress upon them how important it is to not separate from the community. You’re part of the Jewish people.”

While some kids might disdain Jewish classes at a summer camp, the kids and staff all appear to love Baran and value his stories. The campers pay attention as he narrates Maimonides’ life.

Beyond respect for him personally, the assistant camp director, Jessica Rich, says it’s because the camp has a sense of its history. Its

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Tickets will be sold at the JCC front desk for \$10 ahead of time in early April, and \$15 at the door on the evening of the event. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=SmMATpZDAXg>

Please come support the Shalom Park Freedom School (SPFS) by coming to a screening of *Teach Us All*, a documentary that is insightful and thought-provoking. Each year there is a movie night which serves as the largest fundraiser to support the SPFS.

SPFS Fundraiser Co-chairs Christy Horwitz and Amy Andrews were able to choose a film that they are very excited to share with the community. Andrews describes the documentary in the following words:

Released in 2017, *Teach Us All* takes a critical look at educational inequality that is as much a pressing civil rights issue today as it was sixty years ago when the "Little Rock Nine" courageously moved to integrate an all-white southern high school. Told through moving case studies in Little Rock, New York City, and Los Angeles, the film calls on each of us to think about how much – or how little – has changed in our educational system and sets the stage for the vital conversation about where we go from here.

The SPFS will be opening its

doors for the 8th summer to serve 80 students from Huntingtowne Farms and Sterling Elementary schools that are from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The goals of the SPFS are to provide a six-week program to facilitate literacy and character-building for these scholars. Preliminary research suggests these efforts are making a difference for participants in the Freedom School. Without summer programs like the SPFS, 75% of students from low income homes are estimated to lose two to three months of learning over the summer. In contrast, 90% of scholars gained or maintained their reading ability.

For more information about the SPFS please visit <http://spfreedomschool.org> and please "like" or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/shalomparkfreedomschool/> as updates will be provided frequently including pictures of our volunteers and scholars.

Other ways to support the SPFS include....

New swim suits and towels will be collected at the LJCC April 2–May 4. Our scholars will wear these during their swim lessons twice a week. Sizes will be posted outside the LJCC Childcare room along with a sign-up sheet. New swimsuits and towels can be

turned into the LJCC Customer Service Desk.

Six Weeks, Six Books.

Donations of new and gently used children's chapter books would be greatly appreciated. Each scholar will get to take home a book a week to encourage a love of reading. Books may be dropped off at the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library May 1–31. Scholars are always looking for the following titles/topics:

Wimpy Kid series — most requested

Big Nate series

Junie B. Jones series

Magic Tree House series

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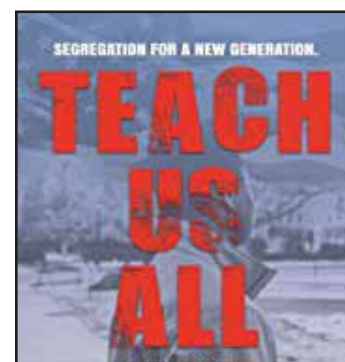
Space

(No board books, please!)

Snacks

SPFS scholars receive one drink and an individually wrapped snack or fruit each day. Donations of drink boxes and individually wrapped snacks (nut free) would be appreciated. Cash or gift card donations from the following would also be appreciated: Harris Teeter, Costco, Food Lion, Publix, Trader Joe's, etc. For drop off information, contact Judy Kaufmann, SPFS snack chair, 704-847-1022 or steveka@att.net.

SPFS will run from June 18 to July 27, our 8th summer to host this amazing program. It takes a village to make it a success each year. Please consider volunteering anywhere from one hour to 100 hours (or more). Contact Kathy Warshaw, kewarshaw@yahoo.com or Hilary Rosenbaum, dhrose4@gmail.com with any questions. ☆



Holocaust Survivor Teaches Yiddish at Jewish Summer Camp

(Continued from page 29)

two color war teams last year, for example, were named after the iconic immigrant poet Emma Lazarus and Justine Wise Polier, the first woman justice in New York. Rich's kids are the fourth generation of her family to attend Kinder Ring.

"We all dress in white, we gather around the flag and sing some of the same songs and do some of the same dances that I know have been going on for decades," Rich says, describing the Friday night ceremony. "I was a camper and counselor in the '80s and '90s, and even then I know it was going on for decades because my mom was doing it in

the '50s and '60s."

Baran, in turn, appreciates the reverence and attention he commands at the camp. But the elder statesman knows that there's only so long he'll be able to serve as a vessel from a lost world. And he isn't sure what will come next.

"I worry a great deal because my generation is passing already," he says. "It's almost gone. And we are the remnant. If we will not tell the story, who will?" ☆

(This article was made possible with funding by the Foundation for Jewish Camp. The story was produced independently and at the sole discretion of JTA's editorial team.)



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What Made Muslim Albanians Risk Their Lives to Save Jews from the Holocaust?

By Cnaan Liphshiz

Tirana, Albania (JTA) — Most anywhere else in Nazi-occupied Europe, an encounter with police would have likely sealed the fate of Jewish refugees like Nissim and Sarah Aladjem and their 10-year-old son, Aron.

Instead, when the family was detained by police in the Muslim nation of Albania 75 years ago, it was the key to their survival.

The family was fleeing Bulgaria when they were detained by five police officers working for the occupation forces. Instead of turning them over to his occupiers, as he should have done with undocumented Jewish aliens, one of the policemen helped the Aladjems find shelter with other locals.

Far from unusual in Albania, the actions of that officer in 1943 — he has not been identified — attest to the prevalence and boldness of the efforts to rescue Jewish refugees in this nation situated northeast of Greece. It is perhaps the only Nazi-occupied country that had more Jews after the Holocaust than before.

Owing partly to what locals call Besa, a local code of honor and neighborly conduct, the rescue and survival of approximately 2,000 Jews by Albanians for decades had remained largely unknown. But thanks to recent studies and films, it is taking its place as a rare ray of light during otherwise dark times.

The Aladjems' story is told in an award-winning 2012 documentary film titled "Besa: The Promise." It tells the story of Rifat Hoxha, who ran the pastry shop to which the family was taken by the police officer and arranged their shelter.

The film follows the unlikely story of how, a decade ago, Hoxha's son, Rexhep, returned three Jewish prayer books to members of the Aladjem family living in Israel. During the war, his Jewish guests had given the prayer books to Hoxha for safekeeping after hiding at his house for half a year.

As with many other Jews who survived in Albania — most of them refugees from neighboring Greece, Italy, Bulgaria and Serbia — the rescue of the Aladjems was "an open secret," Rexhep Hoxha, a father of two who was born in 1950, told JTA. "Not only the police knew, but all the neighbors knew as well. There was a circle of silence. It's something connected to our culture. You don't betray your guest, and you certainly don't betray your neighbor."

To accommodate the Aladjems, Hoxha, who died in 1987, shuttered his bakery in the busiest time of the year — police brought the Jews to his shop just ahead of the Eid al-Fitr holiday — and brought them to his home, Aron Aladjem recalls in the film. Then he put them up in a room occupied by his in-laws, who temporarily moved out to make room for the guests.

"My grandfather was a Muslim cleric. For him to leave his house



Rexhep Hoxha, left, and Fatos Qoqja in a bar in Tirana, Albania, Nov. 8, 2017. Qoqja is pictured with a medal that his father received for saving Jews during the Holocaust. (Cnaan Liphshiz)

and make room for this Jewish family, there is no tolerance more beautiful than this," Rexhep Hoxha said. Israel recognized his father posthumously in 2015 as a Righteous among the Nations — the Jewish state's honorary title for non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust.

In many cases, numerous members of rescuers' families knew of such acts and became involved, according to a 2008 essay by Yad Vashem researchers.

"This included the extended family and even some close friends," the essay said. "Often the Jews were divided between relatives and friends."

Some of the Jews in hiding — and especially the 200 Albania-born Jews who survived the war — were feeling secure enough to operate small businesses during the occupation years, according to



Baba Mondi, leader of the Bektashi sect of Albanian Muslims, at his office in Tirana, Nov. 7, 2017. (Cnaan Liphshiz)

the essay. Some never bothered to go into hiding, trusting their neighbors would not denounce them and warn them ahead of inspections.

Albania currently has 75 so-called righteous gentiles — a small number in absolute terms but one that, examined relatively, means that a Jew there was at least 10 times likelier to be rescued than in Lithuania, which has almost 900 righteous, or Poland, which has 6,706.

Last year, to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a conference in Tirana titled "We Remember: Promoting human rights through the lens of Holocaust education and remembrance."

Traces of the hospitality aspect of the Besa code are still visible

today in rural Albania, an Adriatic republic whose green and black mountains are scarred by thousands of abandoned and elaborate Cold War-era bunkers and reservoirs built by its communist dictator, Enver Hoxha (no relation to Rifat).

"If I'm traveling for work and get stuck somewhere, I only need to knock on someone's door and I have a place to sleep for the night," said Petrit Zorba, a meteorologist and director of the Albania-Israel Friendship Society.

Drivers often signal to others with their lights to warn of speed traps in Tirana, a chaotic but clean city of 1 million where the sound of the call to prayer from the Et'hem Bey mosque is heard several times a day across the main Skanderbeg Square.

According to Zorba, the rescue of Jews in Albania was "a matter of tradition, and had very little to do with religion." Yad Vashem has no insight into what role religion played in the rescue efforts. But Baba Mondi, the leader of the secretive Bektashi Shiite sect, which is headquartered in Albania, says that religion's role in the rescue was both central and indirect.

"In Albania there is a tradition of religious tolerance," Baba Mondi, wearing his traditional white-and-green robe and fez-like hat, told JTA in November. "I wouldn't mind my children marrying a Jew, a Christian, whoever. So while the rescue maybe didn't come from a religious commandment, it grew out of a religious environment where all fellow human beings are our brethren."

He gave the interview at the world center of his sect — a magnificent domed structure with 12 arches that was inaugurated in the city's eastern outskirts in 2015. Its ornate ceiling features arabesque designs and the traditional Bakteshi sun symbols arranged around an elevated turret. On sunny days, its golden dome reflects and amplifies light that it catches from the snowy top of Mount Dajti overlooking Tirana.

Forthcoming in speaking about the rescue of Jews, Baba Mondi declined to reveal anything of substance about the customs of his sect, which for centuries has been persecuted by other Muslims for its mystic interpretations of Islam.

In addition to Besa, the relatively benign nature of the German occupation may have also played a role in how Albanians were more willing to take in Jews than Poles, Ukrainians, and others across occupied Europe.

"German authorities did not aggressively seek, deport, or exterminate Jews from Albania proper

after occupying the country in November 1943," according to Daniel Perez, a historian who wrote about the Holocaust years in Albania in a 2013 book titled "Bringing the Dark Past to Light."

But Aron Aladjem says he witnessed a different reality.

"The Germans ruled there and on every tree, every electrical pole we saw partisans hanging — many of them hanged to scare people into not hiding partisans and Jews," he recalls in the film.

The Germans, who replaced the Italians in 1943 as the occupying force in Albania, were not the only ones that Hoxha had to watch out for, according to his son.

"Having a religious book, Jewish or Muslim, was not a good idea for our family, which already had a cleric, under communism," Rexhep Hoxha said. "Any connection to Jews or Israel, whom we were told was an enemy of socialism, was ill-advised."

The culture of silence under communism partly explains why

the rescue of Albanian Jews has remained relatively unknown for many decades, according to the Yad Vashem researchers. The imprint of the communist era, they wrote, caused "people to fear being linked to the 'wrong' resistance group, even after the regime had been changed."

And Albanians had some very wrong resistance groups. Most notably, the 1st Albanian Waffen SS Division, manned by hundreds of ethnic Albanians — many of them from Bosnia and also Kosovo, which during the German and Italian occupations had been lumped together with Albania. The details of their activities are sketchy, but they are known to have rounded up Jews who belonged to the group of at least 249 Kosovar Jews who ended up at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany, according to Perez.

(Continued on page 34)

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Seven Books about the Holocaust You Should Read, According to Scholars

By Josefina Dolsten

(JTA) — From Anne Frank's diary to Elie Wiesel's *Night*, books about the Holocaust remain some of the most powerful and well-known pieces of literature published in the past century.

Books have the power to educate about the Shoah's unimaginable horrors and bring to life the stories of its victims, as well as unearth hidden details about wartime crimes.

Ahead of Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, JTA reached out to Jewish studies scholars across the country seeking their recommendations on recently published books dealing with the Holocaust. Their picks, all published in the past three years, include an investigation into the 1941 massacre of Jews in the Polish town of Jedwabne (two scholars recommended the same book on that topic), a critical examination of theories trying to explain the Holocaust and a look at how Adolf Hitler saw Islam as a religion that could be exploited for anti-Semitic purposes.

***The Crime and the Silence: Confronting the Massacre of Jews in Wartime Jedwabne* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015)**

By Anna Bikont

Joshua Zimmerman, professorial chair in Holocaust studies and East European Jewish history, and associate professor of history at

Yeshiva University, writes: This book, a winner of the 2015 National Jewish Book Award, was written by a Polish journalist who discovered she was Jewish in her 30s and became deeply engaged in the topic of Polish-Jewish relations. After Jan T. Gross' controversial book *Neighbors: the Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (2000) proved that the local Poles — not the Germans — committed the massive pogrom in that town in July 1941, Bikont went to Jedwabne and its surroundings, interviewing eyewitnesses to the crime in the years 2000 to 2003, shedding new light on the character of the perpetrators, bystanders and the intricate way the crime was concealed for 50 years after the Holocaust. It is written in the form of a journal of the author's travels and conversations with people.

Barbara Grossman, professor of drama at Tufts University and former U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council board member, also recommended Bikont's book. She writes: I first read about the Jedwabne massacre in Gross' book and still remember being riveted by the cover image of a barn engulfed in flames. Perhaps because my paternal grandfather was from Poland — from a city relatively near Jedwabne — I felt a particular connection to this atrocity, as well as gratitude to him for leaving the country years before the

Holocaust. I directed Tadeusz Slobodzianek's "Our Class," a play loosely based on the events in Jedwabne, at Tufts in 2012, and remain fascinated by this story of greed, treachery, and cruelty, a horrific crime in which as many as 1,600 Jewish men, women and children perished. Bikont's magnificent work of investigative journalism details her meticulous reconstruction of the massacre and its subsequent decades-long coverup. It is a sobering and compelling account of anti-Semitism, denial and isolated acts of heroism.

***The Archive Thief: The Man Who Salvaged French Jewish History in the Wake of the Holocaust* (Oxford University Press, 2015)**

By Lisa Moses Leff

Jonathan Sarna, professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University, writes: This award-winning book recounts the amazing story of Zosa Szajkowski, the scholar who rescued archives that might otherwise have been lost in the Holocaust. Szajkowski wrote numerous books and articles, but was also a known archive thief, caught red handed stealing valuable papers from the New York Public Library. Leff's meticulous account reads like a thriller, yet conveys invaluable information concerning the fate of Jewish archives

during and after the Shoah, and why removal of archives from their original home matters. Brandeis University and my late father, Bible scholar Nahum Sarna, play bit parts in this story. I remember Szajkowski, too; in fact, I took a class with him as a Brandeis undergraduate. He told lots of stories in class about his archival experiences during and after World War II, but it was only after reading Leff's wonderful book that I understood "the rest of the story."

***Why? Explaining the Holocaust* (W.W. Norton & Company, 2017)**

By Peter Hayes

David Engel, professor of Holocaust studies and chair of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University, writes: I recommend this book for a lucid, well-crafted introduction to the history of the Holocaust. Unlike most works on the Holocaust written for a general audience, which tend to emphasize how the Holocaust was carried out and experienced, Hayes' book concentrates, as its title suggests, on helping readers to understand why the Holocaust occurred when it did, where it did, in the manner it did, and with the results it produced. It offers readers a window onto how historians go about finding answers to these questions, why some answers turn out to be more compelling than others, and how new evidence can change understanding.

***Probing the Ethics of Holocaust Culture* (Harvard University Press, 2016)**

Edited by Claudio Fogu, Wulf Kansteiner and Todd Presner

Omer Bartov, professor of European history and German studies at Brown University, writes: This book comes out a quarter of a century after the publication of Saul Friedlander's crucial edited volume, *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution* (1992), which had challenged the conventional discourse on the mass murder of the Jews and critiqued its popular representation. The current volume attempts to grapple with the wider impact of Holocaust scholarship, fiction and representation in the intervening period. It includes fascinating essays on new modes of narrating the Shoah, the insights provided by the "spatial turn" on research and understanding of the event and the politics of exceptionality, especially the contextualization of the Holocaust within the larger framework of modern genocide. As such, it enables readers to understand both the ongoing presence of the Holocaust in our present culture and the different ways in which it has come to be understood in the early 21st century.

(Continued on page 34)



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Albanian Muslims Risked Their Lives to Save Jews

(Continued from page 31)

But according to some historians, many Jews who were rounded up by Albanian collaborators were transferred to minimum-security camps in Albania proper, where the vast majority were kept alive in defiance of Germany's orders and policy on Jews.

Due to these complications and communist-era censorship, the first written account of the rescue story was published relatively late, in 1992, after the fall of communism.

One of the first stories to emerge in documented form was of Beqir Qoqja, a Muslim tailor who in 1943 took in his friend, a Jew by the name of Avram Eliasaf Gani from the city of Vlore, after the Germans had arrested Gani's brother.

Qoqja, who was recognized as a Righteous Among the Nations in 1992 and died in 2005, hosted Gani at great risk at his Tirana home, where Qoqja was living with his wife, Naile, and at least one daughter, according to Qoqja's son Fatos.

"A Jewish filmmaker once told me that if he were asked to risk his own child's life to save another man's, he wouldn't do it," said Fatos, 67, who has two children. "But I'd do exactly as my father had done. It's Besa."

The early 1990s were also the

time when European societies became aware of the dark side of the Albanian code of honor: the slaying of men, including innocents, in blood feuds and honor killings that are dictated by the code of Kanun. They have cost thousands of lives and sent many thousands into exile as asylum seekers.

Despite the cruelties of the Kanun system, however, ordinary Albanians found the Nazi violence against Jews unconscionable because it targeted women and children, according to Eliezer Papo, a scholar on Balkan Jewish history at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel.

"Common humanness, rolled into the Albanian patriarchal, tribal ethos, compelled these people to rescue Jews," Papo suggested. And whereas "men killing other men is part of life in Albanian tradition, the targeting of women is an unspeakable monstrosity."

He noted that killing dozens of men from one family to avenge the slaying of just one member of a feuding clan is not unheard of in Albania.

"But those same feuding families," Papo said, "would risk everything to rescue one another's daughters." ☆

Seven Holocaust Books You Should Read Now

(Continued from page 32)

Islam and Nazi Germany's War (Belknap Press, 2014)

By David Motadel

Susannah Heschel, professor of Jewish studies at Dartmouth College, writes: This is a major work of scholarship, examining the various ways the Nazis fostered a relationship with Muslims both before the war and especially during the war. Jeffrey Herf wrote a book a bit earlier, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, detailing Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda sent, in Arabic translation, to North African Muslims, and Motadel expands the range of influence: that Hitler understood Islam as a warrior religion that could be exploited for propaganda efforts and to serve in both the Wehrmacht and the SS. The indoctrination of Muslims with Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda may well have had effects lasting long past the end of the war, a topic that deserves additional attention.

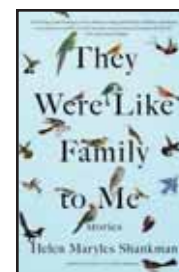
My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me: A Black Woman Discovers Her Family's Nazi Past (The Experiment, 2015)

By Jennifer Teege and Nikola Sellmair

Michael Rothberg, professor of English and comparative literature and chair in Holocaust studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, writes: Teege's memoir, published in German in 2013 and translated into English

in 2015, is a fascinating contribution to the discussion of the ongoing impact of the Holocaust over multiple generations. When she was in her late 30s, Teege discovered that her grandfather was a Nazi war criminal. And not just any Nazi: he was Amon Goeth, the commandant of Plaszów depicted in the film *Schindler's List*. Because Teege is herself a black German woman — the daughter of a Nigerian father and a white German mother who was herself the daughter of Goeth's mistress — her story takes on additional resonance. Intercut with contextualizing passages by Sellmair, a journalist, Teege's memoir both confronts historical conundrums about race, reconciliation and responsibility for the past, and offers glimpses of very contemporary questions about the contours of German identity. Her earnest reckoning with family and national history can inspire us all to reflect on what it means to be im-

plicated in histories of racial violence, even those we have not participated in directly.



They Were Like Family to Me: Stories (Scribner, 2016)

By Helen Maryles Shankman

Jeremy Dauber, director of the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies and professor of Yiddish at Columbia University, writes: Writing literature about the Holocaust is many things, but it is never easy; and writing Holocaust literature in the vein of magic realism is more difficult yet. It risks taking the great horror of the 20th century and rendering it ungrounded, imaginative, even — God forbid — whimsically slight. But when a skillful writer pulls it off — David Grossman, for example, and now Shankman — the fantastic casts illuminating and terrible light on the dark shadows of the history of the war against the Jews. The stories in her collection are by no means factual in all respects. But they contain unmistakable truth. ☆



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- ★ Hole-in-One



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Oasis Senior Enrichment Program*

Committee: Arthur Lavitt (Co-Chair) and Mike Van Glish (Co-Chair)

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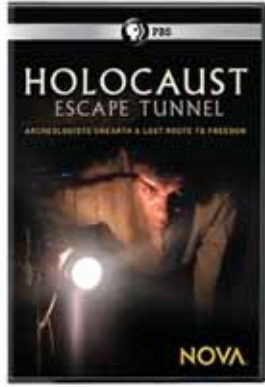
An Incredible Holocaust Escape Story Proven by Science

(Continued from page 28)

father's past came in two ways: One was the annual reunion, on the last day of Passover, held by escapees who had settled in Israel. At dinner, when shots of vodka loosened tongues, the men talked of the past, paying no attention to the boy listening in.

In later years, Gol discovered that his father had kept a written record of his past, which the son translated into English. One small recollection from the diary: the persistent stink from the combination of kerosene and tar the prisoners had to pour on the wood pyres to fan the flames.

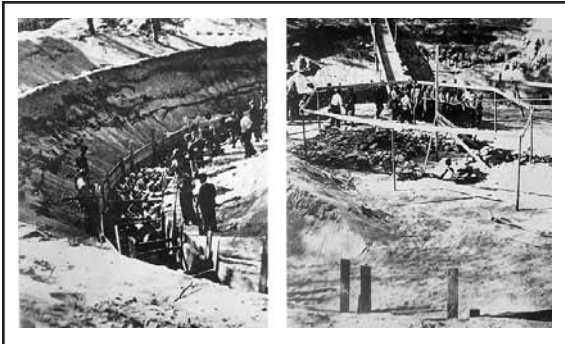
At the time of the tunnel's discovery, Seligman of the Israel Antiquities Authority wrote, "As an Israeli whose family originated in Lithuania, I was reduced to tears on the discovery of the escape tunnel at Ponar. This discovery is a heartwarming witness to the victory of hope over desperation. The exposure of this tunnel enables us



to present not only the horrors of the Holocaust, but also the yearning for life."

With the deaths of the last eyewitnesses of the Holocaust, Freund said, historians will have to rely increasingly on yet unknown scientific and technological advances to preserve and enlarge our knowledge of the great tragedy of the 20th century.

The DVD of "Holocaust Escape Tunnel" is available on amazon.com.★



"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

~ William Shakespeare

In Honor of Volunteer Appreciation Month

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JPsonSardis.org/register

Registration for Camp & School Year is Open. Space is limited!






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