

The Charlotte JEWISH news

Vol. 43, No. 6

Sivan-Tammuz, 5781

June 2021

Charlotte Educators Teaching in Israel

The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte recently committed funds to sponsor six local educators to travel to Israel this summer to teach English in its partnership region of Hadera as part of TALMA, the Israel Program for Excellence in English. The program pairs native English-speaking educators from around the world with their Israeli Hebrew-speaking counterparts. In addition to professional development, the program allows American teachers to reconnect to both Israel and their Judaism.

“Enhancing our community’s understanding and relationship with Israel is one of the Federation’s strategic priorities,” says Tair Giudice, chief impact officer. “TALMA provides young adults from our community the unique opportunity to spend a summer in Israel volunteering in public schools, building relationships with their Israeli counterparts, and deepening their connection to Israel and the Jewish world.”

Eliana Berger, a fifth grade teacher at Sterling Elementary, and Jesse Mazen, a special education teacher at Charlotte Metro School, will be heading to the Hadera-Eiron Region this summer as part of the program.

Eliana says, “I have been in Charlotte my entire life and



Eliana Berger

grew up within the Jewish community here. I’m on the board of the Young Jewish Professionals groups in Charlotte and am passionate about obtaining a strong Jewish identity. As a child, I attended Ramah Darom for ten summers and traveled to Israel with them when I was 16. My older brother made Aliyah 11 years ago and has been living in Israel ever since. I have a very strong love for Israel and although I haven’t been in eight years, I will always feel very connected to it. I can not think of a more rewarding and amazing way to spend my summer than to work with other educators from around the world and be engulfed in the Israeli culture. I would love to represent Jewish

Charlotte!

“While in Israel, when I was sixteen, I volunteered in an elementary school. At that point, I already knew I wanted to be a teacher but that experience solidified it. I am so interested in working alongside an Israeli educator and hopefully taking all of their knowledge back to use in my own classroom in Charlotte.

“I am inspired to join TALMA because I want to grow as an educator and truly believe the best way is by watching and working with other teachers. I have only ever worked in low-income schools which makes TALMA even more appealing and exciting to me. I have a passion for helping students grow — not only as learners, but as people. To know that these students are from Charlotte’s sister city makes it all the more special.”

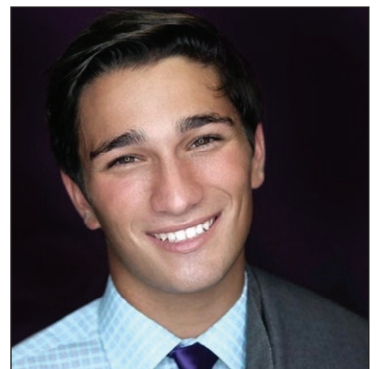
Tisha Greene, assistant dean for the Office of School and Community Partnerships, UNCC, says of Eliana, “When I hired Eliana to teach four years ago, she was named the North Carolina Student Teacher of the Year. She is an amazing teacher.”

Also traveling to Israel is Jesse Mazen, special education teacher at Charlotte Metro School.

“I have been to Israel twice. Once for Birthright and once for an internship with the Joint Distribution Center (JDC). During both of these experiences, I loved learning about Israeli culture and further exploring my Jewish identity. Since visiting Israel, I have joined a young professional Jewish organization to keep exploring and learning. I’ve been itching to go back to Israel as I find myself getting more and more involved with Judaism

every time I visit.

I’m always interested in exploring new ways to teach and broaden my horizons. I believe we can learn something new from anyone around us. I currently work with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Differentiating instruction



Jesse Mazen

(Continued on page 6)

LJCC One of Five Selected to Partner with BBYO to Address Adolescent Health

By Michelle Rusgo, LJCC Youth Programs Coordinator

In a first-of-its kind-partnership, JCC Association of North America and the BBYO Center for Adolescent Wellness (BBYO-CAW), with support from the Jim Joseph Foundation, will collaborate to assess and support mental, emotional, and social health among adolescents.

The pilot initiative comes as mental health issues such as anxiety and depression have surged among adolescents who have been isolated from their peer groups as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initial pilot will use resources from BBYO-CAW to assess and address the preparedness and ability of five Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) to support the needs of the youth they serve. All costs will be covered by the Jim Joseph Foundation. The five participating JCCs are: Mayerson JCC (Cincinnati, Ohio), Bender JCC of Greater Washington (Greater Washington, D.C.), Michael-Ann Russell JCC (North Miami Beach), Tucson JCC (Arizona), and our own

Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center (Charlotte, North Carolina).

This initiative marks the first time JCC Association of North America and BBYO have joined forces to bring a BBYO-CAW program to the JCC field.

“JCC professionals are often on the front lines in observing what may be emerging issues affecting the well-being of adolescents,” said Doron Krakow, president and CEO of JCC Association of North America, adding, “This partnership is all the more meaningful in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. BBYO is the ideal partner for us, to ensure that we’ll be well-positioned to provide the services and support our teens may require.”

“BBYO has a wonderful relationship with the Levine JCC and we hold many of our weekly programs there, so we could not be more thrilled that they were selected as one of the five JCCs to participate in this initial pilot,” said Ellen Goldstein, area director, BBYO. “As we emerge from

(Continued on page 3)

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From the Editor



Shira Firestone, Editor CJN

Yesterday morning when I came to work, the sun was shining. As the morning progressed, feathery, milky-white clouds gave way to something more foreboding. A few hours later and my phone was shrieking an emergency warning, and before I knew it we were sheltering-in-place for protection from a (weak) tornado. With the all clear, I went back to my office and looked out the window to find the sun breaking through the clouds again. Just like that. I've been paying attention lately to events that seem to be opposition. To sun and storms. To beginnings and endings. To birth and death. One day I wit-

ness people venture out for the first time in months, like crocuses tentatively poking through the ground in recognition of the promise of spring. I join in the excitement and optimism. The next, I wake up to news of Meron or of rockets pummeling Israel. In April, our community mourned the loss of those closer to home. (Read tributes to Audrey Madans on pages 8 and 24 and Fred Shporer on page 12.) It was while contemplating these losses that I participated in the South Jewish Roots: Charlotte Heritage Tour, a program of the Stanley Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice at Queens University of Charlotte. One of the most memorable stops on the tour was The Hebrew Cemetery. Rabbi Judy Schindler, Susan Jacobs, and Roz Cooper told stories of the many individuals buried there, individuals who have left an indelible mark on the Charlotte Jewish community — from the Rintel family in the 1870s to Moses Richter, the “Peach King,” who died in 1969. (Read the article about the generations of the Rintel family on page 17.) While standing by the headstone of one of these Jewish

founders of Charlotte, Rabbi Schindler asked us if we knew why Jews place stones on the headstones of their loved ones. In answer to her own question, she shared a poem she had just written.

Stones and Tears by Rabbi Judy Schindler

As Jews, we carry not flowers, but stones to the cemetery. Flowers are beautiful but death is not so we bring stones so as to be realists – so as not to gloss over the pain of death. Our hearts are still torn – even as the years and decades may dull the searing sting. Each stone holds stories – of a parent’s or grandparent’s love for their child or grandchild tragically stolen from this world in the wrong order, turning their lives upside down in a way that it may one day be better, but never completely right. of a spouse losing their soul mate and best friend a bond built over decades suddenly broken leaving the living with a desperate longing, half their life and half of themselves feels gone. Stones marking friendships that sustained, parents who unconditionally loved, mentors who inspired, leaders who awed,



humble people who loved and lived their best lives. Stones hold tears. Of broken hearts. Of broken families. Of broken lives. Yet stones can become smooth and grief can soften. We leave the stones and we live. We do not bring flowers but stones to the cemetery. Stones always remain, as does our love.

We were then invited to take some time to wander the cemetery on our own. With Rabbi Schindler’s poem fresh on my mind, I crouched down to more closely appreciate one of the headstones covered with these symbols of both tears and everlasting love. And as I stood up to rejoin the group, my eye was drawn toward something just on the other side of the headstone that I hadn’t noticed before — a crocus — poking out of the ground. Life and birth — here on the grounds of the cemetery. Soon we will begin to take off our masks and hug again. But the

optimism and joy that come from this renewal don’t diminish the difficult losses in the Jewish community. The memory of those we have lost will be for a blessing. When we hug again, our hugs will be both to celebrate and to comfort. Shalom is more than a greeting, and it means more than peace. It also means wholeness and completeness. There cannot be wholeness if we discard one part of our experience in favor of the other. In these days to come, may we all experience Shalom.

Editor’s Note: The Charlotte Jewish News does not publish in July. But that doesn’t mean we’re not sharing news! Follow us on Facebook so you don’t miss a thing! And as we prepare to come back in August better than ever, it is on Facebook that we will be seeking feedback to guide our next steps as your primary communication vehicle for the Charlotte Jewish community.

Shira

Shabbat Candle Lighting Times June/July

Friday, June 4 – 8:16 p.m.	Friday, July 2 – 8:23 p.m.
Friday, June 11 – 8:19 p.m.	Friday, July 9 – 8:22 p.m.
Friday, June 18 – 8:22 p.m.	Friday, July 16 – 8:18 p.m.
Friday, June 25 – 8:23 p.m.	Friday, July 23 – 8:15 p.m.
	Friday, July 30 – 8:09 p.m.

It’s Not Too Late to Make Your Annual Campaign Gift

Federation’s role has never been more vital. And through all of the challenges that we have faced this past year, the core of our work remains constant in enriching and caring for Jews here at home, in Israel and around the world. If you have already made your pledge to the 2021 Annual Campaign, we thank you. If not, please consider a gift by visiting jewishcharlotte.org, texting “PLEDGE” to 704-327-0354 or mailing your check to 5007 Providence Road, Ste.101, Charlotte, NC 28226.

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Shira Firestone - Editor

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TOTAL ANNUAL GIVING	PERCENT OF GOAL	TOTAL DONORS
\$3,652,587	77%	1348

As of May 13, 2021

Sarah Hurwitz Special Guest at Federation's 2021 Annual Meeting

By Shira Firestone

This past month Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte held its Annual Meeting, the theme of which was Strength in a Time of Crisis. After recognizing Federation staff and outgoing board members and voting in new board members, Federation Board chair, Ron Townsend, interviewed featured guest Sarah Hurwitz.

As former speechwriter for President Barak Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama, Sarah shared with the Zoom audience amusing stories and anecdotes, offering a behind the scenes peek into life in the White House.

The focus of the conversation, however, was on her evolving relationship to Judaism as discussed in her book, "Here All Along, Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life — In Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There)"

Recognizing that the expectation might be that Sarah's first book after leaving the White House would address politics or her time as a speechwriter, Ron asked her how her family and friends reacted to her writing this book.

She replied that they were surprised, and laughed when she

recalled friends saying, "Sarah is getting religious. Is everything OK?" She continued, "It seems funny that we have this one model for what happens when someone gets deeply passionate about Judaism. We assume that they're going to practice Judaism in a certain way. But I know passionate Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist Jews. There are so many ways to be a committed and engaged Jew."

Turning to more practical matters, Ron asked for her perspective on the changing demographics and approaches to institutional Judaism, acknowledging research that shows that those who don't identify with a formal institution are less likely to invest in synagogues, Federations, and other traditional mechanisms of the Jewish community.

Sarah replied, "I am a big fan of institutions. We need them. We need institutions to have deep and rich and thriving communities. I appreciate the work that your Federation and Federations across the country do to invest in institution."

"If we're going to engage younger Jews, we need to rely on our incredible 4,000 years of

tradition. We need to focus on literacy and the transformational wisdom Judaism has to offer about how to live our lives.

"Younger people aren't necessarily looking for easy or thin. They are looking for something transformational. If it's meaningful, if it changes their lives, they will invest. And I passionately believe Judaism has so much to offer them that will change their lives. The struggle is how to translate that. This is a religion that's meant to be learned by living it from birth to death, or by learning it in your tight knit Jewish community, which none of us really live in anymore."

"So we are engaging in the project of trying to translate this for a new world. So you're seeing new kinds of institutions rise up to join older institutions, and that's great. And Federation sponsors and invests in a lot of those institutions."

To read the highlights from the Federation's year in review, you can find the annual report on Federation's website at www.jewishcharlotte.org.

Editor's Note: Sarah's remarks have been lightly edited for length and clarity.

JCC/BBYO

(Continued from page 1)

a year of disruption and isolation and face an increase in mental health and wellness concerns among young people, the notion that this initiative will help ensure safe environments for the teens in our care is a win for everyone involved."

Drew Fidler, director of BBYO's Center for Adolescent Wellness, said, "Given the expected post-pandemic influx of activity from audiences with these potential needs, we understand how important it is for JCCs to be organizationally ready to support the youth populations they serve. Our goal is for this partnership between JCC Association and BBYO-CAW to further enable our Jewish communities to be a place where young people can thrive mentally, emotionally and socially."

Michelle Rusgo, the youth programs coordinator for the Levine JCC and current Merin Teen Fellow will act as the liaison between the LJCC and BBYO-CAW. "This is an amazing opportunity to bring the community together in order to build positive relationships

between our staff and the teens we serve. The mental health of our youth and teens is what we need to focus on right now. This collaboration will help to create a successful plan to support our youth from the ground up."

Using BBYO-CAW's Youth Wellness Assessment tool, JCCs will better understand how their policies, procedures, and training create and ensure safe environments for young people. The tool incorporates best practices, local and national laws, and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and American Camp Association.

After the assessment, BBYO-CAW will provide reports to each JCC, identifying both strengths and areas in need of improvement, and assist the JCCs in

making changes and creating new policies and procedures to ensure safe settings. This pilot will provide BBYO-CAW with data to help refine the services it offers to all youth-serving organizations.

As part of its engagement, to occur through the summer and fall, BBYO-CAW will also provide two customized training sessions to each JCC. These sessions may cover such topics as mandated reporting, building and maintaining appropriate boundaries with children and adolescents, recognizing mental health red flags, and helping children and adolescents with mental health issues.



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L'Shanah Tova!

It's time!

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See page 38



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~ Miss Debby's Bookshelf ~ Best-loved Children's Books, By Debby Block



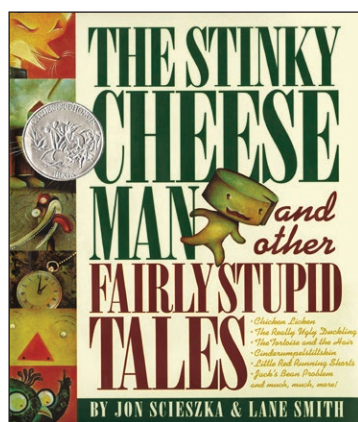
Debby Block

"There's no such thing as a kid who hates reading. There are kids who love reading, and kids who are reading the wrong books." James Patterson

I am frequently asked for book recommendations for children who "don't enjoy reading." We all understand that it is important for students to continue reading when out of school to avoid the "summer slide," but how do you encourage reading over the summer? This summer article will focus on tips as well as my best-loved books for the reluctant reader ages 7-12.

Let's Laugh: Summer is a time for fun! Who said that reading has to be so serious? My favorite

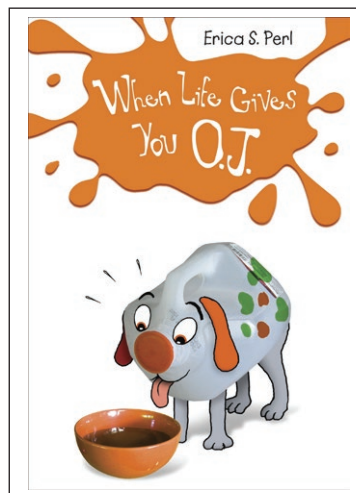
books for children of all ages often range from silly to ridiculous! I highly recommend "The Stinky Cheese Man and other Fairly Stupid Tales." In this delightfully absurd picture book, Jon Scieszka takes well-known stories and turns them on their head. Recommended for ages 5-8.



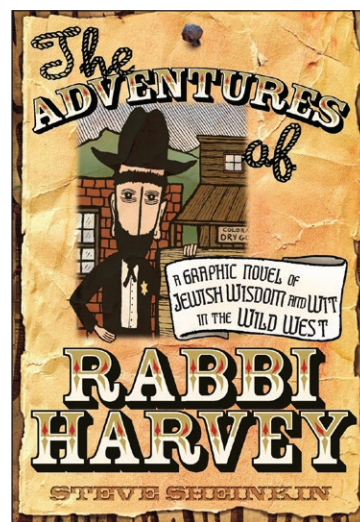
Have you heard of Mr. Gum? He is the grouchy man who hates children, animals, fun, and even corn on the cob. Throw in an angry fairy that lives in the bathtub and you have a riotous series of books by Jewish author Andy Stanton. Stanton says, "Kids have a really sophisticated grip on humor and storytelling." The

books in the Mr. Gum series are easy to read and sure to have your children giggling well past bedtime. Recommended for ages 7-11.

One of my all-time favorite books of recent years is "When Life Gives You O.J." by Erica Perl. Zelly's parents refuse to let her get a dog. Finally Zelly's eccentric grandfather comes up with a ridiculous plan and creates a "practice" dog for Zelly made from an orange juice jug! Imagine feeding a plastic bottle or taking a plastic bottle for a walk on a leash! How silly! How embarrassing! Recommended for ages 8-11.



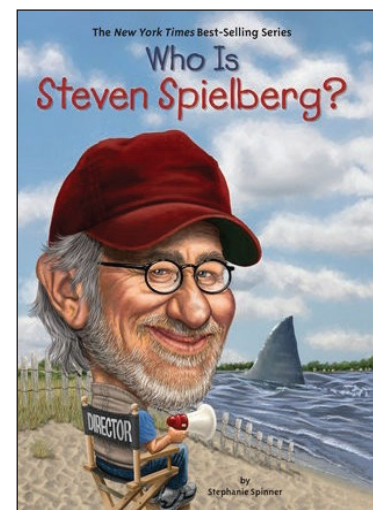
Graphic Novels: Graphic novels are a terrific way to provide visual clues and engage readers. Happily, graphic novels as well as heavily illustrated books have become readily available! From "Big Nate" by Lincoln Peirce to "Dogman" and "Wimpy Kid" by Day Pilkey to "Narwahl" by Ben Clanton, there are many enticing choices. My favorite graphic novel series is "The Adventure of Rabbi Harvey." Rabbi Harvey lives in the Old West and uses timeless Jewish wisdom to solve mysteries, work out problems, and even catch robbers. Each book in the series includes several short, delightful anecdotes. Embedded in each story are layers of humor that will entertain, teach and make anyone laugh. Recommended for ages 8-12.



Just the Facts: Some children, as well as some adults, simply prefer reading nonfiction. Happily, there is a wonderful assortment of child-friendly books that focus on events, people, and historical events. I highly recommend the "Who Was" and "What Was" series. This wildly popular series of books is presented in an engaging, easy-to-read way. Recommended for ages 8-12.

Focus on Interests: What are

your child's interests? What are they curious about? Does your reader like mermaids, or magic tricks, animals, sports, or even Star Wars, or Minecraft? Find books that match their interests and it will make reading a far more enjoyable experience.



Important tips: Don't stop reading out loud to your reader. Not only will this provide opportunities to hear fluent, expressive reading, but also reading aloud will also increase his/her interest in books. Select books that are above your child's reading ability so that you can scaffold learning, including vocabulary and comprehension.

Miss Debby's best-loved books, and many more, are available at the Center for Jewish Education, home of the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library. To reserve your copy today call (704) 944-6783 or email library@jewish-charlotte.org.



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Inspiration.
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~ Sue's Bookshelf ~ By Sue Littauer



Sue Littauer

According to Jillian Cantor, USA Today bestselling author of "The Lost Letter and In Another Time," "The Nesting Dolls" is a vividly rendered, sweeping historical novel. Alina Adams deftly portrays three generations of women, beautifully weaving their coming of age stories about love, sacrifice, family, and ultimately survival. I absolutely devoured this compulsively readable gem of a novel."

When I came upon the cover of the book "The Nesting Dolls" by Alina Adams, I was intrigued, and as I became immersed in the novel, there were a few times when the book brought to mind personal recollections for me.

First, the matryoshka doll on the book's cover looks exactly like the one positioned prominently on a shelf in my home. My matryoshka doll was given to me on the first of my three trips to the Ukraine, as a participant on the Jewish Federation of North America's (JFNA) Campaign Chair and Directors Missions. On that first incredible trip, we gathered with townspeople to mark the 100th year since the Kishinev pogrom in 1903.

Also, much of "The Nesting Dolls" takes place in Odessa, where I visited on my third JFNA Mission in 2006. That trip highlighted for us the resurgence and rebuilding of Jewish communal life following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Federation lay and professional leaders were joined by Hillel students, Jewish communal professionals, and community leaders during that visit.

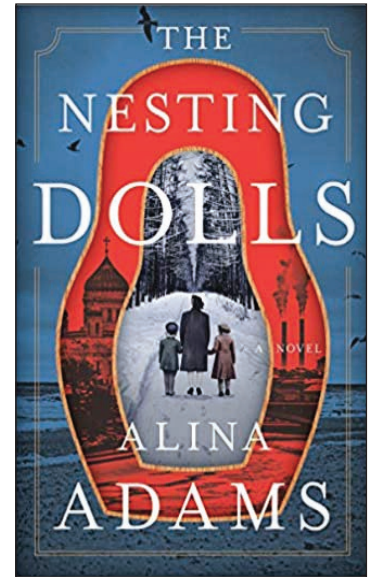
The third memory took me back to the 1980s when I attended a B'nai B'rith Women's Conference in Washington, D.C. during the height of the resettlement of Soviet Jews in the United States. One of the speakers was Ina Nudel, the former refusenik and Israeli activist who was known as the "Guardian Angel" for her efforts to help the "Prisoners of Zion" in the Soviet Union. During her

speech, Ms. Nudel asked how many in the room had grandparents from Russia. Ninety percent of the hands went up, at which time she said, "There but for the grace of God go I." This made a huge impression on me and I will never forget the pall that came over the room — many of us realizing how different our lives would have been had our grandparents not left Russia.

These memories served to pique my interest in "The Nesting Dolls," which masterfully unravels the story of five generations of Russian Jewish women. It specifically follows three of these women from Odessa to Siberia to the United States. Daria, the matriarch of the family, faces impossible choices when her

pianist husband and the rest of their small family are marched off to Siberian labor camps, having been accused of speaking, thereby being, German. Then, in the 1970s, Daria's granddaughter Natasha, clearly the victim of Soviet Union antisemitism, is able to resettle from Odessa to the United States. Finally, Zoe, Daria's great, great-granddaughter, who lives in Brighton Beach, struggles to bridge the gap in her identity, which is split between Russian/Ukrainian Jew and American.

I know you will be as swept away by this mesmerizing novel as I was, and the stories of Daria, Natasha, and Zoe will stay with you for many years to come.



2003 Dedication of Memorial for 1903 Pogrom in Kishinev



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A Letter to My Son, Jacob, on His Fifth Birthday

Jacob Lemay is a transgender five-year-old whose assigned gender at birth was that of a girl but who now lives as an affirmed boy. His story is told in the new memoir "What We Will Become: A Mother, A Son, and a Journey of Transformation."

In 2015, Mimi Lemay wrote an open letter to her son that details the story of how she and husband, Joe, came to accept Jacob was transgender and

allowed him to begin living an affirmed life as a boy. This letter went viral.

Join us on June 2 to hear Mimi Lemay speak about her memoir and her family's journey. Go to www.jewishcharlotte.org to register!

By Mimi Lemay

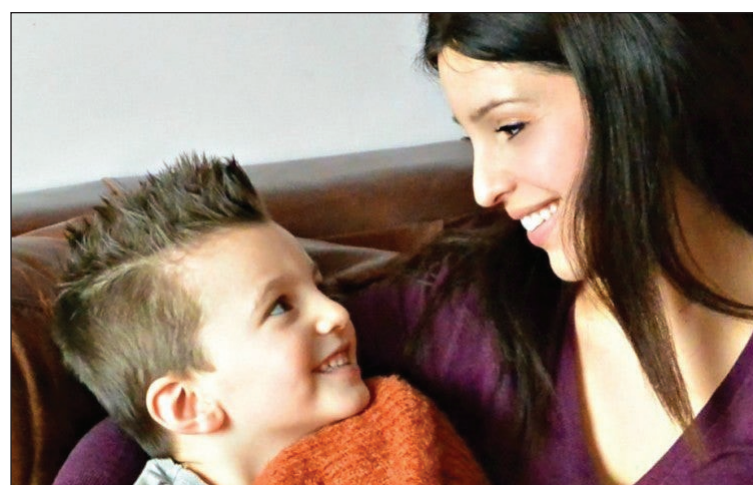
It was a frigid New England February day when we were first introduced. You ROARED: "Here I am!" I was able to gaze into your eyes through a happy

haze and introduce myself in return. "Hello, Princess," I said, "I'm your Mama."

On your third birthday, you set a stake in the ground and declared yourself a boy. At first we bantered with the word "pretend." We explained, and you acknowledged, that you were pretending to be a boy. At preschool you tentatively assigned yourself to the male faction of the class, and you were told that you were pretending and that pretending was fine as long as it didn't interfere with the workings of the school day. When I was told that you were told that you were pretending, I nodded and acquiesced. It made sense. This new thing was foreign, and it was troublesome, and above all, it seemed unhealthy. Another obsession. Another whim.

Whim or not, our home soon became a battleground over gender with your constantly pulling me, your dad, and your older sister into unwilling skirmishes. You would glare at us with your huge, defiant brown eyes and say, "I AM A BOY," and I, a great believer in the principle of the inverse proportionality of parental disapproval to a child's seditious, gave little protest. I would sigh and say, "That's fine, sweetheart. You can be what you want to be in our home."

But our soothing acceptance never seemed to be enough. You became watchful and guarded at school and in public. At home, there were many occasions that you let go, hitting, kicking and punching, wailing and screaming: "Don't talk to me!" "Get away from me," and frequently, "You ruin everything!" Your anger seemed atypical, in excess of the ordinary emotional vicis-



Mimi Lemay and Jacob

situdes of being three.

I knew that being "as a boy" was important to you. I knew little of the word "transsexual." I was aware that there was a newer term — transgender — and that, in my way of thinking at the time, younger people could be "afflicted" with this too. It was weird; it was beyond the pale; it was, to my current shame, slightly grotesque. I did not truly believe that it applied to my beautiful, round-faced, bright-eyed, innocent preschooler.

But then one day in the late fall of your third year, I attended a routine parent-teacher conference. Your teacher expressed her concern in hesitant tones: "You know, Mrs. Lemay, has it ever occurred to you, is it possible — that Em may actually believe she is a boy?" Tears stung as they welled up in my eyes. I tried to stem the flow out of embarrassment, wiping my eyes and nose on my sleeve, standing in the middle of the bare auditorium, no box of tissues in sight. Not my little girl. Not happening. Please wake up.

I stumbled through the next

days in a painful haze. We were a few weeks shy of winter break, and I reached out to a friend of ours, a therapist who had worked with at-risk LGBTQ youth. She confirmed my fears — we should consider that you might be transgender.

I pressed her to tell me what that meant. Not the dictionary definition, but what the implications were: to your future, to your physical and mental well-being, and to our family. I heard words like "outcomes," and "high risk," and "medical intervention," and statistics like "over 40% attempted suicide," and my world started to unravel. She tried to temper these dark things with words of encouragement and moral support; however, it was impossible to process any further. The blood was rushing too strongly in my head as my heart was being carried downstream with the vestiges of my fantasy of a wonderful life for you.

I freely write about the negative emotions that the possibil-

(Continued on page 7)

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To learn more contact Sam Bernstein at sam.bernstein@jewishcharlotte.org

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Jun 2

What if you had to risk everything to support your child? In her powerful memoir, Mimi Lemay, international advocate for transgender youth, weaves together the story of raising and advocating for her young transgender child, with the story of her own childhood in an ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. Her message: "you don't need to choose between faith and accepting people."

Register at www.jewishcharlotte.org

Charlotte Educators

(Continued from page 1)

and individualizing programs is crucial for my students' growth. Observing how Israeli teachers approach problems compared to American teachers will help me gain different perspectives on how I can transform my instruction to benefit my students. Behavior management strategies differ in every classroom. In special education, we are constantly using evidence-based practices to help with behavior management. My long-term goal is to work as a behavior analyst and I think it would be extremely beneficial to see what behavior strategies Israeli teachers use that differ from the strategies we use in the states.

To me, excellence is continuing to work to better yourself. My grandfather used to have a saying "Good, better, best, never

let it rest till your good is better and your better is best." I did not know this saying until I attend his funeral last week. This saying resonated with me. In the classroom, especially as a teacher, I believe we are always continuing to grow. We need to always strive to do better. Once we think we've reached our best we must tell ourselves "no, we can do more". This continuous growth in our teaching is how we will achieve excellence in the classroom. This model will also inspire our students to reach excellence inside and outside the classroom.

Be sure to look in September's Charlotte Jewish News for a follow-up interviews with Eliana and Jesse.

Mimi Lemay

(Continued from page 6)

ity of your transgender nature evoked with regret, but no shame. By now, you know how proud I am of you, how happy I am to be your mother, and how I perceive your unique nature as a precious, if puzzling, gift. At the time, though, it was a devastating blow.

I called the Gender Management Clinic at Boston Children's Hospital, and although you were too young for the program, they referred me to a therapist who had experience with transgender youth. She was not covered by our insurance at the time, but was willing to speak with me at length on the phone. She told me that many children — up to 70 to 80% — who present as gender-non-conforming (running the gamut from tomboy/effeminate to truly transgender) revert to their assigned, or "born" gender upon reaching puberty. Oh, phew. What a relief. "Keep things fluid," she further advised. "Try not to box your daughter into making a choice either way. Just show support." All good advice, and I was temporarily buoyed by the hopeful news. To my desperately seeking ears, this meant you might well be going through a phase. How wonderful.

And so we left things. You asked to cut your hair, and we gave you a sweet pixie cut. Keep it fluid. It was all about compromise those days. Slowing your inexorable march toward all things boy.

But I knew in my mother's heart that you were not truly happy. Not like your sisters. Not like the unburdened joy that I thought you ought to have felt coming from a warm, loving home with plenty of affection, positive experiences, and toys galore. There was an un-childlike, persistent sadness that lay about you like a pall in those years, which should have been so magical.

I thought and I weighed, and I deliberated and I doubted, until a million possible futures nearly drove me to distraction. What if?

It was Friday, June 13, when we called you upstairs into your dad's office. We told you we had something for you to see, and so you sat, engulfed in your dad's big black swivel chair, as he cued the video on his laptop. You viewed intently and solemnly as young Ryland Whittington was transformed from a beautiful little girl with golden locks into a handsome smiling boy in a buzz cut and tuxedo. When the video ended, you asked to watch it again. Then you sat staring at your hands. We asked you what you thought about the boy, and

you shrugged, stone-faced. The walls you had erected were made of harder stuff than we had expected. But the moment was now. All three of us in this room, your palpable pain, the resolution we needed to help you find.

So I got down on my knees and took your soft, still baby-like little hands in mine. I asked you to look at me, but when you lifted your beautiful gaze to mine, I was momentarily speechless. I rallied. "I believe you," I said, and I didn't bother to wipe the tears with my sleeve this time. "We believe you. All we want is for you to be happy, but you need to help us understand what will make you happy." Your dad knelt down next to you, too. "Do you want to be a boy all the time like that boy we showed you?" he asked. Your eyes filled immediately. "I can't," you responded with a quivering lip. "I HAVE to be Em at school and Mica at home."

So we told you. We told you about the choices, any of which you could make — or not. We told you that these choices were yours. Among which, you could continue at your school as Em. Or you could go there next year with any new identity and finally, more radical yet, we could find you somewhere to start anew, to simply be the boy you had insisted for so long that you were. You paused a long while. I didn't know if you could do it. I didn't know if you had the faith in us to tell us what you truly wanted. I didn't know if you could imagine a future where you were whole: one identity, body, and mind. You broke the silence. "I want to go to a new school. I want to be a boy always. I want to be a boy named Jacob."

Within days of beginning life anew as Jacob, you began to stand up straight and look people in the eye. You stopped barking like a dog and running for cover. In allowing your transition, we were only hoping to help your spirit survive. We did not expect the seismic shift in your personality that we experienced. You cracked your first real joke within a week, took a fresh interest in learning your alphabet, and so much more. You started to cuddle and kiss, laugh and sing — and the dam just broke. You talked and talked and talked as if someone had taken a muzzle off your mouth. You took up hobbies, collecting anything and everything you found that piqued your interest. That summer, the world opened up its treasures to you.

Jacob, my love, it is you who

has transitioned us to a life less ordinary and so much more meaningful than it ever would have been. Thank you deeply for your sacred trust.

This letter has been reprinted with permission of author Mimi Lemay. For the completed, unedited letter, please see the addendum in the book "What We Will

Become" or search "A Letter to My Son Jacob on his 5th Birthday" by Mimi Lemay.

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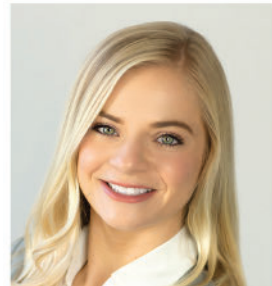
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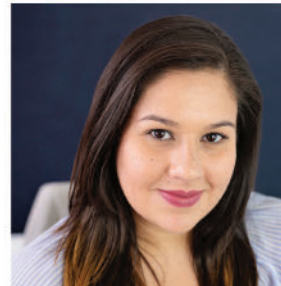
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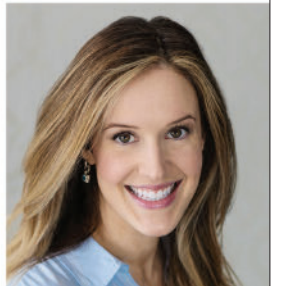
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~ SYNAGOGUES AND CONGREGATIONS ~

Thoughts of the Late Audrey Madans



Audrey Madans, 1931-2021

By Ruth Goldberg

Do you remember seeing a bright red convertible with the top down and a woman with snow-white hair blowing in the breeze? That was the late Audrey Madans, who passed away on April 15, 2021. Born on December 14, 1931, in Malden, Massachusetts, Audrey still had a distinctive Boston accent. She married Jerome Madans in 1951, and they moved to Charlotte in 1959 with their children, Craig and Maxine. They joined Temple Israel, and in a short time, Audrey volunteered in Sisterhood and became its president. She joined the temple choir and enjoyed singing in it for 60 years. When women gained rights to fully participate in a minyan, Audrey

became a regular member of the Thursday morning minyan. She joined an adult B'nai Mitzvah class when in her late 60s, learned how to chant Torah and Haftarah portions, became a Bat Mitzvah, and did readings several times each year at Shabbat services.

Audrey attended Shabbat services regularly and was one of the first to arrive. She welcomed newcomers and invited them to sit with her. She visited the sick and home-bound through the years until COVID-19 prevented her from doing it. She lovingly performed Chevra Kadishah, preparing women for burial. She and friends made and delivered a shiva tray of food for the mourning family to eat after the funeral. In addition, Audrey arranged for a table of cake and coffee to be available after shiva minyans at the Temple.

Audrey was active in many organizations in the wider Jewish community. She was president of Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah, board member of Jewish Family Services, president of the Blumenthal Jewish Home for the Aged in Clemmons and Greensboro, North Carolina, BJH Foundation in Greensboro, and North Carolina Association of Jewish Women and Men.

In 1970, Audrey invited a group of women to her home to present the idea of starting a Women's Division of United Jewish Appeal (UJA). Its purpose was to encourage women to give "plus dollars to Israel." Several years later, the group became the Women's Division of Charlotte Jewish Federation. Today the women are known as "Women's Philanthropy of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte," and they raise funds for Jews locally, in Israel, and around the world.

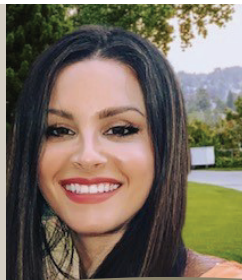
In his eulogy, Rabbi Michael Wolk quoted Audrey's response to a question about what Temple Israel meant to her. In a 2019 interview, she said, "This is my home away from home. I do lots of things in this community, and have for 60 years, but the Temple is what keeps me grounded. When I need comforting, this is where I come"

That bright red convertible had a license plate: TI-M5." Rabbi Wolk told us that TI stands for Temple Israel. "M5 needs more explanation. Audrey would gladly tell you that it stands for the five Jewish matriarchs. If you had the chutzpah to tell her that there were only four matriarchs, she would reply, "You haven't met me yet." She was not only an elder of the community, but played the role of a matriarch to so many. It is in this role of one of the Imahot that I will always think of Audrey.

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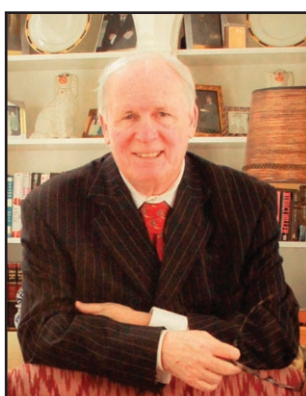
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Sign-up on the Upcoming Programs page on the TI website.
We look forward to spending the summer with our Torah Tots families!

Field Day



SPECIAL PERSON AND ME FIELD DAY!

Sunday, June 13, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Temple Israel Courtyard

Grab your special person in your life and join us for a fun field day! There will be games and good times in the Temple Israel courtyard and grassy area. You do not want to miss out on the fun. Please visit the Upcoming Programs page to register today!

**Due to Covid-related attendance restrictions, there is a limit of (2) special guests per child.*

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VISIT OUR "UPCOMING PROGRAMS" PAGE AT TEMPLEISRAELINC.ORG

Counting Our Blessings and Summer Reading



By Rabbi Asher Knight

As I write this article, we are in the midst of counting the S’firat Haomer. So often, we count down — the days to a birthday (especially for our children), the minutes until halftime, the seconds before the launch of a rocket, or when a new secular year begins. 10-9-8-7... There are even apps on our phones that can count down for us.

But the S’firat Haomer, the seven weeks between the second day of Passover and the holiday of Shavuot, reminds us to “count

up” instead. In Jewish tradition, it is during the counting of the Omer when we move from the confined narrowness of Egypt toward the revelatory promise of Mount Sinai.

In a year that has had so much counting up and counting down — days in quarantines, days until we could get the vaccine and then counting when our vaccines were most effective, days until our kids could go back to school — we have learned a thing or two about the meaning behind the counting. Each day matters. Each note and text message matters. Each letter of sidewalk chalk and homemade goodies matters. Each walk outside, as we witness the changing of the seasons, matters. This is a year of counting. We count the blessings in our lives. We count the ways that a loving community can grow and flourish. We count the ways that we have persevered and been resilient. Count up, as Rabbi Karyn Kedar writes, because all things

are possible right in the palm of our hands — hands that extend in kindness, hope, and love.

One of the things I’ve been counting this year has been books. During the pandemic, reading has helped me discover new ideas, challenge my thinking, and transport me to new worlds (and get my travel fix). Summer is the perfect time to escape into the pages of a book, to be challenged by new ideas, to imagine, and to reflect. We can also use the opportunity to deepen and enhance our Jewish learning.

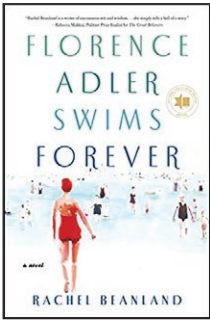
In all the counting this summer, consider counting the pages of a book or two or three. Here are some of my suggestions for your summer reading. These books have given me new insights into my lives and our world.

“Friendly Fire:

How Israel Became Its Own Worst Enemy and Its Hope for the Future” by Ami Ayalon. Former head of Shin Bet security agency, Ayalon shares a brutally honest assessment of what’s Israel must do to achieve peace.

“Caste: The Origins of our Discontents” by Isabel Wilkerson. If you don’t trust Oprah or the New York Times, please trust me. This is perhaps the most important book you could read all summer, especially in light of what’s happening in our country. Push through this book and learn from this extraordinary teacher.

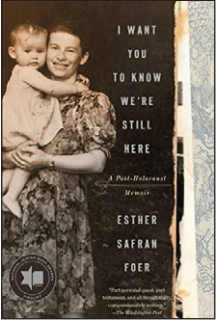
“I Want You to Know We Are Still Here: A Post-Holocaust Memoir” by Esther Safran Foer. A



deeply moving story about the author’s trip back to Ukraine to find the shtetl and a family that saved her father. It is also a deeply personal story of discovery and memory.

“Judaism for the World” by Arthur Green — Engaging with the Hasidic masters and mystical traditions of Judaism, Rabbi Green gives a religious language of cultivating the Divine Spark in each person.

“Florence Adler Swims Forever: A Novel” by Rachel Beanland. This is a perfect beach read, even if you aren’t at the beach. Beautifully written, the book will make you smile as you read about the slightly dysfunctional Jewish family. A great escape!



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Temple Kol Ami Emerges From Behind the Screen

By Shari Baum

*Hineh mah tov umah na'im
Shevet achim gam yachad*

Behold how good and how pleasing it is for people to sit together in unity.

The words of this Jewish hymn, traditionally sung on Shabbat, have never been truer than now. Over the past almost year and a half, we have not been able to sit together except with our immediate family. Events that had previously brought us together, such as B'nei Mitzvahs and High Holiday services, were moved from inside the sanctuary to behind the computer screen. While we are grateful that we were able to carry on virtually, there is no substitute for praying and playing together. Over the past couple of months, as more and more individuals have been vaccinated, Temple Kol Ami has started to emerge from behind the screen and come together in person again. In May, we held our first in-person service (albeit outside) in over a year, had a

"Bark Mitzvah" at a park, and celebrated the end of religious school with a picnic. On June 19, we will have an in-person B'nei Mitzvah when Reece and Cassandra Dobro will be called to the Torah (a reschedule from June 2020 due to the pandemic). Additional B'nei Mitzvahs are scheduled for October, November, and December. So we are starting to take baby steps and enter into our "new normal."

It is the intention of Temple Kol Ami to have in-person Religious School starting in the fall of 2021. All of our teachers have been vaccinated and are excited to get back into the classroom with our kiddos. We completed an excellent year of virtual learning but are anxious to have the interactions and friendships that are so crucial to growing up Jewish (especially in a small Jewish community). This is a work in progress and subject to change if circumstances change. If you have a child who is ready for Religious School (Torah Tots

through B'nei Mitzvah), check out Temple Kol Ami. For more information, please contact tka.religiousschool@gmail.com.

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 Reform congregation in Fort Mill comprising Jews from diverse

backgrounds. We hope you will join us soon (hopefully, in-person) and find your Jewish home in our welcoming community. Go to our website, www.templekolamisc.org, to keep up with all that is going on at Temple Kol Ami.



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A Loss to the Charlotte Jewish Community: Fred Shporer of Blessed Memory

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

Fred Shporer passed away early on the morning of April 29, 2021. Fred's passing left his family and friends and all who knew him with a void that will

take time to heal. Fred was loved and adored for his exceptional kindness and willingness to help anyone and everyone. He always put others before himself and relished the opportunity to do a

favor for a friend. His response to anyone who asked him how he is doing? "Much better now that I see you." He had a unique way of making people feel important and welcomed.

What was unusual about Fred is that he was an ambitious person who was driven to success, rising to the top in his profession. He won many awards for being top in sales and rose to managerial positions for several large companies. As Fred succeeded and increased sales and distributorships, all with diligence and determination, he was never satisfied with his success. Yet as a person, he was a real "mensch" in a most genuine way. He extended kindness, friendship, and empathy to everyone he met. He did not boast about his accomplishments or exhibit his awards. Fred's humble and kind demeanor never hinted of pride or self-importance.

Fred lived up to the Mishnaic dictum of "Greet every person with a cheerful face." He was genuinely happy to meet new people, especially during services at the synagogue. He was the unofficial usher who would seek out newcomers, helping them become acquainted with their new surroundings and keeping them engaged.

Fred was always ready to volunteer for the organizations he served and loved. No volunteer job was below his dignity; he did it with a smile and with true devotion. His commitment was boundless, and his joy was to make others happy. He had a persuasive way of convincing people to join him in his volunteer work. Perhaps because he was great at making people at ease with his genuine care and interest in their lives.

In his personal life, Fred was a loving and caring husband, a devoted father to his children, and totally engaged in all of their academic and social activities.

Fred Shporer was knowledgeable of our Jewish heritage. He held degrees in history and Jewish studies from University of Massachusetts and Hebrew College. He continued his education and received an MBA from Northeastern University. Yet he was always eager to learn more. When it was his turn to emcee the kiddush luncheons at Ohr HaTorah, he would always prepare his comments by researching the early rabbinic commentators on the weekly Torah portion, distilling these thoughts to be understood even by the average person.

Fred met Lisa, the love of his life, in 1975 outside the Bostoner Rebbe's synagogue on Beacon Street in Boston, and they got married in 1980. His three children were his greatest treasures. He was totally involved in

their education and helped them sharpen their skills and took pride as they excelled in their school work.

In 2012 the Shporers suffered a painful tragedy with the loss of their beloved son Zachary. The pain was deep and greatly affected the Shporer family. One of the uplifting projects that brought comfort to Fred and Lisa was the creation of ZABS Place — a unique and beautifully designed boutique thrift shop in Matthews, which employs young adults with special talents, with a multiple track training program that allows them to find employment in the retail marketplace. ZABS is the acronym for Zachary's Hebrew name. (Zecharyah Avraham Baruch Shporer). Lisa and Fred threw themselves personally into the development and expansion of ZABS, which has become a beacon of light to the young people with special talents and their families.

In addition to ZABS Place, Fred was also active in Jewish Family Services in Charlotte, as well as the Butterfly Project at Shalom Park. He served on the board for the Hebrew Cemetery. Fred also served on the board of Congregation Ohr HaTorah which is part of Chabad of Charlotte and was an active participant in the Chabad building committee with recent building project on Sardis Road.

His passing leaves a void in our hearts.



News of Israel's Achievements and Heartwarming Stories from the Jewish State.

In April's edition: Israeli scientists have found a bacteria that can help fight cancer.

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Fred Shporer – January 11, 1955-April 20, 2021

Inspiring Summer Sundays at Chabad

This summer, Chabad will be launching an exciting new Torah study initiative in Charlotte.

Chabad of Charlotte will feature a unique chavruta-style learning program starting on Sunday night, June 13, followed by consecutive Sundays through the summer, culminating on Sunday, August 1. Participants will be paired with one of the rabbis and scholars in the community. Topics of Torah that will be studied will include Tanach, Talmud, Chassidic thought, Tanya, and much more. The Sunday evening program will begin with Mincha, the afternoon service at 7:30 p.m., followed by a one-on-one hour of study with a partner in a chavruta-style learning. Maariv, the evening service, will be at 8:45 p.m., and the program will conclude at 9 p.m. On the two summer fast days, the 17 of Tamuz and Tisha B'Av, the study

will focus on the inner meaning of Jewish fast days and the relevance of the past to our times. This program is free of charge.

In addition, Chabad will offer a parallel study program that will be an in-depth, advanced Yeshiva-style learning initiative. In this program, Chabad will offer eight round-the-year topics that will explore and delve into the deeper meaning and fascinating facts about the Jewish holidays and days of significance on the Jewish calendar. These eight subjects will cover the holidays of Tu B'Shevat (new year for trees), the counting of the Omer and Shavuot, Purim, Passover, High Holidays, Sukkot, and Chanukah.

The launch of this project will focus on the topic of the three weeks of mourning, during which we reflect on the destruction of the Temple and the long

Jewish journey through the Diaspora. This subject will be taught in two sessions on two consecutive Tuesdays: July 6 and 13, at 7:30 p.m. These classes will be offered in person and by Zoom. There is a nominal fee for each class, or you can register for the whole series of eight topics throughout the year. Please check www.chabadnc.org and watch your email for registration information, or call Chabad at (704) 366-3984 in June for more information.

The Return of the Shabbaton Dinner: Mini Summer Shabbatons at Chabad

After a long break because of COVID precautions, Chabad of Charlotte will open our famed Friday night Shabbaton program gradually. This will allow us to provide social programming with three, small-scale, limited group Shabbaton dinners limit-

ed to between 25 and 30 people at each event. This series of Mini-Shabbatons will be held on the three Fridays during the three weeks of July 2, 9, and 16.

These three weeks coincide with the three weeks of mourning. Although the three weeks are thought of as a time of sadness and reflection, on Shabbat, we reflect with joy and hope for a better future, which will bring us extra joy into those Shabbats.

Each Shabbaton will begin with early candle lighting at 7:30 p.m., followed by Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat, and will feature a delicious gourmet Shabbat dinner prepared by Kosher Charlotte.

To follow the COVID safety guidelines, tables will be spaced apart from each other in the Social Hall at the Epstein Family Chabad Center of Jewish Life. One of the Chabad rabbis and

rebbetzins will host each event.

These events will be first come, first served. Registration will close once each of these events fills up. Please send your request to sign up to rabbicohen@chabadnc.org. You will then be contacted to confirm your availability to participate. The cost of these dinners will be \$25 per person. If you can't make it to join one of these three Shabbatons, have no fear, as Chabad will have many more opportunities throughout the coming year!



Charlotte Lost a True Hero This Winter



Rabbi Yudi Dukes

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

Rabbi Yudi Dukes, who led JNet, Chabad's international remote learning study program, passed away on January 21, 2021. On that day, when Yudi passed away at age 39, the world at large, and more specifically the world of Torah learners, lost a shining light.

A pioneering online teacher and director of JNet, the organization that connects Jews around the world in Torah study, Rabbi Dukes was, among other things, personally responsible for connecting thousands of people to the sweet, holy words of Torah. As recounted by so many, he lived and breathed his calling to connect Jews with each other in the study of Torah by connecting people with phone chavrutas, or study partners, for weekly Torah study sessions.

This tragedy is especially painful here in Charlotte. Rabbi Yudi would regularly visit

Charlotte each holiday. Together with his wife, Sarah, a Charlotte native, they would celebrate the major Jewish holidays with Sarah's parents, Dr. Selwyn and Cheryl Spangenthal.

On every High Holiday, Rabbi Yudi's melodious voice inspired the participants at Ballantyne Jewish Center and helped lift their prayers heavenward. Every other holiday he could be found at Chabad of Charlotte's Sardis Road campus, now known as the Epstein Family Chabad Center for Jewish Life. Yudi's energy was contagious. Whenever he was in town, he would read the Torah at Chabad in a unique and inspiring way. His voice was strong, so powerful that it reverberated throughout the whole shul in a way that uplifted all who heard him. Simchat Torah was his favorite, celebrating at Chabad with palpable joy that touched everyone who knew him. Doing a headstand, dancing, singing, and carrying one of his six beautiful children on his shoulders were some ways Yudi would always celebrate. Yudi earned a special place in our hearts, and our community will never forget him.

A global campaign to carry on the torch that defined Rabbi Dukes's very life: more Torah-study partners, 1,800 of them to be exact, is an ongoing initiative.

Organizers stress that the primary goal is to increase Torah study, whether it's using the JNet website to find a new

chevruta match or just registering a new commitment with a friend in the registry. What counts is that the legacy of this positive person with a perpetual smile will carry on.

Yudi will be remembered for meeting his harrowing, yet te-

nacious, battle with COVID-19 with an upbeat attitude, and although he suffered, he refused to yield to that suffering. He will be remembered for greeting others with a smile and being a source of inspiration — that was Yudi's way of life.

Although Yudi has physically left us, his soul is still positively affecting us. It is now up to us to pick up where he left off, ensuring that his work leads to thousands more people sitting down to study Torah together. For more information, visit www.jnet.org.

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Temple Solel Appreciates Jewish History

By Shelley Pawlyk

I felt like S.S. St. Louis survivor Sonja Geismar was reaching into my soul when I heard her tell the 7th grade class of South Carolina Gold Hill Middle School, “Be an UPstander not a BYstander.” She went on to provide a recent example: “You can be like the 17-year-old who recorded the video that was used as evidence in George Floyd’s murder trial. She was an upstander. We must be upstanders to change history.”

It was an honor and a privilege for members of Temple Solel to attend this dialogue facilitated by the school with special guest

Robert Krakow, creator and producer of the documentary called “Complicit.” Krakow tells the powerful true story of the German transatlantic liner the S.S. St. Louis that sailed from Hamburg, Germany, in May 1939 to Havana, Cuba, carrying 937 passengers, nearly all of them Jewish refugees. The ship was not allowed to land in Cuba, the United States, or Canada. By not accepting those Jews, the film notes, the U.S. and other countries indirectly sanctioned Hitler’s later actions in widespread murders. “Many, many thousands of lives could have

been saved,” Krakow said, “had Roosevelt offered the refugees a safe harbor.”

One of the students asked a follow-up question, “What can kids do to stop oppression?” Eva Wiener, also a survivor, answered this way: “Stand up for what you think is right; be against antisemitism, bullying, hate, and prejudice. Everyone who stands up is meritorious. If not, you are complicit, and it won’t make the world a better place. Be aware of history and realize social media can spread false information. Don’t be swayed by propaganda.”

Robert Krakow stated, “The St. Louis played out before the world, and there are moral lessons and consequences for our actions with far-reaching implications today.” Krakow went on to explain the generations of people affected by what happened, like those murdered upon returning to Europe who could have been saved by the countries that turned Jews away.

Several weeks prior, I received a phone call from Sam Bernstein, chief development and marketing officer of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, who asked whether I knew about the synagogue that was in Rock Hill, South Carolina, in the 1990s. Neither of us could find more information about it, so I contacted the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina (www.jhssc.org/).

My contact there did not have history about the synagogue; however, I was invited to attend its South Carolina Historical - Documenting Synagogues meeting.

Sam Gruber described how critical it is for us to tell the story and why the synagogues are important, to get a sense of the place, doing photography, and seeing from the perspective of congregants and the leaders. Another member, a photographer, is scheduled to travel to Myrtle Beach, Charleston, and other locations. This will ensure the history of Jews in our state and congregational legacies are documented.

We are also planning to bring in a virtual genealogy speaker as a follow up to one session we sponsored prior to the pandemic. If you are interested, please contact us via our website and direct your inquiry to Helaine Yancey.

I’ve talked about history, but I would be remiss not to mention the present day. Temple Beth El’s organizers did a wonderful job hosting “From Social Distance to Social Justice — Using the Lessons of 2020 to Work for a Better Charlotte,” which had almost 150 temple members who reflected on the events of the past year. The purpose is to bring people together to start the process of healing.

History isn’t just the past; it is present and future. We are the

only ones who can remember, protect, listen, and stand up so our Jewish community not only survives, but also thrives. Young students like those at South Carolina Gold Hill Middle School, many not Jewish, as well as the survivors who spoke to them, have set a beautiful path before us. Solel means “pathfinder,” and that’s exactly what we want to be: “Upstanders, not bystanders.” Let’s all set a goal to create change and influence wherever we can — relentlessly, passionately, and by adding kindness to this powerful version of virtual Jewish penicillin, aka chicken soup.

Temple Solel is in the process of gaining approval to start socially distanced services again this summer. In the meantime, Temple Solel holds regular Shabbat services at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Fridays of each month via Zoom and hopes to resume services soon at Belair UMC Family Life Center, 8095 Shelley Mullis Rd., Fort Mill, SC 29707. For more information, visit www.templesolelSC.org, write us at info@templesolelSC.org, or call (803) 610-1707.



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What Americans Had to Say About Jewish War Refugees

By Uriel Heilman

December 2, 2015 (JTA)

They were called “so-called” refugees, told they were alien to American culture and warned against as potential enemies of the United States.

This heated anti-refugee rhetoric in America was directed against Jews trying to flee Europe, not Mexicans or Syrians. Back in the 1930s and ’40s, the fear was of Nazi and Communist infiltrators sneaking in along with the refugees rather than the Islamic militants or Mexican criminals that some fear today.

Here’s a snapshot of what Americans were saying about Jews as they sought to escape Hitler’s Nazi vise for refuge in the United States.

The polls

In 1938, when Hitler’s threat to Jews in Germany already was apparent, America still was emerging from the Great Depres-

sion, and xenophobia and antisemitism were commonplace. In a July 1938 poll, 67 percent of Americans told Fortune magazine that America should try to keep out altogether German, Austrian and other political refugees, and another 18 percent said America should allow them in but without increasing immigration quotas. In another 1938 poll, cited in the book “Jews in the Mind of America,” some 75 percent of respondents said they opposed increasing the number of German Jews allowed to resettle in the United States.

In January 1939, 61 percent of Americans told Gallup they opposed the settlement of 10,000 refugee children, “most of them Jewish,” in the United States.

In May that year, 12 percent of Americans said they would support a widespread campaign against Jews in the United States and another eight percent

said they would be sympathetic to one, according to the book “FDR and the Jews.” By June 1944, the number had risen to 43 percent of Americans who said they would support a campaign against the Jews or would be sympathetic to one. Polls cited in “Jews in the Mind of America” showed 24 percent of Americans believed Jews were “a menace to America.”

At the same time, however, 70 percent of Americans said in an April 1944 poll commissioned by the White House that they supported creating temporary safe haven camps in the United States where war refugees could stay until the war’s end. Only one such camp was set up, at Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York; 982 refugees were placed there in August 1944.



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(Continued on page 15)

No Act is More American or More Jewish Than Welcoming the Stranger

By Amy Lefkof

This July 28 will mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the 1951 International Refugee Convention, which is the key legal document (along with its 1967 Protocol) that defines a refugee as a person with a well-founded fear of persecution “because of reasons of race, religion, national origin, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion,” and outlines the rights of refugees and the legal obligations of nation states to protect them. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) serves as the guardian of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol. The Refugee Convention builds on Article 14 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes the right of persons to seek asylum from persecution in other countries.

Why should this matter to us as Jews? Adopted in the wake

of the Holocaust, when so many European Jews were denied a safe haven by potential resettlement countries and subsequently murdered, the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol echo our religious texts and ethical teachings, in which a core value is to welcome the stranger.

How fitting then that on May 3, President Joe Biden fulfilled his campaign pledge to raise the United States refugee admissions cap. The new presidential determination number (as this refugee admission ceiling is called) for fiscal year 2021 is 62,500 — light years away from former President Trump’s 15,000 ceiling for fiscal year 2021, and 125,000 for fiscal year 2022. In response to Biden’s move to rebuild refugee resettlement by raising the ceiling number, Mark Hetfield, president and CEO of HIAS, formerly known as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, said: “No act is more American

or more Jewish than welcoming the stranger.”

How can members of the Charlotte Jewish community help in this effort to rebuild refugee resettlement? Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRA), headed up by Executive Director Marsha Hirsch, is a local affiliate of HIAS. As they help resettle refugees in the coming weeks and months ahead, CRRA can use donations of gift cards to Walmart, Target, and grocery stores as they set up apartments for new arrivals. Once new arrivals are scheduled, CRRA may put out a call for specific clothing or furniture needs. Go to <http://carolinarefugee.org> for more information.

In addition, Refugee Support Services (RSS) continues to distribute at least 100 COVID relief boxes with fresh food and basic need supplies each Wednesday to local refugee families. Donations can be dropped off on

Wednesday mornings between 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. at the parking lot behind the Galilee Center on Central Avenue. You can go to RSS’s website to sign up to bring fresh fruit or vegetables. Or, through RSS’s Fruitful Friend program, you can get information on how to volunteer to be a buddy family to a refugee family. <http://refugeesupportservices.org>

If you want to help with advocacy for refugees or asylum seekers (e.g., Senator Markey of Massachusetts introduced the GRACE act with Rep. Zoe Lofgren and Rep. Joe Neguse, legislation that would statutorily lift the annual refugee cap to 125,000 in each fiscal year), please contact the Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice. On its website you can view a video recording of an eight-week Refugee Advocacy training program. Each session includes an academic or professional presentation and a

dialogue on potential pathways for advocacy. <https://www.stan-greensponcenter.org>

And finally, please stay tuned for the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative’s Fourth Annual Welcoming the Stranger to the Table program to be held this upcoming fall. Whether in-person or by Zoom, this annual program educates members of the Charlotte Jewish community about current issues surrounding refugees and asylum seekers, and encourages meaningful relationships between members of the Charlotte Jewish community and those seeking a safe haven.



Jewish War Refugees

(Continued from page 14)

The statements

Rep. Jacob Thorkelson, a Montana Republican, said Jewish migrants are part of an “invisible government” tied to the “communistic Jew” and to “Jewish international financiers.”

Sen. Robert Reynolds, a North Carolina Democrat, said Jews are “systematically building a Jewish empire in this country.”

“Let Europe take care of its own people,” he said. “We cannot care for our own, to say nothing of importing more to care for.”

Reynolds told Life magazine he merely wanted “our own fine boys and lovely girls to have all the jobs in this wonderful country,” according to TheIntercept.com.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself warned that Jewish refugees might be Nazi spies, coerced to do the Reich’s bidding with threats against relatives back home. At a news conference, Roosevelt explained how refugees — “especially Jewish refugees” — might be forced into service for the Nazis with the threat that if they declined, they would be told, “We are frightfully sorry, but your old father and mother will be taken out and shot.”

Similar warnings against Nazis disguised as refugees appeared in the Saturday Evening Post, Reader’s Digest and American Magazine, according to Reason.com.

The numbers

America did not take specific action to help Jewish refugees until January 1944, when Roosevelt, conceding to pressure from members of his own government and American Jews, established the War Refugee Board to help rescue Jews in Europe.

Until then, several thousand Jewish refugees had gained admittance into the United States under the German-Austrian quota from 1938 to 1941, which wasn’t limited to Jews. But for most of Roosevelt’s presidency, the U.S. quota for immigrants from Germany went less than 25 percent filled, according to the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies. In all, more than 190,000 quota places from Germany and Axis-occupied countries sat unused during the Holocaust.

In 1938, just two weeks after the Kristallnacht pogrom, the U.S. interior secretary floated the idea of settling refugees in Alaska, and soon his office began researching the possibility. In March 1940, Sen. Robert Wagner of New York and Rep. Frank Havenner of California proposed bills to resettle 10,000 war refugees in the remote territory who wouldn’t count toward America’s immigration quotas. But the idea ran into opponents in Congress who expressed concerns that “these foreigners cannot be assimilated in Alaska, and will constitute a threat to our



MS St. Louis surrounded by smaller vessels in the port of Hamburg

American civilization.”

In one of the most infamous incidents involving Jewish refugees, the SS St. Louis, a ship loaded with Jews fleeing the Nazis, sailed to the waters off of Florida in 1939, its passengers begging Roosevelt to enter the country. But Roosevelt said no, and the ship — once close enough for passengers to see the lights of Miami — returned to Europe. Nearly half its passengers would perish at the hands of the Nazis.

Even after World War II, Jewish refugees and displaced

persons who wanted to resettle to the United States faced tight restrictions. Overall immigration to the U.S. did not increase after the Holocaust, but in an effort to bypass congressional inaction and help war refugees, President Harry Truman ordered that existing immigration quotas be filled by displaced persons. Under the provisions of the Truman Directive, some 22,950 DPs came to the United States between late 1945 and 1947; two-thirds were Jewish.

In 1948, Congress loosened immigration restrictions to allow 400,000 DPs into the United States. Most of those spots went to Christians, however; only about 20 percent, or 80,000, were Jews.

In all, 137,450 Jewish refugees had settled in the United States by 1952, according to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.



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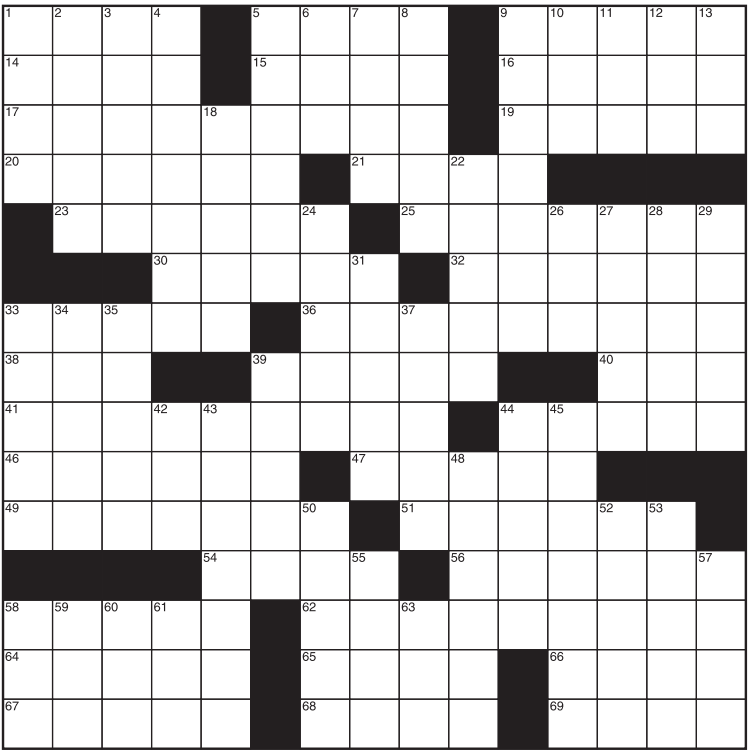
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Crossword



(Solution on page 39)

ACROSS

1. What Spitz has done well

5. Oversized groups

5. Poker player's response

6. Eggs, in the lab

9. Best-case scenario

7. Court calls

14. Macadamize, e.g.

8. Dismal, to a poet

15. Ham's sign-off

9. Really big

16. "West Side Story" song

10. It breaks early

17. Produce a faint image of

11. Be at fault

19. Biblical gift

12. Hang out to dry

20. Insert more ammo

13. "Well, ___-di-dah!"

21. Bank fixture

18. Sources of woe

23. Precipitated

22. Has emotions

25. Extended a subscription

24. Decorative sticker

30. Washer button

26. Traveler's concern, for short

32. Place for fox hunting

27. Dennis the Menace's toy

33. Bottomless void

28. Chopin forte

36. Professional associate

29. Scout's good works

38. Do some pruning

31. Matter

39. ___ lazuli

33. Battle to remember

40. Simon's couple

34. Is an omen of

41. Kind of rush

35. Belgian city famed in W.W.I

44. Chromatic nuances

37. Queen Elizabeth, for one

46. Not so bold

39. Lash of bygone west-erns

47. Beany's TV pal

42. Manage, with "out"

49. Bone-like

43. Delivery room delivery

51. Least encountered

44. Treaded things

54. "How peachy keen!"

45. Chipmaker's substitute

56. Award

48. Coaxial and booster

58. Nepal neighbor

50. Exploit accounts

62. Bile-duct blocker

52. Ermine, in summer

64. Heckle

53. Lone Ranger's rescuer

65. African lily

55. Fishing souvenir?

66. Give stars to, perhaps

57. Show grief

67. Wheel rod

58. Neither his nor hers

68. Does tailoring

59. Shut-eye

69. In peak position?

60. Dynamic team?
1. Train for a fight

2. Kid in a kiddie pool

3. Throat pendant

4. Personal histories

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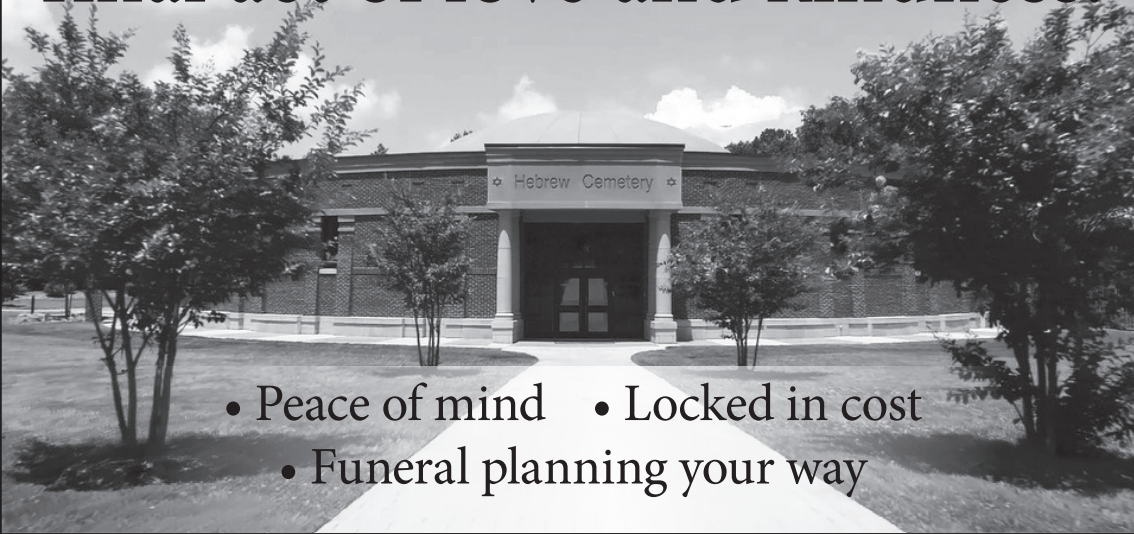


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Jonathan Rintel Discovers Deep Family Roots

By Sandra Goldman, Hebrew Cemetery Executive Director

After a year of being locked down and locked in, our country has slowly opened up again. Pleasant weather means being able to spend more time outside, and that includes being able to visit the cemetery. While cemeteries are quiet and peaceful, the grounds are now alive with an abundance of birds, including hawks, cardinals, and other Carolina natives. Beauty abounds.

Though our graves include old obelisks and other markers with intricate inscriptions, one area stands out in the historic section — the final resting place of Jacob and Bessie Rintels and two of their children. Jacob was one of Charlotte's most successful merchants of his time, and he was one of the principal players who established the cemetery in 1867. A more-than-a-century-old wrought iron fence surrounds their family plot. It is the only plot enclosure within the cemetery. The fence is currently being restored with the help of a grant from the decedents of the Rintels

family who still support the cemetery, even though they have all moved away.

Jonathan Rintels recalls, "Near the end of the last century, when somebody told me about this new thing called Google, I did what many did: I Googled my name. I found little about me, but there were several 'Rintels' links posted by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historical Society. I got in touch with the director of the Historical Society and was invited to visit the Hebrew Cemetery.

"When I finally brought my family to Charlotte a few years later, Hilbert Furstmann gave us a tour of the Rintels family section of the cemetery and told us of Jacob and Bessie Rintels' role in founding it. They were my great-grandparents, but I knew bupkis about them. My father was born in New England, so I'd always thought we were Yankees; it turns out I'm a Tar Heel! My brother has now also visited the cemetery and embarked on a deep dive into our Rintels' family roots. Filling in this large hole in our family



Jonathan Rintels

history has been rewarding and transforming."

The sages advised us to purchase a burial plot even while we are alive and well. And it is commonly said that doing so will actually bless one with a long life. Although this blessing is not written in any classical Jewish source, it is possible to explain it psychologically. The fear of dying, like the fear of anything, saps our energy. Buying a burial plot may help normalize death, thus allowing us not to be pre-occupied with it. An honest discussion about our final wishes is

truly a gift to our loved ones.

Jacob and Bessie had no time to pre-plan, as their emphasis was on life, but Jacob knew that creating a Jewish cemetery was the most important and first obligation when establishing the Jewish community in Charlotte. Little did he know that they would need graves so soon, but we can only imagine that knowing that there was a final resting place for his family and community must have given him peace of mind.

Today, more than ever, a gentle reminder of our mortality can motivate us to use our time wisely. And this brings us to the importance of pre-planning and supporting the Hebrew cemetery. Most cemeteries are connected to a temple, but that is not the case here. The Hebrew Cemetery is a community cemetery, a nonprofit organization that established memberships early on. Members receive a 20% discount on the cost of burial, but it also gives a sense of belonging and purpose, knowing that these holy grounds will be well maintained.

As mentioned above, the Rintels no longer live here, but they continue to have close ties with the community. For history buffs, cemeteries provide a wealth of information. They are a snapshot of a community's timeline, a permanent museum of those who came before. Jonathan Rintels couldn't agree more, stating, "We all should know where we come from and pass that knowledge on to future generations. Our lives are richer for it. The Hebrew Cemetery has made that possible for my family, and we're very grateful."

To learn more about the Hebrew Cemetery, pre-planning choices, membership as well as legacy and donation opportunities, please contact the director, Sandra Goldman, at (704) 576-1859 or by email at director@hebrewcemetery.org.



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For the First Time, a Woman Will Lead an Israeli Orthodox Synagogue

By Ben Sales, April 29, 2021 (JTA)

A woman will be the spiritual leader of an Israeli Orthodox synagogue for the first time.

Shirat Hatamar, a congregation in the West Bank settlement of Efrat, elected Rabbanit Shira Marili Mirvis, 40, as spiritual leader on Monday with the support of 83% of its membership.

"I truly hold in my heart all of the women, across all of the generations, who are greater than me, and smarter than me, and fear heaven and are students of Torah that didn't receive the recognition and love that I have received," she said in a speech this week. "I have a congregation that is a group of people — men, women and children — that come together to serve God in happiness, simplicity and prayer."

Mirvis' election is a historic breakthrough in Israel. Unlike the more liberal Conservative and Reform movements, which began ordaining women decades ago, Orthodox seminaries have traditionally ordained only men as rabbis.

That began to change about 10 years ago, as Modern Orthodox seminaries in Israel and the United States began ordaining women with a title akin to "rabbi" while teaching women a curriculum identical to that of male rabbinic students.

The ordination of women remains controversial in the Orthodox communities of both countries. Israel's Chief Rabbinate, which is dominated by haredi, or ultra-Orthodox, officials, does not recognize women as rabbis or authorities in Jewish law. The Orthodox Union,



Rabbanit Shira Marili Mirvis

an umbrella group in the United States, similarly does not recognize women as rabbis and prohibits its member synagogues

from hiring women as clergy.

Women serving as leaders of Orthodox congregations is still a rarity across the world. In the United States, only a few Orthodox women have led congregations. Women regularly lead Conservative and Reform synagogues in the United States, where those movements represent most American synagogues. Women have also led non-Orthodox congregations in Israel, where the Conservative and Reform movements are far smaller and often derided by Orthodox officials.

"[Mirvis'] appointment serves as an official recognition of her broad work to promote Torah and contribute to the community," Shirat Hatamar said in a statement posted alongside Mirvis' speech. "We are certain that Shira will continue in her

blessed work in the community and will serve as an example of attentive leadership for everyone."

Mirvis will soon receive her degree from the Susi Bradfield Women's Institute of Halakhic Leadership after completing a five-year curriculum studying Jewish law. She has previously served as an adviser on Jewish law, the head of a beit midrash, or Jewish house of study, and as an attendant at a Jewish ritual bath, or mikvah.

The Bradfield Women's Institute was founded by Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, who is also the chief rabbi of Efrat and a prominent liberal Modern Orthodox leader. In 2015, his position in Efrat was threatened due to his activism.



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Bal Tashchit and Beyond: Composting, Little Effort With Big Reward

By Rochelle Carney

Our family has been backyard composting, or food scrapping, for several years now. We first started learning about the benefits of composting when we lived in New York. The park across the street would collect food scraps from residents for composting every weekend. We collected our apple cores, banana peels, and coffee grounds all week and stored them in a bag in our freezer until Saturday, when we would deposit them in the bin in the park. It wasn't much, as at this time in our lives there were only two of us, and we didn't do much cooking in our apartment. But it felt good to be contributing and to feel like part of something larger than ourselves.

We moved to Charlotte six years ago with our growing family and began to do more kitchen prep for more people, so we decided to reengage with composting — but this time as a do-it-yourself project. We have a small bin in our kitchen that we line with compostable bags into which we deposit our fruit and vegetable scraps. We have been using Think Green 1.2-gallon bags from Amazon, but any bag that is marked as home/residential compostable will work. We purchased a compost tumbler from Blackhawk Hardware that sits behind our garage, and we deposit the scraps, including the bag, once the kitchen bin gets full, which in our house is about every day. Once every few days we turn the tumbler a few times to mix up the compost and allow oxygen to get into the pile.

While there are many ways to compost at your home, this has worked for us over the years, and we follow a few simple rules.

The basic rule is that if it comes out of the ground, it can go in the bin — with a few exceptions. That means no animal products like meat, bones, dairy, or fish. Our pile primarily consists of nitrogen-based items (the “greens”) such as fruit and vegetable scraps like apple cores, banana peels, onion skins, and potato peels; coffee grounds; and eggshells (which is one of the no animal products exceptions).

Add in some carbon-based dryer material (the “browns”), as the kitchen scraps can get quite “juicy”! We add in dried leaves and weeds from the yard and old cut flowers from the house. I recommend drying out any weeds that you pull because they can germinate and take root if you throw them directly into the bin. That's not a huge deal and just creates more material to recycle, but it can be a little annoying!

There are compost starters



you can buy and tips on mixing wet and dry compost material. Our general rule of thumb is to try to keep an even split between the “green” and the “brown” materials, but if the bin seems too wet and leaky, add dry leaves, and if it seems dry and clumpy, add more food scraps.

Scraps we throw in the bin break down and compact quite quickly, so it takes a long time for the bin to get full. For us, it takes about nine months, but for our family, the benefit of creating nutritious new soil is a secondary benefit to the waste reduction.

Once we have usable compost from the bin, the big question is how to use it. In the past, we have given most of our completed compost away to friends and family because we don't do a lot

of gardening and growing ourselves. However, just having the compost available has made us more adventurous about gardening, and we have recently begun to find more uses for ourselves around the yard.

If you are seeding parts of your lawn, or filling in a bare spot, put a layer of the compost down first and seed on top.

We mix our compost with regular soil or potting soil on a 1:1 basis for growing herbs and flowers in pots on the back patio.

When we planted our fig tree cutting, we filled in around the root system with our compost.

Just this past weekend we filled a pot with half compost and half soil and are attempting to grow a pineapple plant from the crown of a pineapple.

Finally, we have been bringing the compost to our kids' school to use for our kids' various projects, including the Peace Gardens outside their classrooms.

We derive many benefits from the composting project, including having an easy way to teach the kids about taking care of the environment and giving back to the earth. They have come a long way and now just instinctively throw their fruit peels into the compost bin as opposed to the garbage. In addition, I don't think it's possible to overstate how significantly our actual garbage production has decreased. In any given week when we take the City of Charlotte bin to the curb, it is almost never more than half full. While I fully recognize the impact of our actions is limited, with a household of six people, I feel good about reducing the use of plastic garbage bags, the amount of trash that goes to landfill, and the time that the garbage truck idles in front of our house potentially picking up multiple bins.

When we first started composting, we did a lot of research online and found many helpful resources. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a great starter site at: www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home. There are seemingly endless ways to compost, some of which are simple and easy, some of which are quite time consuming and involve much more expense and effort. From a tiny countertop container to a worm composting system, there is a solution for every person in

every housing situation. If it all feels a little daunting, but you have the space and want to start composting, I recommend just jumping in with a tumbler and an awareness of what you are throwing away.

Finally, if the concept of composting interests you, but the process does not, there are a few fee-based services that will pick up your compost for you (or accept drop-offs) including Crown Town Compost (www.crowntowncompost.com) and one that is looking to get off the ground in Charlotte at Compost Now (www.compostnow.org/coming/nc/charlotte). Either way, you will figure out what works best for you and your family over time, and you will be surprised by how much of a difference composting makes on your household's waste footprint.

Jewish tradition teaches the importance of caring for the environment, for we must act as partners in preserving creation. If you are interested in supporting Shalom Green or have ideas for educational programming, please contact us at info@shalomgreenCLT.org. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and Instagram @ShalomGreenCLT, and visit our website at www.shalomgreenCLT.org.



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Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community Annual Meeting 2021

This year's FCJC Annual Meeting and Community Legacy Celebration was held virtually, via Zoom, on April 11. Here are the remarks by Phil Warshauer, FCJC executive director and Stephen Philipson, FCJC Board chair.



Phil Warshauer
FCJC Executive Director

Phil Warshauer, FCJC Executive Director:

Saying that 2020 was some year would be the understatement of understatement. The year presented us all with unimaginable personal and professional challenges. How do we stay connected to our legacy donors and service our existing clients? In what ways can we support our local Jewish organizations? Could we continue our work as philanthropic advisers without in-person meetings? It was some year. In fact, it was record-breaking!

In 2020, it was the generosity of our existing clients and

their trust in FCJC that set the tone. A record \$14.4 million of new gifts was added to existing FCJC-managed funds. These funds distributed a record \$14 million of grants to 386 unique public charities throughout North Carolina, across North America, and beyond. A record \$2.2 million was distributed from FCJC-managed donor-advised funds to support Jewish Charlotte. Over the last four years, FCJC has received gifts and distributed grants of more than \$39 million. This number is incredible given that following the 2008 financial crisis, total FCJC assets under management were less than \$35 million. Supported by strong financial markets,

FCJC total assets under management were \$177.3 million at year-end.

Yes, 2020 was some year. We thank Fred Dumas and the FCJC Board for their leadership during these difficult times. We welcome Stephen Philipson as FCCJ's new chair and his willingness to embrace the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. One such challenge will be replacing my friend and colleague, Nancy Kipnis, who later this year will be joining her husband, Bob, in retirement. Nancy has created her own legacy at FCJC since joining us in June 2012. Her work on our Create Your Jewish Legacy initiative speaks for itself, as does her

passion for FCJC and our Jewish community. Over the years, she expanded her role at FCJC and leveraged her personal relationships into major FCJC client relationships. From day one we created a great working partnership. We are so happy for Nancy and Bob as they begin the next chapter of their lives. Please join me in expressing our appreciation for all Nancy has done for FCJC and our Charlotte Jewish community. Talk about a legacy. Thank you, Nancy, thank you legacy donors, thank you fund holders, and special thanks to our community partner organizations for all you do and for your commitment to Jewish Charlotte.

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Stephen Philipson
President FCJC

Stephen Philipson, FCJC Board Chair:

As we emerge from the pandemic, there are several opportunities for the FCJC to serve our fund holders and our community. The pandemic uncovered so many vulnerabilities in our society, our economy, and our community's organizations. It also uncovered as many opportunities to approach everyday life, work, school, and religious observance differently. As everyone reassesses their personal and philanthropic

priorities in a post-pandemic world, FCJC is uniquely positioned to partner with each one of us. Personally, it was extraordinarily eye-opening for Laura and me, participating in FCJC's Harold Grinspoon Foundation sponsored workshop. It really led us to think about our giving, our personal priorities, and how we can be impactful in ways that are meaningful for us and our community. I think FCJC can have a similar impact on every fund holder and prospective fund holder we touch.

As I embark on this two-year term as chair of the FCJC Board, I have a few priorities in mind consistent with what FCJC has given me as a "customer":

Continue to transform giving and philanthropy from being transactional to being personal. FCJC is uniquely positioned to serve as an unbiased partner.

Bridge the gap in generations in the Jewish philanthropic community. My generation has been incredibly blessed by the generation before us and its selfless giving and boundless generosity. That generation's names adorn many buildings. Their vision led to the creation of Shalom Park and institutions such as this one. They are the

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Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community Annual Meeting

(Continued from page 20)

sustainers of our community in every sense of the word. My generation must step up and take the torch from them and live and give by the example set by them. This is not a “nice to have.” It is a “need to have.” It is critical for the long-term sustenance of our community. FCJC can play a critical role in planting the seeds for this to happen.

I would like to see FCJC hit \$200 million in assets under management by the end of my term. If we get the first two things right and markets coop-

erate, we should easily hit and exceed this goal!

Thank you for all you do for our community and for your engagement with FCJC. As we approach the light at the end of the tunnel on the pandemic, I am so excited about what our always forward-looking community will do and equally excited for what FCJC can do in enabling that forward-looking journey.



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Congratulations, Nancy!
Wishing you a long, happy and healthy retirement.
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Celebrating our Community's 404 Legacy Donors

Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community thanks the 404 individuals and families who have created 920 unique Jewish legacies to ensure the future of our Jewish community. These generous donors have collectively committed to more than \$28.5 million through bequests, individual retirement and life

insurance plans, without affecting current disposable income or lifestyles. Already, local Jewish organizations have received over \$2.5 million in realized legacy gifts. If you are interested in learning how to create your own Jewish legacy, please contact your favorite Jewish agency, Phil Warshauer or Nancy Kipnis.

Anonymous (23)	Irv and Deedee Gould Cygler	David Jacobson	Scott and Pamela Menaker	Bobby and Stacey Selkin
Ann and Bob Abel	Gene and Deedee Daumit	Jake Jacobson	Laura Milgrim	Daisy Shapiro-Rieke / Julie Irma Shapiro
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				William and Angela Zimmern
				Mildred Zuckerman (OBM)

Queens University Jewish Life: The Learning and Relationships Never End

On the Queens University campus, the month of May is bittersweet. On one hand, we celebrate the completion of a successful Hillel and academic year, yet on the other, we bid farewell to our graduating Hillel students who have become central to our Hillel family and have evolved into great leaders.

One such student is graduating senior Morasha Winokur. When Morasha arrived at Queens in August of 2016, she found a Hillel that had just been born. As she grew as a student, we, as a Hillel organization, grew and evolved into an active, inviting, and warm Hillel family.

Fast-forward to May 2021; Morasha is graduating with a triple (yes, you read that right) major in art history, arts leadership and administration, and studio art! During her tenure as a presidential scholar at Queens, Morasha served as Hillel president and Art Club president and is a member of Phi Alpha Theta (history honors society).

In reflecting on her years at Queens and on our fifth anniversary as a Queens Hillel, Morasha shared the following:

Who would have thought five years ago that we would be where we are today? Who would have thought five years ago that I am where I am today? Five years ago, in the fall of 2015, when I made the decision to join Queens, there was no Hillel and only one engaged Jewish student. I knew of the Jewish life initiative and the already strong commitment of so many of you to support the vision, and I was inspired. I chose Queens in part because I wanted to help build and craft what Hillel would become. I have watched us become a supportive, warm, thriving Queens Hillel family. We celebrate sacred time together (with good food) in a meaningful way. I've watched what we have done for the Queens campus. We are strong partners in the interfaith community. We share Jewish culture, Jewish teachings, and our passion with Queens.

Even in my major, I have brought Judaism to life on the campus. I helped paint the RBG dissent collar Chanukah menorah mural that was featured in the Jewish Forward, a national newspaper. I helped create a masterpiece that connects us nationally to seven other communities and inspiring art pieces. I have spent the past year in the pottery studio creating Judaica, specifically candlesticks, kiddush cups, and seder plates. I will carry these objects, symbolizing the sweetness and light I gained at Queens, with me throughout my life.

The amazing art, design, and

music faculty and the Hillel at Queens have prepared me for my next steps and have made the campus feel like home.

What makes Queens Hillel unique is that it is a home not only to our Jewish students but also to those seeking to build interfaith bridges of understanding. Graduating senior Keegan Rapp decided to join Hillel four years ago not because he was Jewish but because, as a non-religious person committed to bettering himself and our world, he sought to learn about the Jewish faith. For his first experience, he chose to join the 25-hour Yom

Kippur fast alongside our Hillel students. As he reflected on his four years of being associated with Hillel, he said his favorite Hillel holiday was Yom Kippur. Why? He said, "because the next day you wake up with a sense of gratitude."

Hillel at Queens is truly a "home away from home" for our students. The two Hillel "moms," Rabbi Judy Schindler and Talli Dippold, nurture the students by creating a family that is always accepting, supportive, and nurturing (food!). From our well-known Soul Food Shabbat to High Holiday services to our

cherished Mimi's Matzo Ball Soup giveaways and our challah treats, our students feel the love. Even during COVID, we engaged our students with virtual programs, food, gift deliveries, and personal touches.

Once a Queens Hillel member — always part of the family. We engage our alumni who regularly participate in programs and offer great advice to current students. Our motto has become "There is

always a seat at our Hillel table."

Just as our Queens Hillel relationships never end, so too does the learning never end at our Stan Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice. We have summer learning opportunities ranging from book groups, wine and wisdom (the fourth Wednesday of every month) to our popular Jewish Heritage tours. To learn more, please visit our website, www.StanGreensponCenter.org.

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Hadassah Remembers Audrey Madans

By Aileen Greenberg-Kriner

"I'll be there." That's what Audrey Madans always answered when asked for help. That's only part of why people loved her so much. Laurie Sheinhaus, current co-president of Hadassah Charlotte, told me with a smile, "Nobody ever said no to Audrey." Audrey got people to do things, and Audrey did so much for Hadassah Charlotte.

When Audrey passed away on April 15 this year, nearly everyone had a story to tell about her. I listened at our board meeting as others shared memories of Audrey and reminisced fondly. I spoke with three chapter past presidents, and each had her favorite "Audrey stories."

Audrey became a Life Member of Hadassah in 1973 and was president of the Charlotte Chapter from 1988 to 1990. She sat on the Charlotte Chapter board for more than 30 years and was an active Hadassah member for more than 48 years. At one time or another, Audrey worked on all of our chapters' committees.

Audrey was presented with the Rosalie Ashendorf Award,

the biggest honor Hadassah gave at the time. Years later, she was honored at a chapter fundraiser dinner as Hadassah's Woman of the Year. Audrey worked on the Hadassah Directory, which has become a community-wide resource of information for and about the Jewish community. As the public affairs chair from 2008 to 2011, Audrey served as the community liaison for Hadassah. She was a devoted member of Lunch & Learn (now called the Short Story Discussion Group) until earlier this year.

Audrey, who called herself a "professional volunteer," made a lifetime commitment to volunteer service, the Jewish community, and Hadassah. We will miss her. May her memory be a blessing.

In other Hadassah News...

Join us for a colorful afternoon outside with our Mai Tai Tie-Dye event on Sunday, June 13. Make something for Father's Day, for yourself, or for someone else you love. Enjoy fruity drinks and express your creativity. Bring a clean, white item to tie-dye (100% cotton is best).

Please RSVP by June 9 on the www.hadassahCLTevents.org website. Location shared after your RSVP. Contact Roz at rcoper133@aol.com with questions.

Bzzzzzz. How about some honey for your honey? Hadassah is having a Rosh Hashanah honey sale. It's not just any honey. It's Hello Honey! Hello Honey is locally owned by Laura and Kevin, a North Carolina couple who are certified beekeepers. Their apiary (where the beehives are kept) is located just outside of uptown Charlotte.

Order your honey from June 1 to August 18 on the Charlotte Hadassah website at www.hadassahCLTevents.org. An 8 oz. bottle is \$10, and a 16 oz. bottle is \$18. The honey will be ready for porch pickup at a home near you from August 23 to 25. Enjoy the honey with apples at your Rosh Hashanah meals or in your honey cake and tea, or send it to your college students. Help your family and friends begin the New Year on a sweet note. Contact Laurie at laushein@gmail.com if you have questions.

The next meeting of Hadas-

sah's Short Story Discussion Group will be on Friday, June 18. The story is The Camera Eye, on page 157 of the book "Many Seconds Into the Future" by John J. Clayton. This will be the last story in the book. The selection of the next story or book will be sent to those on our email list at a later date. The group meets on the third Friday of each month at 11:45 a.m. to discuss stories with Jewish content. For information, email Amalia Warshenbrot at AmaliaIma@att.net or Linda Levy at levyollie@aol.com.

Hadassah's Sunshine Committee prepares much-needed meals for Jewish Family Services Circle of Caring Hearts on a monthly basis. If you would like to help purchase supplies, cook, or assemble meals, please contact Elissa at svining@aol.com.

Hadassah Charlotte's "Keeper of the Cards," Nancy Kerstein, has kindly volunteered for many years to send out beautiful Hadassah cards for births, illness, sympathy, and other life events. If you would like to send your family or loved one a personal-

ized card, please email Nancy at randee3763@gmail.com.

The next two Hadassah Charlotte board meetings will be on Monday, June 21 and Monday, July 19 at 7 p.m. All members are invited. For more information about Hadassah Charlotte events, refer to our website at www.hadassahcltevents.org.

Hadassah members live our motto "The Power of Women Who Do" and have fun while doing important work. Come join us! Contact Karen at klh2603@gmail.com for membership information.

If you have questions about Hadassah Charlotte events, please check our website at www.hadassahcltevents.org for more information.

HADASSAH



W.O.W.: Join Us for Women-Inspired Learning

By Andrea Gamlin

April and May were very informative months at W.O.W.! Two weeks after Passover ended, we had a challah-shaping event. You thought that challah

came only in loaves or circles? No way, not when you join us! Sara Oppenheim opened our challah-shaping class by reviewing each ingredient and what each represents. For example,

sugar represents sweetness and that we try to be kind. Salt represents criticism, so we always put in less salt than sugar in our challah recipe. It's OK to be critical, but with more sweetness than harshness.

Sara led a minyan of women through creating challah napkins, twist, crowns, cones, sunflowers, and candlesticks! We also learned about the Shlissel challah. After Passover, many families around the world form their challah for the first Shabbat after Pesach in the shape of a key, or they may place a key in foil and place inside the challah.

In addition to shaping challah, we talked about various toppings to make our challot (more than one challah) sweet or savory. Have you tried adding pecans, brown sugar and cinnamon, onions or garlic, or even broken pretzels? For more information on challah baking, Sara recommends the book "The Secret of Challah" by Ayelet Yifrach and Shira Wiener.

Our May flowers this year were the loads of ideas on how to reclaim our health and life, brought to us by Tracy Farrell, diagnostic nutritionist and functional practitioner. We learned

how to "edit" unhealthy foods in our diet into healthier versions. Also, did you know that sleep is vitally important to good health, especially as we age? Furthermore, we learned how exercise and stress management make a big difference to our well-being. Last, and certainly not least, Tracy spoke with us about the importance that spirituality and community play in our health. We learned even more steps we can take today to make tomorrow healthier and happier. You can find more information about healthy living on her Facebook group, "Tracy Farrell Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner." Tracy has a wealth of information, and we thank her for sharing her knowledge with us!

Did someone say book club? I thought so! Join us on June 1 at noon for "The Choice: Embrace the Impossible" by Dr. Edith Eva Egar. Suzy Catenazzo is our resident book club leader, and through her insights, we delve further into themes of each book we discuss together.

Please remember to mark your and adult family members' calendars for our big event this fall on November 14 at 7 p.m.

— American film director, animator, and voice actor Saul Blinkoff! Saul will share practical tools for success, meaning, and fulfillment in all aspects of life!

Stay tuned for our Challah Bake and Challah Sale (two different events) at the end of August!

Please go to W.O.W.'s website at www.charlottewomenofwisdom.com for more information about our events. We are a nondenominational group for Jewish women to engage, learn, and connect. No synagogue affiliation is necessary, just an interest to learn more about our beautiful heritage!



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You've Been Diagnosed With Cancer and Need Chemotherapy: What You Need to Know



Lorrie Klemons, MSN, RN, CDP

You've been diagnosed with cancer, and your life will certainly never be the same again. The emotional roller coaster you have been on since receiving this diagnosis leaves you scared, breathless, and feeling like you are out of control. These feelings are perfectly normal. Finding a cancer specialist (oncologist) whom you can relate to and trust will help you regain your sense of control. Your primary health-care provider can refer you to such a specialist. We're lucky to have excellent cancer care here in Charlotte.

There are several ways your cancer can be treated, and your doctor will have that conversation with you. You will most likely be overwhelmed with choices, and so it is critical that you have a patient advocate (family member or friend) with you who can listen to details, ask questions, take notes for you, and clarify any information you might have missed.

You may also want to get a second opinion about your diagnosis and which treatments will offer the best outcomes. Be sure to bring all of your medical records with you for the second opinion. The most important thing is for you to understand the treatment plan your doctor has prescribed for you. Since COVID, an increasing number of health-care professionals are offering virtual visits. This is good, as you can send your medical records for multiple opinions without having to physically travel for a consulting appointment.

The three mainstay cancer treatments are surgery, radiation, and/or chemotherapy. Newer technologies include immunotherapy and gene therapy, which can be extremely effective, depending on your diagnosis. You will probably be treated with one or more of these treatments. Your individualized treatment plan will be based on the type of cancer you have, your age, your overall health, and whether your cancer has spread (metastasized).

Many types of chemotherapy drugs exist, and they can be used for treatment in a variety of com-

binations, depending on your specific disease. Your oncologist will discuss this with you. Your cancer treatment may change as your disease changes throughout the course of your chemotherapy to protect your body from harmful side effects or to help support your immune system.

The goal of any cancer treatment is to cure you of your cancer. However, if your disease is advanced, your treatment may be administered to reduce symptoms (palliative treatment) or to extend your life, and not necessarily to cure you. While that may sound scary, keep in mind that people are living with their cancer longer than ever before, even with advanced cancers that cannot be cured. Survival rates of many various cancers are improving.

Questions to ask about your chemotherapy treatment:

What type of chemotherapy is most effective for my type of cancer?

What are the chances that this treatment will be effective?

What immediate side effects can I expect from my chemotherapy treatments?

Are there long-term side effects associated with this treatment?

How will my side effects be dealt with?

How many cycles of chemotherapy will I need? (A cycle is a period of chemo treatment and recovery before a new dose is given.)

How will the chemotherapy be administered and by whom?

What are the risks associated with this treatment?

How will chemotherapy affect my ability to work or perform daily tasks?

Are there alternative treatments, and if so, what are they?

How do I prepare for my chemotherapy?

Will I need to take any precautions during treatment?

How will I know that the chemotherapy is working?

Will I need other treatments besides chemotherapy?

Where will I receive my chemotherapy?

Can I bring a visitor with me?

What can I do if I don't have transportation?

Whom do I call for related emergencies?

Does my insurance cover my treatment in-network?

If my chemotherapy treatment doesn't work, what other treatments are available?

Can I refuse treatment?

How do I access community resources and support groups?

Will I have access to a nurse navigator who will help me navigate the process?

Cancer Resources:

If you've been diagnosed with cancer and are not a patient within the Atrium Health Care system and want to be seen at the Levine Cancer Institute, call its new patient referral center: (980) 442-2000. If your doctors are part of Atrium, they can call in referrals directly at (980) 442-2900.

American Cancer Society: (704) 553-5350

Cancer Helpline: (800) 227-2345

Patient Advocate Foundation: Provides education, legal counseling, and referrals for cancer patients and survivors. (800) 532-5274, www.patientadvocate.org/help

Sarcoma Alliance: If you've been diagnosed with sarcoma, this organization offers financial assistance for second opinion consultations by reimbursing expenses related to travel, phone bills, costs of evaluation, and other related expenses. (415) 381-7236, www.sarcomaalliance.org

National Leukemia Research Association: If you've been diagnosed with leukemia at any age, this organization offers financial assistance for radiation therapy, chemotherapy, leukemia drugs, and leukemia laboratory fees. (516) 222-1944, www.childrensleukemia.org

Heavenly Hats Foundation: Provides free hats to cancer patients. (920) 434-4151, www.heavenlyhats.org

Where There's A Need, Inc: Provides hair scarves for women and children who have experienced hair loss due to cancer treatment or other medical conditions. (718) 529-3638, www.wheretheresaneed.org

Palliative Care & Hospice, Charlotte Region: (704) 375-0100

Breast Cancer Network of Strength: Provides support groups, early detection workshops, wigs, and prosthesis for women with limited resources. (800) 221-2141, www.y-me.org

Brenda Mehling Cancer Fund: Provides financial assistance for patients ages 18-40 who are going through cancer treatment. www.bmcf.net

National Cancer Institute: 888-644-6226, www.cancer.gov

www.NancysList.Org: Provides support and resources for those with cancer.

www.imermanangels.org: Cancer support community.

www.carolinacomfortcoalition.org: Provides end-of-life care to those who have nobody else to help them. (704) 664-2004.

www.PatientPower.info: An online portal of cancer knowledge, info, experts and support.

Travel and Transportation:
National Patient Air Travel
Helpline: www.patienttravel.org,
(800) 296-1217

The Shepherds Center: Free medical transportation: (704) 365-1995

Veteran Transport Services:
For blind/disabled veterans (704) 844-0506

Chemo Cars: Free rides to chemotherapy via Uber/ Lyft. (443) 286-0091

American Cancer Society: Free rides to cancer therapy. (800) 227-2345

Bloom's Black Hat Car Service: Pre-scheduled preferred; minimum \$10. (980) 286-7353; ask for Greg.

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~ JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES ~

See Your Way Into Summer Using Mindfulness Strategies

By Rachel Green, Director of Programs and Services, JFS

As school winds to a close and the summer begins, many of us may find ourselves reflecting on the intense period of changes and challenges we have faced since March 2020. We may experience a mix of many emotions, including sadness, excitement, hope, and even confusion. All of these emotions are a normal reaction to the experiences we have lived through. One technique that can help us relax and process these feelings in a healthy way is through the practice of mindfulness. The term “mindfulness” has become popular over the past few years on social media and through the use of relaxation apps. But the term actually describes a very simple act that can be practiced anywhere and anytime — the act of returning to the present moment. We often get focused on the “should haves” of the past or worry about the “what ifs” of the future. Mindfulness helps us come back to the peace of “right

now.” These easy tips can help you feel more relaxed, grounded, and connected to the joy of the present moment this summer.

Tip One: Scan your visual field
This strategy uses the sense of sight to help you ground yourself in your physical space. By slowing down and carefully noticing all the details in your space, you allow your brain to come to the present moment. First, focus on what you can see in the visual field around you. Look around you and start observing the objects that you see. What is their color? What is their shape? Observe whether the room is light or dark, whether it is spacious or small. Stay with each object long enough to observe how it looks and then move to the other. Spend about five to 10 minutes on this.

Example: “I can see my white wallet lying on the desk. It has a rectangular shape, and there is a sunray touching it. I can see my black notebook, smooth on the cover, also a little lit by the sun-

rays. On my right, I have a glass of water, translucent, with a form of a cylinder. The water moves a little inside the glass because of my movements.”

Tip Two: Use your five senses
This strategy is a fast way to bring you out of your thoughts or intense emotions and back to the present moment. This is a simple grounding technique you can do in the moment.

Name five things you can see.
Name four things you can hear.

Name three things you can touch within your immediate reach.

Name two things you can smell.

Name one thing you can taste.

Tip Three: Ground yourself physically

Spread your hands out in front of you (like you are going to give someone two “high fives”) and walk up to a wall or other flat surface. Slowly and evenly, push your hands against the wall. Use

as much force as you comfortably can to feel your body connected to the ground. Your feet should be firm on the ground, and you should be pushing firmly with your hands. If you feel unsteady, stop. Take a moment to notice your hands on the wall and your feet on the floor. This technique is a form of physical grounding and can help you return to the present moment.

Tip Four: Practice mindful walking

Take a walk. Notice your feet on the ground, the sounds you hear, and details of what you see. This walk is not about “getting steps” or any other goal other than using all of your senses to notice as many of the details of the present moment as possible. Do you hear the sound of the wind in the trees? Do you hear the call of a bird? Do you feel the ground under your feet? Do you smell the grass?

The key to these and any other type of mindfulness or relaxation skill is practice. Like learning to

knit, play an instrument, or any other new skill, learning to relax using mindfulness takes practice. You may find that one or two of these techniques work better for you, and that is great. Each person can create an optimal practice. With the addition of a few moments of coming to the “here and now,” we hope this summer has many moments of peace and joy for you. To learn more about these techniques, or if you or anyone you know needs some extra support, please contact Jewish Family Services at (704) 364-6594.



JFS Monthly Tributes April 2021

For a Speedy Recovery of Bonnie Borresen

Michael and Sue Littauer

For a Speedy Recovery of Debbie Palefsky

Alan and Lee Blumenthal

Bruce LaRowe and Anita

Strause- LaRowe

Michael and Sue Littauer

Carole Sternstein

Bonnie Tangolis

Movie Mavens

For Speedy Recovery of Harry Berzak

Stanley Greenspon

Get Well Soon Audrey

Madans

Barry Bobrow and Karen

Knoble

Get Well Soon Terri

Cathcart

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

In honor of Audrey Madans

Morris and Linda Spil

In honor of Penina Polsky

Michael and Robbie

McGinley

Happy Birthday Brian

Meltsner

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Happy Birthday Celia Spangenthal

Alan and Madeline Aron

Happy Birthday Ed Newman

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Happy Birthday Marsha Scheer

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Happy Birthday Steven Ostrow

Jeffrey and Janet Ganoung

In Memory of Anna Poyner

Alan and Lee Blumenthal

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Elliot and Peggy Gartner

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Leon and Jennifer Golynsky

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Barry and Lorrie Klemons

Barry Bobrow and Karen

Knoble

Marcia Lampert

Eric and Susan Lerner

Adrian and Andrea Mesonznik

Howard and Karen Olshansky

David and Beth Thrope

Barnet and Harriet Weinstock

In Memory of Audrey

Madans

Alan and Madeline Aron

Alan and Lee Blumenthal

Max and Adina Barkinskiy

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Leslie and Mary Gordan

Stanley Greenspon

Stephen and Heidi Kramer

Jerome and Barbara Levin

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Peck

Jerry and Adina Leach

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Mittler

Jaime Bryan

Racial Justice: Making the Commitment for Real Systemic Change

By Howard Olshansky
Executive Director, JFS

When I was growing up, every year my family would take a summer vacation. Though we were fortunate to be able to afford taking trips, we couldn't afford to fly, so our vacations were always road trips. In the late '60s, we took a trip to New Orleans and Houston. A big baseball fan, my father wanted to see the Astrodome, the first stadium with a domed roof. To keep myself occupied, I always took some reading materials. On this particular trip, I started reading a book called "Black Like Me" by John Howard Griffin. I don't recall how I came upon the book, but I remember that when I started reading it, I did not know what it was about.

If you are not familiar with the book, it is about a white journalist who undergoes treatments to darken his skin. When his skin was dark enough to look like a Black man, he traveled to the South to document what it was like being a Black man in the South. This was in the early 60s.

This book had an indelible effect on my life. I grew up in Phil-

adelphia where there was certainly prejudice, but there were no Jim Crow laws as there were in the South. The book had an influence on me not just because of what I was reading but also because we were literally driving through the areas being described. Griffin traveled through Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana — exactly the states we were driving through to get to New Orleans and Houston. I remember reading about his experiences of discrimination in the towns and cities he described and then stopping to get gas or eat in the same towns. At one stop, I actually saw the remnants of "White only" signs. I recall this surreal feeling. I'm sure if I hadn't been reading the book, I probably wouldn't have even noticed the fading sign. Then I started getting angry. I was already disturbed by what I was reading, but now I had to process this blatant bigotry staring straight at me. The surreal feeling stayed with me the entire trip. I still recall that feeling of anger as if it were yesterday.

Last year when I first saw the video of a white police officer

kneeling on the neck of George Floyd, that same feeling of anger took over me. How could I be looking at the same level of injustice 50 years later? In April, when that same officer was convicted in a court of law of killing George Floyd, my immediate reaction was that justice had been done. That response didn't last more than five minutes because my next thought was wondering whether this was really going to change this country's perpetual history of systemic racism.

Throughout my life, I have experienced prejudice in different ways — as a Jew, as a young man who was friends with a Black woman, as an American, and now as a senior. As a social worker, I have certainly seen the overrepresentation of injustices for people of color in the justice, foster care, health-care, and education systems.

There are times I think we are making progress. I see more interracial and gay couples on TV and then realize that my own institutional prejudices are evidenced by the fact that I'm even taking note of this.

At a recent conference of the

Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies, I attended a workshop about Jews of color in the United States. I was astounded at the level of disconnect Jews of color experience from their organized Jewish communities. Are we that blind that this population exists or just ignorant in our acceptance?

I join in the frustration that we live in a society in which such deep levels of institutional racism still exist. As the executive director of Jewish Family Services (JFS) and a social work professional, I have pushed for actions that can result in cultural change as it relates to systemic racism. At JFS we are developing strategies that will increase our sensitivity to cultural differences. As a community leader, I take part in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives both within the Jewish and the Greater Charlotte communities. I know that these are all good things. But I also know that to eliminate systemic racism, we must own up to our biases, both as organizations and as individuals. Then we must take action to change our policies and our behaviors. We can

no longer accept or ignore prejudice — from anyone. We must be willing to give up our comfortable places that deter us from learning and accepting those who may be and look different.

Rabbi Dr. Laura Novak Winer, director of clinical education at Hebrew Union College's Rhea Hirsch School of Education stated, "One of the very first lessons of the Torah gives it a place of high priority:

'All humans are created equal.' This belief in equality compels action in response to discrimination, racism and racial injustice."

Maybe if we all follow the Torah and take action, some day we might experience true change.



Jewish Family
SERVICES

JFS Monthly Acknowledgments April 2021

Volunteers: Rick Abrams, Marcia Arnholt, Mike Arnholt, Alex Catenazzo, Joshua Catenazzo, Suzy Catennazo, Dan Coblenz, Jonathan Collman, Andrea Cronson, Julie Dermack, Sheryl Effren, Terri Fishman, Rachel Friedman, Rob Friedman, Meredith Gartner, Marty Goldfarb, Jennifer Golynsky, Gail Halverson, Etti Krause, Bob Jacobson, Jodie Joseph (and Lester), Elliot and Stephanie Krietman, Marcia Lampert, Linda Leviel, Adam Levy, Kim Levy, Matt Luftglass, Gene Marx, Harriet Meetz, Frada Mozenter, Julie Novak, Lisa O'Brien, Barbara Rein, Nina Rose, Rikki Sedaka, Lynne Sheffer, Janice Shubin, Louis Sinkoe, Lorin Stiefel, Ken Stern, Steve Teich, Gail Vogel, Susan Webber, Jan Weiner, Amanda Zaidman

Live Laugh Give Volunteers: Suzy Catenazzo, Andrea Cronson, Jessica Garfield, Tara Green Andrea Hollander, Kevin Levine, Kim Levy, Adam Levy, Adina Loewensteiner, Jodi Michel, Staci Mond, Lisa O'Brien, Stephanie Rindner, Anne Sinesheimer, Louis Sinkoe, Karen Silver, Lori Trapani

Hadassah Meal Preppies: Sharon Cavanaugh, June Hirschman, Yvette Jacobson, Johnson and Wales, Judy Kaufman, Penny Krieger, Marcia Stern, Joyce Stoll, Shayna Strasser and friends. Elyssa Vining, Kyle Vining, Scott Vining

Shalom Green: Thank you to your volunteers who harvest fresh produce for our pantry.

Food Pantry Donations: Thank you to our wonderful community for continuously donating items to the JFS food pantry. The donations have been incredible and we appreciate everyone's generosity. We continue to have contactless drop off of donations every other Wednesday. Please see our website for a list of donation days. www.jfscharlotte.org.



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The Pew Study Cheat Sheet: 10 Key Conclusions From the New Survey of American Jews

By Ben Sales, May 11, 2021 (JTA)

Meet America's Jews: They're older, more educated, richer and less religious, on average, than the rest of the country.

They're overwhelmingly white, though Jews under 30 are more diverse. Most of them care about Israel, though one in 10 support the movement to boycott it. Most of their young adults are marrying non-Jews, though the growing Orthodox community is not.

Those are some of the many findings of a study on Jewish Americans published Tuesday by the Pew Research Center. It's the second edition of a landmark 2013 study that changed the American Jewish conversation.

The 2013 survey measured not only the size and makeup of American Jewry, but quantified what those Jews believed (or didn't), how they practiced their religion (or didn't), whom they married, how they raised their children and how they felt about Israel.

The "Pew study," as it came to be known in Jewish organizational circles, reflected the current state of American Judaism and influenced what Jewish nonprofits did and how they spent their money. Jewish leaders and pundits marshaled its data to buttress their arguments and advance their vision of what the Jewish community should look like.

The new edition asks many of the same questions, and adds a few new ones based on the events and conversation of the past few years. For example, the survey delves much deeper into antisemitism, as well as racial and ethnic diversity among American Jews.

If this year is anything like 2013, the response will be reams written (including by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency) about what this Pew study means. Meanwhile, its authors have cautioned not to make direct comparisons between the data in the two surveys because of differences in methodology.

But here are the basics: The American Jewish community is growing and increasingly diverse. It is largely educated, affluent and leans Democratic. Most of its young people are marrying non-Jews, though many of those families are still raising their kids Jewish.

Orthodox Jewry is growing and the Conservative movement is shrinking. The more traditionally observant Jews are, the more likely they are to consume Jew-

ish culture.

More than 4,700 Jews took part in the survey, which has a margin of error of 3%, with larger margins of error for subsets. Questions pertaining to Orthodox respondents, for example, had a margin of error of 8.8%. Here are some of the highlights.

1. There are 7.5 million American Jews.

The number includes approximately 5.8 million adults and 1.8 million children. About 4.2 million of the adults identify their religion as Jewish, while the rest of the adults are what Pew calls "Jews of no religion."

The 7.5 million figure is up from the 6.7 million counted in 2013, which included some 5.3 million adults and 1.3 million children. And the 2021 figure is a bit larger than the Jewish population of Israel, which is around 6.9 million.

Jews make up about 2.5% of the American population. They are slightly older than Americans overall, with a median age of 49 compared to the overall median American age of 46.

2. Most young Jews are either Orthodox or unaffiliated.

The future of American Jewry appears to be one of polarization. The numbers of Orthodox and unaffiliated Jews are growing. The Conservative and Reform movements, which once claimed the bulk of the American Jewish community, are shrinking.

Overall, the raw percentages belonging to each denomination haven't changed much since 2013. But religious affiliation by age shows a changing community.

Among Jews aged 65 and older, 69% are either Conservative or Reform, while just 3% are Orthodox. But among adults under 30, 37% are Conservative and Reform and 17% are Orthodox. Just 8% of those young adults are Conservative, as opposed to 25% of Jews over 65.

And 41% of Jews under 30 are unaffiliated, compared to 22% over 65.

3. Some 15% of young Jewish adults are not white.

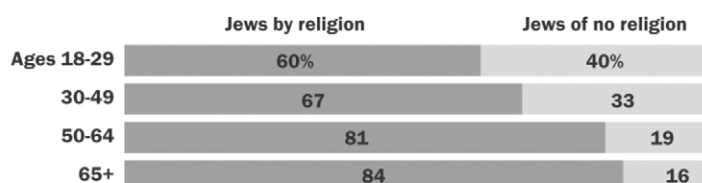
The survey adds to a discussion that the Jewish community has been having in recent years: What proportion of American Jews are Jews of color, and have Jews of color been undercounted as a result of institutional bias? That conversation grew more intense during and after the protests over racial injustice that began last year.

The survey did not ask about the term "Jews of color" specifically because of debates over its

Jewish identity in the United States, 2020



U.S. Jewish identity, by age



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Survey conducted Nov. 19, 2019-June 3, 2020, among U.S. adults.

"Jewish Americans in 2020"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

definition and researchers were concerned that respondents may not be familiar with it. But the survey aimed to measure the racial and ethnic diversity of American Jewry.

It found that the overwhelming majority of the Jewish community identifies primarily as white — 92% — but that young adults are significantly more diverse. Some 85% of adults under 30 identify primarily as white, while 7% identify as Hispanic, 2% as Black, 6% as multiracial and less than 1% as Asian or Pacific Islander. By contrast, 97% of Jews over 65 identify primarily as white.

And while most American Jews were born in the U.S. and identify as Ashkenazi (with roots primarily in Eastern Europe), those numbers drop among young adults as well. Among those under 30, 28% are either not Ashkenazi, identify with at least one racial minority or are the children of immigrants from countries with a largely nonwhite population.

Overall, two-thirds of Jews identify as Ashkenazi, while only 3% identify as Sephardic, or following the traditional religious Jewish customs of Spain, according to Pew. Another 1% identify as Mizrahi, a term primarily used in Israel that refers to Jews with roots in the Middle East and North Africa.

4. Some 10% of Jews support the boycott of Israel — but half of young adults haven't heard much about it.

As in 2013, the survey asked American Jews how they feel about Israel, and the results provide fodder for Israel's advocates as well as its critics. On one hand, more than 80% of Jews say that caring about Israel is an im-

portant or essential part of being Jewish. Nearly half of American Jews have been to Israel, and a quarter have been there more than once.

But the survey also found that the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel, or BDS, has made inroads into the American Jewish community. One in 10 American Jews — and a slightly higher proportion of young adults — said they either "strongly support" or "somewhat support" the BDS movement. Some 43% of Jews oppose BDS, and another 43% haven't heard much about it.

(The survey did not define BDS — due to debates over its scope and aims — but instead asked people how much they had heard about it. Only those who had heard "some" or "a lot" were then asked if they supported or opposed the movement.)

In that vein, the survey found that college campuses appear to be far from the hotbeds of BDS support that some have warned. While Jewish organizations have fretted about BDS activism on campus for over a decade, the survey found that nearly half of Jewish adults under 30 had heard little or nothing about the boycott movement.

5. Most young Jews are still intermarrying.

For organizations that are invested in "Jewish continuity" (or, in plain English, urging Jews to marry Jews and have Jewish babies), the 2013 Pew study was a red flag. It found that the majority of Jews who married after 2000 wed non-Jews. When it came to non-Orthodox Jews, the numbers were even higher.

The same is true of the 2021 study, though researchers say the

numbers haven't shown meaningful growth. In other words, plenty of young Jews are still intermarrying, but the number isn't much bigger than it was in 2013. Due to changes in methodology and small sample sizes, the researchers emphasize that it's unwise to compare results between the two surveys.

The 2021 study found that in the past decade, 61% of Jews married non-Jewish partners. And nearly three-quarters of non-Orthodox Jews who married since 2010 wed non-Jews. Intermarriage is quite rare among Orthodox Jews.

In total, 42% of married Jews have a spouse who is not Jewish.

6. But among young adult children of intermarriage, nearly half are still Jewish.

Whether intermarried couples are raising their kids Jewish has been a perennial concern of Jewish communal planners and institutions worried about the vitality of the Jewish future. The survey found that virtually all in-married couples are raising their children Jewish. In addition, most intermarried couples (57%) are raising their kids Jewish, with about half of that number saying they are raising their children to be Jewish by religion.

Another 12% of intermarried couples said their children were being raised "partly Jewish by religion," meaning that overall, the survey found that more than two-thirds of children of intermarriages are being raised with some Jewish identity.

Among adult children of intermarriage, the study found that younger adults are more likely to be Jewish than older adults. Only 21% of adults over 50 with one Jewish parent identify as Jewish, as opposed to 47% of those under 50. The finding led the researchers to conclude that "the share of the offspring of intermarriages who choose to be Jewish in adulthood seems to be rising."

Across the survey's respondents, preventing intermarriage is not a high priority. For every age group, the respondents said it was more important that their grandchildren share their political convictions than that they marry a Jewish partner.

7. Most Jews have experienced antisemitism in the past year.

Like a range of other recent surveys, this one asked Jews about antisemitism — something that was largely absent from the 2013 study. This one said that in

(Continued on page 30)



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Living life and looking ahead

Pew Study

(Continued from page 28)

the wake of antisemitic events from the Charlottesville neo-Nazi rally in 2017 to the deadly attacks on Jews in Pittsburgh in 2018 and Poway, California, in 2019, antisemitism appears to be a larger part of American Jewish life now than it was at that time. Like other studies, the 2021 Pew survey found that most Jews believe antisemitism in America has increased in recent years and said they feel less safe now than they once did. Five percent of American Jews said they have stayed away from a Jewish event or observance because of safety concerns.

Over the past 12 months, the survey found, 51% of Jews have experienced antisemitism — either by seeing anti-Jewish graffiti, being harassed online, being physically attacked or through another form of discrimination.

8. Jews are wealthier and more educated than Americans overall.

In line with other recent studies, this one found that American Jews are significantly more educated than Americans overall, and wealthier. The majority of Jews have a college or postgraduate degree, as opposed to fewer than 30% of Americans overall.

Jews also have higher salaries. The majority of Jewish adults have a household income of more than \$100,000, including 23% above \$200,000. Only 19% of Americans overall have a household income above \$100,000. Jews also report being satisfied with their lives and communities at higher rates than Americans as a whole.

Orthodox Jews appear to have a tougher time financially. Among Orthodox Jews, 45% reported having trouble paying bills over the past year, compared to just 26% of Jews overall.

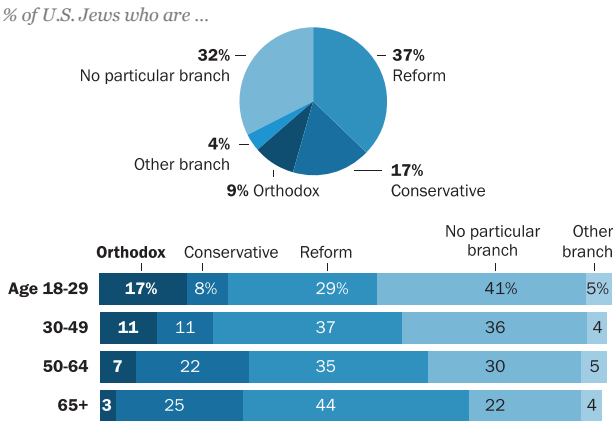
9. More than three-quarters of American Jews say remembering the Holocaust is essential to being Jewish.

While the survey highlighted differences across American Jewry, the survey found that the vast majority of Jews, 76%, believe remembering the Holocaust is essential to being Jewish. A similar number said the same of leading an ethical and moral life.

At the other end of the spectrum, just 15% of Jews said observing Jewish law is essential to being Jewish, and 33% said being part of a Jewish community was essential.

Among Orthodox respon-

Compared with older Jews, youngest Jewish adults include larger shares of both Orthodox and people with no denominational identity



PEW RESEARCH CENTER

dents, though, the numbers were different: 83% called observing Jewish law essential, and 69% said the same about being part of a Jewish community. Slightly over half of Orthodox Jews said remembering the Holocaust was essential to being Jewish.

Holocaust remembrance was also a lower priority among young adults — although it was

still high. Sixty-one percent of respondents under 30 said it was essential to being Jewish.

10. COVID hit Jews earlier than most Americans.

The survey was mainly conducted prior to the pandemic, so its findings were not intended to reflect changes in practice or attitudes that were introduced during it. But the report includ-

ed details from follow-up interviews that quantify something that is conventional wisdom for many Jews: Relative to Americans as a whole, Jews were hit early in the pandemic.

Jewish areas of Westchester County, in suburban New York City, were an early COVID-19 hotspot, and haredi Orthodox communities in Brooklyn suffered painful losses from the disease last spring. Pew's numbers bear this out: In August, 10% of "Jews by religion" had tested positive for either COVID or antibodies, compared to 3% of Americans overall. And 57% of Jews knew someone who was hospitalized or died from COVID, as opposed to 39% of Americans overall.

But by February 2021, as the coronavirus circulated widely in the United States, gaps between non-Jews and Jews had narrowed. "Jews by religion" were still about twice as likely to have tested positive as Americans overall — 23% to 11%. But among both groups, a little more than two-thirds knew someone who was hospitalized or died from COVID.

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~ SCHOOL NEWS ~

Flying With Our Fours to Israel



By Karly Lucas and Macy Leonard, CJP

A trip to Israel just wasn't in the cards this year, so why not take an exciting pretend trip in preschool? Well, that is exactly what we did in the 4's classes here at the Charlotte Jewish Preschool. We prepared for our "trip" by learning all about Israel for several weeks. The children were quite motivated to learn about the different places in Israel and what makes each destination unique. Each day in class, students saw photographs of cities and explored provocations during their classroom discovery time.

Students prepared for the big day by painting the Western Wall, packing a suitcase, filling out passports, and decorating

their classrooms and hallways. The 4's teachers transformed two rooms and a hallway to look like Israel. As a culminating activity, on Yom Ha'atzmaut we embarked on our trip.

The children were delighted when they stepped into Israel. We pretended to fly there, and when we arrived, we explored Jerusalem in a fully immersive 360-degree experience. We milked cows on a kibbutz, tasted Israeli snacks, explored Dead Sea mud, and prayed at the Western Wall. The children had a wonderful time. Like everything else we do at the Charlotte Jewish Preschool, we made Yom Ha'atzmaut a thrilling and exciting holiday for our students to celebrate.



Ms. Karly and Ms. Macy's 4's class at the Western Wall/Kotel praying to G-d and sharing their wishes on Yom Ha'atzmaut. After saying the Shema, the students wrote their wish or prayer for G-d. They then placed their prayers in the wall cracks and spoke a few wishes.



Lyla Batt with her suitcase, ready to board the plane for Israel on Yom Ha'atzmaut.



Audrey Kuhn painting the bricks of the Western Wall, or Kotel, in the Old City of Jerusalem



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Charlotte Jewish Day School Participates in the Teacher Institute for the Arts

By Donna Lerner

Last spring, Charlotte Jewish Day School (CJDS) was fortunate to be chosen to participate in the Teacher Institute for the Arts, funded by a national foundation committed to raising the quality of instruction and learning in Jewish day schools, more specifically to help us enhance our Judaic curriculum using the visual arts and creative thinking. This year-long international program comprised an initial two-day, intensive seminar in the summer of 2020, followed by additional seminars throughout the 2020-2021 school year. We were led by a team of Israeli artists and educators and were joined by teams of teachers from Jewish day schools from around the country and Canada. Each seminar, although virtual, provided a wonderful opportunity to see and learn different approaches to dealing with complicated Jewish texts and ideas and how these approaches might benefit our students.

Each time we met, we learned a new methodology or instrument to add to our ever-growing

“toolkit” of ideas. Each tool provides a way to use visual art and creative thinking as part of the learning process. For example, we learned how to use Synectics, a problem-solving technique that encourages students to think outside the box, and text-to-symbol, a methodology designed to help students better understand complicated texts by providing a framework to interpret them using colors and symbols. We also explored using stop-motion animation and word art to convey ideas.

For our year-long, mentor-assisted project, we concentrated on helping our students develop a deeper connection to their Jewish faith through the holidays they are already familiar with. For Rosh Hashanah, our students made their own shofars with a horn from a real animal. Before the students could take their shofars home, we asked them to write about their experiences. This reflection allowed students to appreciate and to physically and emotionally internalize the experience in a new way. It gave them “voice” and let us see what

they took from the experience. For Chanukah, our fifth-grade students created T-shirts using cyanotype printing, a process that requires exposure to light, to demonstrate their Jewish pride and strength. We chose to use the cyanotype process because, as occurs with Chanukah, we are shining a light to create something good. And most recently, for Pesach, our fifth graders participated in a Synectics problem-solving session to find new ways to make the model seder more engaging for our students.

By far our biggest project centered on Purim, which we chose to celebrate in conjunction with our annual Special Friends’ Day. More than 140 CJDS Special Friends received mishloach manot packages containing a Megillah companion and special Purim cards created by our students and, of course, Purim foods. On Purim, we livestreamed our celebration and were joined by friends and family from around the world. Our Special Friends were thrilled to receive these packages from their children and even more excited

to connect by video.

As a school, we approached the project by focusing on the mitzvot of Purim: mishloach manot (sending food gifts to friends), matanot la’evyonim (tzedakah), and listening to the Megillah. Our second through sixth graders created a Megillah companion using the text-to-symbol methodology, retelling the story of Purim in pictures. Each class was assigned one chapter of the Megillah. After a first reading of the narrative, the students were asked to assign a color to each of the essential elements of the story. For example, in Chapter One (Perek Aleph), King Achashverosh has a party, and Queen Vashti refuses to attend. The students assigned Achashverosh the color purple, the concept of anger the color red, and Hashem the color yellow. Then each student used colored construction paper to create an individual abstract collage using those colors to depict a scene in the chapter. Thus, anytime purple appears in a collage in Chapter One, it represents Achashverosh; anytime

red appears, it represents anger; and anytime yellow appears, it represents Hashem. Each chapter has a unique legend of colors corresponding to the collages for that chapter. By creating a visual interpretation of the text, the students were able to connect with the story in a personal and meaningful way.

Our kindergarten and first graders designed mosaic tzedakah boxes that were placed around our Shalom Park campus to collect matanot la’evyonim for Charlotte’s sister city in Israel, Hadera. Our older remote students helped prepare pamphlets to place with the boxes on the history of Hadera and the projects our local Federation undertakes in that city.

When learning about the Purim story, we discovered that the name of Hashem does not show up in the Megillah. Our students discussed where they see the hand of Hashem in the events that occur in the story. Our fourth graders created stop-motion videos showing the ways they see

(Continued on page 33)

We're Growing!

Our extraordinary education will soon include middle school students! Beginning in the fall of 2022, CJDS will expand to offer grades K-8.

CJDS Charlotte Jewish Day School

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A South African Connection

Some of you may remember that a few months ago Jewish Preschool on Sardis (JPS) applied for and received the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte's Adaptation and Transformation Fund. We were able to purchase new materials (toys, books, puzzles, and educational materials) for our classrooms to help incorporate racial diversity into the children's environment.

As part of establishing the importance of inclusion, the 4's classes participated in a unit called "All Around the World." The students learned about cities, countries, and continents around the world, including Africa, Australia, and Israel. We partnered with a four-year-old class in South Africa and exchanged letters (via email) to compare and contrast our lives in Charlotte to their lives in Johannesburg. We enjoyed a visit with Ms. Nadine, a native South African, who showed us toys, photos, and fabrics from South Africa. We learned about different animals living in Africa, and we learned about the many languages spoken there. We read books about South Africa, exploring the culture, the foods, and other aspects of life there. We engaged in several projects as well, including

making arm giraffes and African animal stamping —art inspired by African kente cloths and African necklaces. Learning about this incredible continent was a marvelous adventure, and it was very special to connect with a class "just like us" from South Africa.

We are so excited and grateful for this opportunity to deepen our commitment to inclusion and racial justice. Thank you, Federation!



Weaving our own colorful artwork, inspired by an African kente.



Our partnering class in South Africa



Our visit with Ms. Nadine, native South African. She showed us toys, animals, and many photos of South Africa.

CJDS

(Continued from page 32)

the hand of Hashem in their lives today.

Finally, all our students created two cards. The first was a trifold, which upon opening revealed a picture of them beneath their Purim masks. Inside, each student reflected on the Purim holiday. The second was to wish their friends and family a happy Purim. Our fourth and fifth graders used word art in their designs, many turning the letters in the word Purim into symbols of the holiday.

Participating in this grant program was a light in an otherwise challenging year. The tools we were given will continue to benefit our students and enhance our Judaic curriculum.



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Hebrew High School Year Ends With Maccabiah Games

By Megan Harkavay and Marci Goldberg

Hebrew High finished the school year on an incredible high note. After a year of learning over Zoom, we were able to celebrate the last night of classes with our in-person 2020-2021 Maccabiah Games. It truly was an end-of-year celebration of Hebrew High's determination, creativity, amazing teachers, and incredible students.

Those who were not ready to meet in person enjoyed a virtual cooking class with Janice Zacks. They made mini cheesecakes for

the upcoming Shavuot holiday. And while the cheesecakes were in the oven, they played a round of Kahoot with Shavuot questions with Amy Montoni.

The Hebrew High Maccabiah Games began as teens gathered in the parking lot at Temple Israel for the "pregame" check-in, which included mask and temperature checks. Next, they were divided into four different color groups: red, green, blue, and purple. It was amazing to see their happy masked faces as they said hello to friends they'd only seen on Zoom screens.

The official Maccabiah games began with each color team dividing into three smaller groups to compete in three rounds of different activities. Activities included a relay race where teams competed in games of rock, paper, scissors, and tic tac toe! Another activity was a photo scavenger hunt. Teens were given a list of items to find and scored points when they texted a picture of that item to a Hebrew High teacher. The third activity was a game where groups competed against each other to come up with the correct answer to various trivia questions. Bonus points were given to individuals and teams for good sportsmanship, creativity, and all-around good behavior.

The competition was fierce, and it was a race to the finish to see who came out the winner of the Hebrew High Maccabiah Games. In the end, the green team won! But really everyone was a winner. We got to spend an evening with friends, teachers, and clergy, all in a place we've missed — Hebrew High. The games came to an end as prizes were awarded and, to continue our traditional snack time, take-home treats of Oreo cookies were handed out.



Some members of the green team: Shayla Siegel, Rebecca Leighton and Paul Mark acting silly during the Hebrew High Maccabiah games!



Maeli Zhiss, Asher Yesowitch, Amy Montoni, and Janice Zacks showing off the cheesecakes that they made over Zoom.

Thank you to all our students, parents, and teachers for another amazing year of Hebrew High. Registration information for 2021-2022 will be available soon.



Some members of the red team: Toby Waller, Sydney Adamo, and Lindsay Pfeffer jumping for joy that they got to be together in person!

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~ YOUTH VISIONS ~

Friendship Gone Right: A Friendship Circle Story

By Stacey Sharoni

Our family joined Friendship Circle last year. It has been especially rewarding during this pandemic.

Our son enjoys going to the events and feels everyone is so nice. He likes the "Friends on Call" program a lot as well. This is a program where a child who does not have special needs communicates with the child with special needs once a week on Zoom or FaceTime.

As an example of one of the fun activities they are doing together, my son and his buddy will be making pizzas and demonstrating together live on



Art program at Friendship Circle



Baking cookies is so much more fun with friends



To learn more about Friendship Circle visit www.FriendshipCircleNC.org

Friendship Circle is an affiliate of Chabad of Charlotte and a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.



Friendship
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BBYO Returns to In-Person Programming

"Resilience is accepting your new reality, even if it's not as good as the one you had before. You can fight it, you can scream about what you've lost, or you can accept it and try to create a better reality." Elizabeth Edwards

It has been almost 15 months since the world as we knew it shut down. For BBYO members, the challenges of the shutdowns meant that many traditions that had become annual rites of passage had to be changed, or even eliminated, but they also presented opportunities to be creative, try new things, and discover our resiliency. Despite these challenges, we welcomed more than 40 new members to Charlotte BBYO, teens attended four virtual conventions, and many parents even participated in their first BBYO convention by logging in for Shabbat or Havdalah services.

In February, over a weekend that would have been a travel nightmare due to snow and ice storms, teens attended the international convention virtually without a hitch! BBYO even put teens in "virtual rooms" so attendees could meet new people. Over the past year, many events went well and exceeded expectations and, not surprisingly, there were some that were just OK. Through it all, our teen leaders demonstrated that they could adapt and adjust as needed. This may not have been the year our chapter leaders envisioned when they ran for office, but their determination to make it work has been inspiring and will be something they can always

rely on when faced with future challenges. For all their hard work and flexibility, we would like to thank Charlotte Chapter presidents: Zoe Wojnowich, Chai Chaverim BBG; Anya Dippold, Ohavim BBG; Sam Baumstein, Hank Greenberg AZA; and Jacob Russack, Mickey Barak Aberman AZA.

As more people become vaccinated, BBYO is excited to return to in-person programs. On May 8, Charlotte BBYO was able to honor our active seniors at an in-person gathering. At the event, our Sweetheart Beau Court was introduced and crowned. Senior poems were recited, and a beautiful Havdalah service marked the end of Shabbat. BBYO is also looking forward to a "more normal" summer with programs taking place at camps.

Finally, we are excited to start planning for the next programming year. Conventions for the 2021-2022 will be held at camps and hotels. Mark your calendars for the following events: Regional Execs (Teen Leaders): Aug 27-29; New Member Weekend: October 22-24; and Regional Convention: December 15-17. Charlotte members save the afternoon of September 12, 2021, for our kickoff! Details coming soon!

If you have a rising 8th-12th grader and would like more information about BBYO, please email egoldstein@bbyo.org.



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Stephen Spielberg Launches Foundation to Fund Jewish-Themed Documentaries

By Gabe Friedman, April 16, 2021 (JTA)

Steven Spielberg has launched a film foundation called Jewish Story Partners to fund documentaries that “tell stories about a diverse spectrum of Jewish experiences, histories, and cultures.”

It’s funded by the Righteous Persons Foundation, which Spielberg and his actress wife Kate Capshaw founded after Spielberg’s experience making “Schindler’s List” in 1993. Two Jewish philanthropies — the Maimonides Fund and the Jim Joseph Foundation — also contributed funds. (Both organizations also help fund 70 Faces Media, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency’s parent company.)

“We are especially proud to help establish this initiative — which will make visible a fuller range of Jewish voices, identities, experiences, and perspectives — at a time when social divisions run painfully deep and mainstream depictions too often fail to reflect the Jewish community in all its complexity,” Spielberg and Capshaw said in a statement Thursday announcing the foundation.

The organization, which starts with \$2 million, will soon announce its first round of grantees, who will receive \$500,000 in total this year. It is already taking applications for a second round of

grants and says it hopes to ramp up its funding over time.

The project’s director is Roberta Grossman, a filmmaker who has specialized in Jewish-themed documentaries. Caroline Libresco, a longtime Sundance Film Festival programmer, will be its artistic director. And “Friends” creator Marta Kauffman is a board member.

“I’m looking forward to helping create a stable and lasting funding organization that can fill the funding gap for independent filmmakers who want to tell a Jewish story,” Kauffman said in a statement.

Spielberg’s Righteous Persons Foundation has funded a range of Jewish initiatives beyond the film world, including the USC Shoah Foundation, which has created an archive of recorded Holocaust survivor testimonies.

Spielberg is also a recent recipient of the Genesis Prize, nicknamed the “Jewish Nobel,” which is given to “extraordinary individuals for their outstanding professional achievement, contribution to humanity, and commitment to Jewish values.” He said he will donate his \$1 million prize earnings along with \$1 million of his own to 10 different organizations fighting for racial and economic justice.

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—Beverly B., a community resident

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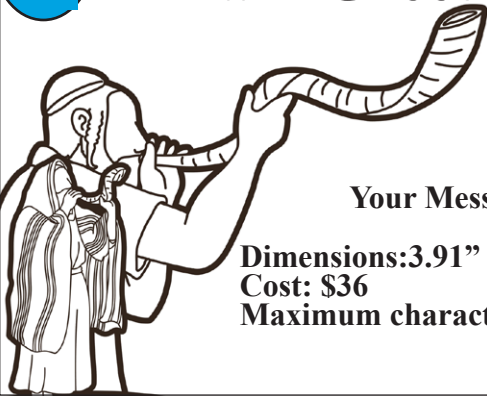


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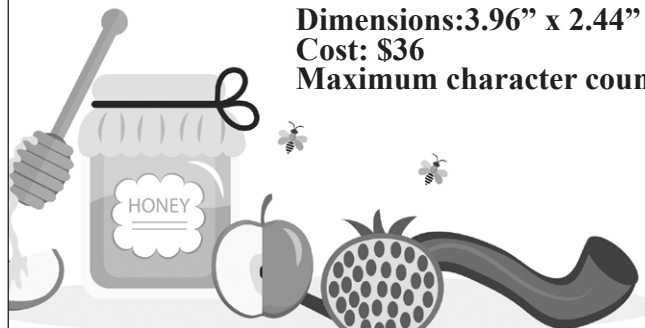


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Main Greeting



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Cost: \$36
Maximum character count: 60

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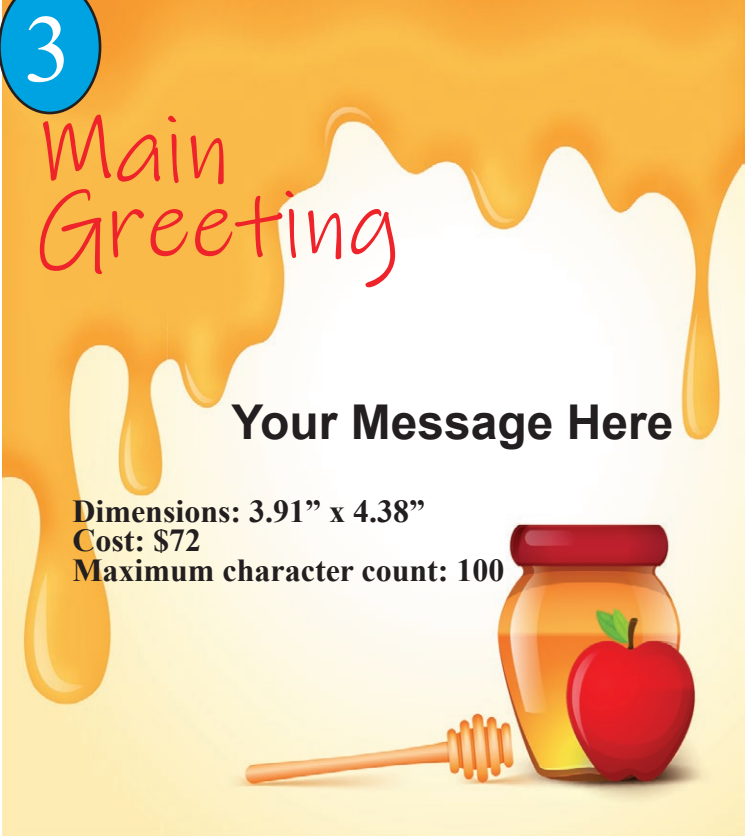
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Main Greeting



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Maximum character count: 100

4

Main Greeting



Your Message Here

Dimensions: 5.94” x 2.92”
Cost: \$72
Maximum character count: 100

6

Main Greeting



Your Message Here

Dimensions: 5.94” x 2.92”
Cost: \$72
Maximum character count: 100

5

Main Greeting

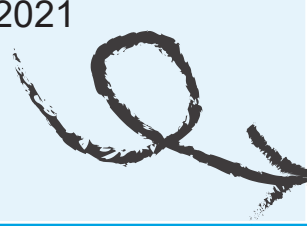


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Looking Back

Newspaper archives are a treasure trove of collective memories, providing a snapshot of our history. The following is from June 2008. To read the whole issue or other issues of CJN, visit the archives at <https://www.digitalnc.org/newspapers/charlotte-jewish-news-charlotte-nc/>.

Graduating From Hebrew High

Article written and presented by Becca Gerger, past Student Council president, as she gives the student address at this year's Hebrew High graduation.

At the beginning of the year, I was asked to think of a quote to put in the school yearbook next to my picture. The quote that instantly came to my head was from Bob Marley's Redemption Song: "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery; none but ourselves can free our minds." At the time, it just sounded cool, but now that the year is coming to an end, I have realized the truth in the meaning of that quote.

For the last four years, we have studied the subjects required of us in school, we've participated in sports teams, helped out with clubs to boost our resume, and lastly, we've explored our Judaism in Hebrew High School. Looking back on my Jewish education, I can easily recall how much I used to dread Hebrew School. I would complain to my mom, saying that all the Christians didn't have to go to Bible school twice a week, so why was it fair that I had to go to Hebrew school so much? Now,

as I stand here, graduating from Hebrew High, I realize that it wasn't fair — I was right, in a small way. People outside of our community, who don't have the forces of a tight knit congregation pulling them toward their constant religious education don't have the same opportunity as us to look outside their all too basic world, and perceive something bigger than what's expected of them by everyday society.

We, as participants in Hebrew High, stand out from the rest of the public. Not only have we worked throughout our lives to satisfy the expectations of the world around us, but we have also chosen to better our understanding of Judaism through Hebrew High and Post Confirmation. Following the actions and expectations of society isn't always the best way to find personal clarity. If you spend your life following the crowd, your perspective of the world can become dangerously tainted by the limits of your knowledge; however, if you invest the extra time to participate in outside programs like Hebrew High, you will find in yourself the ability to shape your own



perspective, enabling you to become a more well-rounded person by the breadth of your knowledge.

Hebrew High is proud of all of the 2008 graduates and know they will continue to be leaders in their Jewish lives and beyond.

Congratulations to the following graduate:

Mark Abadi, Hannah Archer, Rebecca Berlin, Elizabeth Bernstein, Joshus Bockenek, Rebecca Gerger, Sarah Greenfield, Jonathan LaRowe, Leslee Lisnek, Jamie Morse, Jared Morse, Morgan Saloman, Issac Spil, Sheina Taub

Birthright Restarting Trips to Israel as Nation Nears Herd Immunity

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) — Birthright, the organization that flies young Jews to Israel for a free 10-day tour, will resume its trips now that the pandemic appears to be winding down.

"Birthright Israel will resume providing the gift of educational trips to Israel for eligible individuals aged 18-to-32 from the United States who are vaccinated or recovered," its statement said. "Dozens of trips are expected in May and June, and more than 400 tour groups are planned for July, August and October."

Participants will be required to test for coronavirus before boarding and upon arrival, the statement said. A factor was Israel, a world leader in coronavirus vaccination, nearing herd immunity.

The organization has brought over 750,000 young Jews to Israel over 20 years, including close to 46,000 in 2019. Along with a number of other organizations, Birthright suspended trips to Israel after the pandemic outbreak.

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A	D	U	M	B	R	A	T	E		M	Y	R	R	H
R	E	L	O	A	D		S	A	F	E				
	R	A	I	N	E	D		R	E	N	E	W	E	D
			R	E	S	E	T		E	S	T	A	T	E
A	B	Y	S	S		C	O	L	L	E	A	G	U	E
L	O	P			L	A	P	I	S			O	D	D
A	D	R	E	N	A	L	I	N		T	O	N	E	S
M	E	E	K	E	R		C	E	C	I	L			
O	S	S	E	O	U	S		R	A	R	E	S	T	
				N	E	A	T		B	E	S	T	O	W
I	N	D	I	A		G	A	L	L	S	T	O	N	E
T	A	U	N	T		A	L	O	E		R	A	T	E
S	P	O	K	E		S	E	W	S		A	T	O	P

(Puzzle on page 16)



High Holiday Greeting Mail-In Order Form

1 Pick your design

- _____ #1 (\$36)
- _____ #2 (\$36)
- _____ #3 (\$72)
- _____ #4 (\$72)
- _____ #5 (\$72)
- _____ #6 (\$72)

2 Customize your main greeting:

(For example: Happy Rosh Hashanah, Happy New Year, L'shanah Tova, etc.)

3 Customize your message:

(Design #1 and #2 maximum character count: 60
Designs #3-#6 maximum character count: 100)

4 Fill out contact information

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

5 Mail your check to: Charlotte Jewish News

5007 Providence Road, Suite 112
Charlotte, NC 28226 by July 23.

A **spark** in strengthening Jewish community.

Luxury Jewish candles with programs and proceeds benefiting
your local temples and communities.



Locally
Hand Poured
in Charlotte.



Throughout some of the most challenging times in history, the prophet Elijah has brought familial peace and blessings into the homes of Israel. Today, Elijah Candles seeks to do the same with intentional and mindful moments with each candle that's lit. Our candles are handcrafted with the same passion and purpose as the community that holds them, and we are honored to be a part of spreading that light throughout those homes.

1

100% Kosher
Wax & Vessel

2

Limited Edition
Handcrafted Designs

3

Exclusive Temple
Giveback Programs

4

Created by and for
the Jewish community

JEWISHCANDLES.COM

שָׁלוֹם