

The Charlotte JEWISH news

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March 2021

2021 Main Event: Unprecedented Event; Unprecedented Success

"I'm a product of Federation." Those were the words of actress, podcaster, author, and neuroscientist Mayim Bialik at the first ever virtual Main Event on January 31. With almost a year to figure out how to offer quality, engaging programming online, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte's Main Event turned out to be a major success in more ways than one.

The online format allowed for greater attendance than in past years, with more than 800 participants and a record amount of pledges — almost \$400,000 — to the 2021 Annual Campaign. Donors were motivated by a generous \$900,000 gift from the Leon Levine Foundation, of which \$50,000 was a match for all increased, recovered, and new gifts. A telethon-style, scrolling banner appeared periodically on viewers' screens, prompting them to make their gifts by three easy methods, including directly texting their pledge! Main Events have truly come into the digital age.

However, online programming will never fully make up for what is missed by gathering



Mayim Bialik special guest at Main Event

together in person — including the tradition of sharing delicious desserts, but Main Event coordinators thought of everything and distributed dessert boxes filled with delicious cookies, brownies, rugelach, and more to participants who disregarded the cold and rain to drive to Shalom Park and schmooze with Federation staff and volunteers.

The Main Event was preceded by a special virtual reception for Federation major donors and

included remarks from Annual Campaign co-chair, Jake House, and a brief visit from Bialik.

At the Main Event, co-chairs

Andrew and Jen Rosen spoke passionately about how Federation affects the lives of so many in our community and beyond. Brian Kahn, local attorney and co-producer and writer for Charlotte Squawks, emceed the event with his own brand of humor that added to an entertaining and meaningful evening. The highlight, of course, was hearing from Bialik. While past events have included notable speakers such as Bari Weiss and Josh Malina, the novel online format lent itself more to an informal interview with Bialik in the comfort of her own home, which she is quick to note she cleans herself! Excerpts from the interview can be found below.

The Road to \$5 Million continues with you. A successful Annual Campaign enables



Scarlett Rosen helps distribute desserts

(Continued on page 3)

Women's Philanthropy: A Powerful Voice in the Jewish Community

It is fitting during Women's History Month to acknowledge the vital role that women's philanthropy plays in creating social justice, aiding the vulnerable, preserving human dignity, and building Jewish identity.

While the focus on philanthropy is the mobilization of financial resources to promote the welfare of others, it extends beyond that. It's about knowing and understanding deeply the breadth of issues facing our community and rolling up our sleeves to help. It's about educating, inspiring, and empowering women of all ages in our community. It's about nurturing leadership and fostering a commitment to philanthropy. It's about having an impact.

Still, when it comes to women's role in generating and distributing philanthropic dollars, their collective influence is significant and only growing. With 64% of charitable contributions nationally coming from women,

they represent a demographic with a powerful voice.

Locally, the power of that voice is evidenced by the role women's charitable giving has in the work of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC), with more than one third of donations to the JFGC Annual Campaign coming from women — more than \$1,400,000 in 2020! Part of that total comes from the Lions of Judah, Pomegranate, and Pearl Societies, representing women who give to the Federation at various levels. As part of the Women's Philanthropy division of the Annual Campaign, they serve as a

leading voice in local, Jewish, philanthropy.

As noted by Karen Ransenberg, co-chair for the Pomegranate Society, "Lions and Poms are the most dynamic philanthropic women in the world. We are strong women of all ages, an international sisterhood of thousands of global activists who care deeply about the Jewish future. We play a vital role in creating social justice, aiding the vulnerable, preserving human dignity and building Jewish identity."

Each year, the Lion of Judah and Pomegranate Societies hold

(Continued on page 5)

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From the Editor



Shira Firestone, Editor CJN

How do you measure the impact a woman has on the world? Is it by the awards or titles she is bestowed? A Nobel Prize in Chemistry to Madame Curie? A Nobel Prize in Literature for Doris Lessing? A Nobel Peace Prize for Malala Yousafzai? What about Kamala Harris's historic accomplishment of becoming the first female vice president? As we enter Women's History Month, and as I prepared for this month's paper in which examples of the legacy of women appear throughout (especially the article on page 29 about the kashariyot and their role in the armed resistance during the Holocaust), I gave this more thought than I might otherwise. To those who say we no longer need a

Women's History Month, that we should be past designating months to explore and celebrate accomplishments of minorities or historically oppressed groups, I say that this is one reason the month still matters. I have been fortunate that I don't ask myself this question daily. It means that I take for granted my ability to take my place among the men of the world to vote, to earn a living, to make choices that direct my own destiny. But this month I am reminded that, largely, I am able to enjoy these freedoms because of the women who preceded me.

I recently came across a picture in the Dallas Morning News of my brother and me wearing a gas mask and carrying signs at a march our mother had taken us to to draw attention to pollution. I don't know whether I actually remember it or if it's the picture that painted my memory of that day. I have no photograph to remind me of the day I sat at the dining room table licking envelopes for a mail campaign she'd spearheaded in support of the Equal Rights Amendment, but I remember it clearly. I don't remember fully understanding the issue at the time, and I can't say I ever consciously thought about

it as I grew into adulthood and became a mother myself. But the memories must have been stirring when my mother told me in 2017 that she had kidney failure and had only a year left to live. My brother and I took a walk that day and, within an hour, decided that it was time for me to leave Seattle where I'd lived for 25 years to move to South Carolina to take care of her during her last years. When we presented her with the plan, she flat out refused. Pride and a desire not to be a burden kept her from asking for or accepting help. But as the conversation continued, I began to cry with emotion I didn't know I felt and said, "Mom, you need to let me do this for Heather (my daughter). Our daughters learn how to treat their mothers by watching the way we treat our own." I believe my mother was partially thinking of her own mother, whom she'd taken care of for 12 years, when she cried and accepted my offer.

As I watch my own daughter grow into a young woman who marches for causes important to her, who nurtures and cares for others, who is strong in the face of adversity, I'd like to believe I've played some role in that.

Last month I had the privilege



Five generations of Shira's family

of attending the Lion of Judah and Pomegranate Society luncheon to benefit the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte 2021 Annual Campaign. (See article on front page.) More than 100 women philanthropists gathered virtually, and leaders of each society shared why it is important for them to participate in philanthropy and why, specifically, they give to Federation. I was not surprised to hear statements about the good that Federation does in the community, the way that so many of our Jewish institutions are supported by the work Federation does and the funds they raise and distribute. What I did not expect to hear (though upon reflection, I'm not sure why not) was the theme repeated by nearly every woman who spoke about the importance that being a model for her children has on these women's actions — and not just on her daughters but on their sons as well. One of the sweetest moments was watching one of the women in her little Zoom square with her wiggly, young daughter standing directly behind her. I wonder what that lit-

tle girl will remember of the day when she is an adult. Will that be her gas mask or envelope-licking memory? From witnessing these women whose daily lives are committed to tzedakah and tikkun olam, I have no doubt that their children will use their memories as building blocks to who they will become. And I hope that, as Women's History Month rolls around each year, they will not only look to women who are being honored by the National Women's History Museum (though who's to say their mothers won't be among them?) but also will take a moment to acknowledge the role their mothers and grandmothers played in creating the world they have grown up to enjoy. And may we remember as we make choices about where we will commit our energy and resources that our children, our future, are watching.

Shira

Shabbat Candle Lighting Times March

Friday, March 5, 6:04 p.m.
Friday, March 12, 6:10 p.m.
Friday, March 19, 7:16 p.m.
Friday, March 26, 7:22 p.m.



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Main Event Continued



Sam Bernstein and Peter Levinson

(Continued from page 1)

Federation to continue meeting the needs of our beneficiary agencies. A special thank-you to The Leon Levine Foundation and to all of our donors that have made a gift to this year's campaign. Federation influences every area of Jewish life. If you have not already done so, you can make your gift today at jewishcharlotte.org, calling (704) 944-6757 or by texting "PLEDGE" to (704) 327-0354.

Excerpts from interview with Mayim Bialik

Brian Kahn: You are so accomplished and have done so much. What drives you and can you attribute any of that to your Jewish upbringing?

Mayim Bialik: That's a powerful question. I'm powered by a Jewish God. I'm powered by waking up every morning in awe of my existence, and I spend my day trying to make myself a better person. With all the challenges that I encounter, that we all encounter, I'm guided by Jewish principles and Jewish thinking, I'm driven by the charge that I believe was given to my ancestors. It may look different because we're modern people, but it's the same thing that I seek — oneness, connection, and peace.

BK: Federation played big role in your life growing up, tell me about that.

MB: I'm a product of Federation and Federation scholarships. I didn't grow up with money and we didn't have money for me to go to summer camp like many other Jewish kids did, Federation had programs where we could have the camp experience five weekends each year, and I did that from 8th grade all the way through high school. Those years and experiences at Jewish camp — I found the concept of God there, a sense of obligation to the larger world because I was a Jew. I found a place of belonging. If you're an odd kid (I'm an odd adult too), having a connection like that is so powerful, and

that literally is why I dedicate so much time to Federations, because it's people like all of you who provide the opportunity for Federation to be there for people who need it ... there's different ways that we need it ... I'm a true Federation product and it's still a huge part of my life.

BK: You have a minor in Jewish Hebrew studies and neuroscience was the major. Was there an overlap?

MB: You can study Jewish studies and not be a person of faith. For me, I happen to be a person of faith, so for me learning and expanding my Jewish consciousness made me appreciate the universe more. And the more I study science, the more I have gained a deep understanding that I didn't create the world. There are scientific principles that are beyond my understanding and beyond my command and that's divine to me, so there's a lot of overlap between being a person of faith and a scientist. Being Jewish makes its way into everything. My Jewish mind, my inquisitive mind — for me a huge part of my thirst for learning comes from my heritage.

BK: Another amazing part of what you're doing is a podcast called "Mayim Bialik's Breakdown" about mental health. Tell us about that.

MB: Like many people, particularly Jewish people, I was

born into a family that had a tremendous amount of anxiety. We come by it honestly; my grandparents were immigrants from Eastern Europe and were fleeing the pogroms which preceded World War II. My grandmother was already orphaned by then and had lost at least a dozen siblings by the time she ended up at Ellis Island. There's intergenerational trauma that happens; there's an environment often of depression or anxiety. Some people come out of those situations without those kinds of struggles, of course, but that wasn't my family's story, and that stuff trickles down. I've been open about my mental health challenges because I believe that if

I'm going to use my platform for anything, it would be to try to make people feel less alone if they're struggling too.

Mayim concluded with: I was touched listening to the chairs tonight — how their life has grown and how much they have given to Federation, and to me that's so inspiring because that's how I want my life to look. I want to keep doing things that bring more good. Sometimes it's through entertaining, sometimes it's through speaking engagements, sometimes it's through saying I'm proud to go to Israel, and sometimes it's donating money — there are many different ways to do it.



Kara Culp



Heart to Heart: Virtually Limitless

This March, in honor of Women's History Month, join women from around North America on Heart to Heart: Virtually Limitless to explore the bonds between women in Israel and women around the world. Together we will learn about extraordinary women who have shaped Israel's history along with Federation and its partners. Lyana Rotstein, Expert Educator and Tour Guide will take us on this experience along with experts from around Israel. Free registration. Final session dates, additional speakers and details coming soon.

Reach out to Sarah.Fels@JFNA.org with questions.



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Inspiration.
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~ Sue's Bookshelf ~ By Sue Littauer



Sue Littauer

Alice Hoffman is my favorite author. One of the highlights of my career at the Jewish Federation was the opportunity to meet her. I found her to be quite shy and reserved, but I had a lovely

conversation with her and did manage to find a connection. She and my brother both live in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and when I told her where he lives, she knew exactly which house was his and said she walked by it every day! She even said to call her when I visited and we could meet for coffee.

I love Alice Hoffman's books because she is a masterful storyteller. Her books are magical yet grounded. And from my view, the title of her book "Practical Magic" perfectly describes the essence of her books. Many begin with a character, a situation, or a seemingly random thought. The story follows, and when you least expect it, the book is magically tied together to become a gift to the reader.



Sue Littauer and Alice Hoffman



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When I think back to my favorites, I am reminded of "Turtle Moon," "Second Nature," "Illumination Night," "At Risk," "Seventh Heaven," "Here on Earth," "Faithful," "The Museum of Extraordinary Things," and "The Marriage of Opposites." But my absolute favorite has always been "Practical Magic," the novel published in 1995, which became a major motion picture starring Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman.

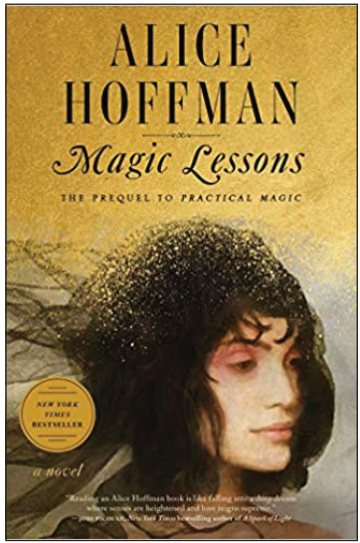
Ms. Hoffman has written two prequels to "Practical Magic" and is currently working on the fourth and final book in the series. Her most recent, "Magic Lessons," published in October 2020, is historical fiction telling the story of the Owens women, beginning with Maria Owens in the 1600s, continuing with Maria's journey to Massachusetts and the events surrounding the Salem witch trials. All the Owens women are described as beautiful with gray eyes and an intrinsic understanding of how plants and animal organs can cure various ailments, mainly lovesickness. We meet Hannah and Maria in "Magic Lessons," Franny and Jet in "Rules of Magic" (2017), and Gillian and Sally in "Practical Magic." (1995). After reading "Magic Lessons," I went back and reread "Practical Magic" because what I remembered of the book was a dead man, red boots, and lilies. (Yes, they were all still there.)

While reading "Magic Lessons" and Alice Hoffman's most recent books, I noticed a distinctive Jewish influence that wasn't found in her previous work. I wondered whether there was a specific occurrence or event that had influenced her to reference Jewish history in her latest books. The books I am referring to are "The Dovekeepers," "The

Marriage of Opposites," and "The World That We Knew." I emailed Ms. Hoffman through her publicist, feeling fairly confident I would get a response once I mentioned our Cambridge connection. A few hours later, I received the following: "I began to reference Jewish history more than I had previously after the death of my grandmother. My grandmother, Lillie Lulkin, was my connection to my heritage and history, and once she was gone, I felt a huge loss. It wasn't a conscious decision to add this material to my novels; I was just drawn to Jewish history and folklore."

Now would be a great time to settle in with these books about the Owens women. Your experience reading "Magic Lessons" will be enriched by the Jewish history found within its pages.

"Magic Lessons" will be our book club selection for May. It is available at the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library at the Center for Jewish Education. For more information, contact sueb.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org.



Women's Philanthropy Continued

(Continued from page 1)

their annual luncheon to “celebrate the power of a woman’s gift” and raise funds for the JFGC Annual Campaign. This year, like so many other events (including the Main Event) the luncheon was held virtually, though lunch was not absent, being provided to each attendee’s home. And as with the Main Event, instead of seeing a decrease in attendance because of the format, the luncheon had greater attendance than years past, with more than 100 women participating.

The leaders shared what the Jewish Federation and philanthropy mean to them. Individually and collectively, they acknowledged how the traditions of tzedakah and tikkun olam motivate them to dedicate themselves, through women’s philanthropy, to the continuity, connectivity, and thriving future of our Charlotte community, Israel, and the Jewish people. They also highlighted the importance that modeling involvement and giving have to inspire future generations.

JFCG wishes to acknowledge and thank the Women’s Philan-



thropy leaders: Sara Kulbersh (2021 Annual Campaign co-chair), Lisa Strause Levinson and Debra Van Glish (Women’s Philanthropy co-chairs), Meredith Baumstein (Lion of Judah chair), Melanie Brown, Alyssa Levine, and Karen Ransenberg (Pomegranate Society co-chairs).

In the words of the song that opened the luncheon, “Our voice is strong, our voice is powerful, our voice can change the world” — the voice of the Jewish women in Charlotte is strong and powerful, indeed.

Not Just Another Zoom Call: Super Sunday in Action



For the first time, Super Sunday went virtual this year! Rather than the familiar Sam Lerner Center setup each volunteer was asked to make phone calls from home. While the focus of Super Sunday is raising dollars for

our 2021 Annual Campaign, the event also serves as an opportunity to connect our community with representatives from all of Federation’s beneficiary agencies. Over 70 volunteers participated, representing 23 Federa-

tion beneficiary agencies. Our amazing volunteers embraced this new environment, reaching out to donors by telephone, email, and through text. As the numbers continue to roll in, we are grateful for the support from our community on Super Sunday and throughout the Annual Campaign.



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It's Time to Do Something for Yourself: Overbooked Women's Book & Author Series

By Debby Block

We are all overextended and overbooked! Before COVID-19, women's roles were diverse and frequently taxing, but during the pandemic, women assume an even more broad-ranging scope of duties. At the Center for Jewish Education (CJE), we believe that now, more than ever, women need to take time to feed their intellect and their souls. To meet this need, the CJE created the monthly book and author series aptly called "Overbooked: Strong Women, Extraordinary Circumstances." This series highlights Jewish women authors and the bold stories they tell.

To date, the series has featured two amazing authors: Bess Kalb



Book Lovers' Care Package for March: "The Book of V."

and Tiffany Shlain.

Bess Kalb, Emmy-winning writer for the Jimmy Kimmel Show, wowed us with her warmth and conversational rapport with our audiences. In her debut book, "Nobody Will Tell You This but Me," Kalb tells us her family history, as told by her grandmother, Bobby Bell, and paints a beautiful portrait of love between a grandmother and granddaughter. We were excited to learn that Kalb's book is now being made into a movie, with Kalb as the screenwriter.

February's featured author was Tiffany Shlain who shared her philosophy about technology as outlined in her book "24/6: The Power of Unplugging." Shlain showed us how to bring the time-honored tradition of Shabbat into our modern-day lives by unplugging from technology one day a week.

This month, Overbooked is featuring Anna Solomon and "The Book of V." A modern retelling of the story of Queen Esther and the long-forgotten Vashti, this book intertwines the stories, identities, and powerlessness of three women: concubine Esther, a modern-day mother, and a 1970s senator's wife. It is a fascinating look at women

through the ages. The author talk will take place Wednesday, March 3 at 8 p.m.

Don't miss our upcoming Overbooked programs! Our future programs include:

April 21

"Donna Has Left the Building" by Susan Gilman. Former wild-girl, Donna's life comes tumbling down at the age of 45. As Donna sets off in search of reclaiming her former youth, she unexpectedly finds a spiritual awakening through tikkun olam (repairing the world). The novel is irresistible, funny, smart, and surprisingly powerful.

May 12

"The Boys Club" by Erica Katz (soon to become a Netflix movie). How does a young female lawyer survive professionally in the boys club? This novel offers readers an inside look into the male-centered world of a prestigious New York law firm while simultaneously providing a deliciously compelling fictional narrative.

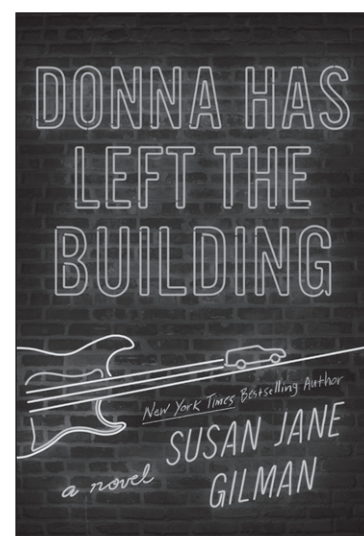
June 2

"What We Will Become: A Mother, a Son, and a Journey of Transformation" by Mimi LeMay. What would happen if you found that your child was different? What if you had to

risk everything to advocate for your child? This memoir tells the true story of an ultra-Orthodox Jewish mother who supports and advocates for her young transgender child. A story brimming with love and courage.

Book Lovers' Care Package

As a value-add to enhance these stimulating book talks, women can purchase a specially curated "Book Lover's Care Package" (\$20). Each package includes a few surprises relating to the book's theme (including a signature cocktail mix!) along with a signed copy of the book and a thought-provoking reader's guide. Supplies are limited, so make sure you reserve yours in advance by registering online at www.jewishcharlotte.org.



"Donna Has Left the Building" is Overbooked Women's Book & Author Series pick for April.

"Donna Has Left the Building"

From the beloved New York Times bestselling author of "Hypocrite in a Pouffy White Dress" comes a hilarious, timely, and big-hearted novel about rebuilding life in the face of disaster.

Forty-five-year-old Donna Koczyński is an ex-punk rocker, a recovering alcoholic, and the mother of two teenagers whose suburban existence detonates when she comes home early from a sales conference in Las Vegas to the surprise of a lifetime. As her world implodes, she sets off on an epic road trip to reclaim everything she believes she's sacrificed since her wild youth: great friendship, passionate love, and her art. But as she careens across the U.S. from Detroit to New York to Memphis to Nashville, nothing turns out as she imagines. Ultimately, she finds herself resurrected on the other side of the globe, on a remote island embroiled in a crisis far bigger than her own.

Irresistibly funny, whip-smart, and surprisingly moving, "Donna Has Left the Building" spins an unforgettable tale about what it means to be brave — and to truly love — in a tumultuous world.

Amazon



Female Nobel Laureates in Literature

Herta Muller, 2009

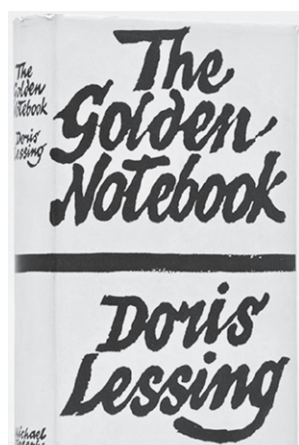
The German-Romanian writer is known for her poetic style of writing, often entrenched in social themes about her native Romania. Muller first broke through in 1982, with a collection of short stories called "Niederungen" (Nadirs) which was censored because of its autobiographical portrayal of the oppressive lifestyle in the Romanian countryside.

Most famous work: "Atemschaukel" (The Hunger Angel) — the 2009 poetic novel told the story of a young man named Leo Auberg who is deported to a forced labor concentration camp in Ukraine.

Doris Lessing, 2007

The English author (now 93) is the oldest person to win the Nobel Prize in Literature — but

better late than never. Lessing broke out with her 1950 novel, "The Grass Is Singing," about race relations in Zimbabwe (where she was mostly raised). Her work is mostly centered around political and feminist issues.



Most famous work: "The Golden Notebook" — the 1962 novel about a woman keeping a record of her life in journals contained strong feminist and anti-Stalinist themes.

Elfriede Jelinek, 2004

The Austrian novelist and playwright was set to become a musician before discovering her passion for literature. Her debut collection, "Lisas Schatten" (Lisa's Shadow) in 1967, was well-received and set her on a path to literary fame. Jelinek's work is usually focused on female sexuality and is often considered controversial.

Most famous work: "The Piano Teacher" — the 1983 novel is about a piano teacher who gets in a sadomasochistic relationship with her student.

Wisława Szymborska, 1996

The Nobel committee described the late Polish writer as the "Mozart of poetry." Szymborska often wrote on themes of war and terror, written in her humorous and ironic writing style. Her first published poem was 1945s I Am Looking for a Word.

Most famous work: "Dwukropek" — the 2006 collection, the writer's last, was chosen the best book of 2006 in Poland.

Toni Morrison, 1993

American author Toni Morrison blends epic, poetic styling with plots that mainly center around African-Americans. Morrison's first book was 1970's "The Bluest Eye," about a young black girl who wishes to have blue eyes.

Most famous work: "Be-

loved" — the 1987 story about a tortured African-American woman named Sethe won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and was turned into a film starring Oprah Winfrey.

Nadine Gordimer, 1991

Alfred Nobel called Gordimer's work a "great benefit to humanity." The South African-born writer focuses the bulk of her work on racial issues, such as apartheid in her native country. She gained an audience after her story A Watcher of the Dead was published in The New Yorker in 1951.

Most famous work: "The Conservationist" — the 1974 novel about an rich white antihero living in South Africa was a joint

(Continued on page 10)

~ Miss Debby's Bookshelf ~

Best-loved Children's Books

By Miss Debby

Celebrating Jewish Tradition: "Sarah's Solo" by Tracy Brown



Debby Block

By Debby Block

We all have to do things — as children and as adults — that we would prefer to avoid. More often than not, when we accept the inevitable, we usually relish the new experience. Tracy Brown's debut children's picture book "Sarah's Solo" helps children explore just this dilemma through the eyes of a little girl. Sarah is all ready for a dance recital she has prepared for over several months only to find out that she must miss the dance recital to attend her cousin's wedding. As you can imagine, Sarah is angry and disappointed. In the end, Sarah learns to dance the "Hava Nagila" at the wedding and has a wonderful time and even dances a solo.

As a librarian, I am constantly looking for books that depict life-cycle events in the Jewish tradition. Brown's book is one of very few children's picture books that highlights a Jewish wedding and celebrates its joyous traditions.

I love that "Sarah's Solo" is accessible to anyone, no matter what the reader's level of Jewish knowledge. And though the book is easily understandable for all, Brown and the publishers have added a list of vocabulary in the back for those who would like to explore Jewish wedding traditions in further depth.

Although I believe that "Sarah's Solo" will appeal primarily to girls, I love that author Tracy Brown explores the very human reaction of disappointment and frustration. I am keenly aware that both boys and girls often face this frustration when Jewish holidays, events, or even religious school supersedes their other activities.

About author, Tracy Brown:

An integral part of Charlotte's Jewish leadership, Tracy Brown is now also the author of her first picture book "Sarah's Solo."

Currently, Tracy splits her time between Charlotte and Vail, Colorado, with her husband, Larry. She has three children — Sammy, Annie, and Katie — who live scattered across the country. Tracy currently sits on the Executive Board of the Jewish Book Council and has served as the chair of the Children's Literature Panel.

Interview with author Tracy Brown:

Debby Block: What inspired you to write "Sarah's Solo?"

Tracy Brown: I feel it is essential to "write what you know." Jewish culture and family are very important to me. But I also realized that my children missed many activities because they were Jewish. I wanted children everywhere to know that something good can come from Jewish practices and cultural experiences and that sometimes disappointment can turn to a truly joyous experience.

DB: Is Sarah's experience based on one of your daughters?

TB: No, actually, it is based on a friend's daughter's experience. But, of course, my own children have had many times when they had to miss sports or birthday parties because of Jewish holidays or events.

DB: How long did it take you to write "Sarah's Solo?"

TB: It took me approximately two months to write this book as part of my graduate studies at Stony Brook University, where I was fortunate enough to be mentored by Heidi Stemple. And then it took two more months to work with my publisher.

DB: Is this your first book?

TB: Yes, this is the first children's picture book to be published. But interestingly, I used to write small books for my stu-

dents at the Jewish Preschool on Sardis.

DB: What are some of your memories of reading to your children?

TB: I was always reading to my children! I even built a collection of books for each child based on each one's name. So we had lots of books about Sammy (including Sammy Spider) and lots of books about girls named Annie and Katie.

DB: What was your favorite Jewish book as a child?

TB: You know, I don't remember too many books with Jewish content when I was very

young. It wasn't until I was a teen that I remember Jewish books with Jewish content. Today, there is a large variety of books that depict Jewish culture and traditions, and I am proud to have supported Jewish children's books by serving on the Children's Literature panel of the Jewish Book Council.

DB: And now you are adding to the richness of Jewish literature available for children! So what's next? Do you have another book in the works?

TB: Yes, I am working on another picture book about my grandmother's rugelach recipe that gets lost.

We recommend this book for 3- to 8-year-olds along with early readers in grades one and two. Coming out this month, "Sarah's Solo" will be available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, JKBAC.com, and many other retailers. You may also borrow a copy of the book from the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library.



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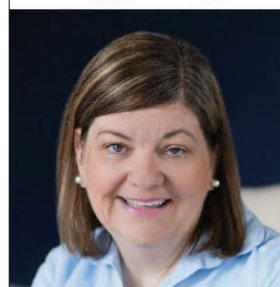
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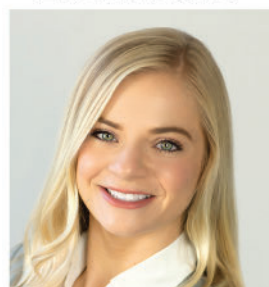
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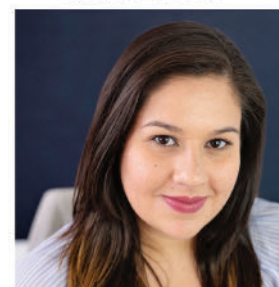
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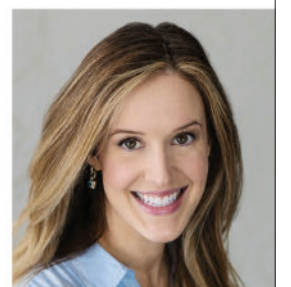
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JELF Helps Students Continue Education Through Crisis

By David Cohen

Joshua Elbaz grew up in a middle-class neighborhood, one of three boys in a divorced household. His parents were always loving and very involved in the lives of their three sons. Joshua earned good grades in school

and was a member of his synagogue's youth group. However, he could have never predicted the tragedy and heartache he and his family would eventually face. Not only did the family suffer the tragic loss of both of his brothers (non-COVID related) a

few years apart, but also while still grieving his second brother's death in July 2020, Joshua and his father contracted COVID, and his father subsequently died from it.

Even before COVID, Joshua had been inspired by his family's story and had made the decision to become a lawyer. It was important to him that others got the second chance his brothers never received. To achieve his career aspirations, he knew he needed to pursue a law degree; his challenge was to find the money needed to be a full-time student. To accomplish this, Joshua took out federal Stafford loans, worked several jobs, and turned to Jewish Education Loan Fund (JELF) for those final dollars needed to get by.

JELF, a nonprofit organization providing interest-free loans since 1961, gives Jewish students the chance to achieve their career goals by helping them fund their higher education. Sadly, with the cost of college on the rise, many families are unable to afford the financial burden of tuition, fees, books, rent, food, utilities, and so much more. Today, even middle-class families find themselves facing situations that prevent them from putting aside extra savings for their children's education. In recent years, as many as 94% of all students relied on some financial support (scholarships, grants, and/or loans). According to the Department of Education, 70% of college students graduate with student debt.

This is where JELF makes

a huge difference. The average annual JELF loan is between \$3,000 and \$6,000; students save \$3,000 on average per loan in interest. Loan repayments begin six months after a student graduates, at which point JELF offers an eight-year, graduated repayment plan. This means that borrowers start repaying their loans gradually over time, as recipients progress in their careers. Student repayments are then used to help the next student in need.

Because of COVID, Joshua's family suffered more than many others did. When the pandemic hit, Joshua had just started law school. He was living in his father's house, where his grandmother also lived. After suffering a fall earlier this year, she was taken to the hospital and then placed in a rehab facility. Unfortunately, she contracted COVID at the rehab facility and unknowingly passed it to Joshua and his father after she had returned home. The virus took a huge toll on the family. Fortunately Joshua's grandmother recovered, but sadly, Joshua's father Robert, age 65, died at home. When the paramedics came to the house for his father, they immediately realized that Joshua was also extremely ill. They transported him to the hospital's COVID unit, where he spent two weeks on oxygen. After recovering and being released from the hospital, Joshua had to face the difficult realization that he had just lost his father and then had to pick up his life in to resume his first year of law school.

Even during this grief-strick-

en time, Joshua's goal to persevere with his legal education has never wavered. "I've lost more family members at the age of 29 than many people have lost at the age of 70," explains Joshua sadly. "I've had friends tell me that if this [had] happened to them, they would have dropped out and quit. But if I don't move forward, I would just stop. And nobody benefits from that. All the hard work that my father and brothers watched me put in would be for nothing. So I continue on in their memory."

As Joshua begins the path to fulfilling his dreams, JELF is proud to lend him the financial support he needs. In 2020, JELF loaned more than \$1.5 million in interest-free loans to nearly 400 students. Thanks to donors throughout the Jewish community and our consistent 99% student loan repayment rate, JELF was able to increase the number of students served by 33%.

As JELF's board president, Jane Aronoff, recently said, "What I love about JELF is that your dollars never stop. They are used for one student, and then when paid back, the money is used for the next. Every dollar lives on and on." Since the organization first started providing interest-free loans in 1961, JELF has loaned more than \$14.5 million to more than 2,000 Jewish students.

To receive a JELF loan, a student must meet the following qualifications:

Identify as Jewish.

Be a resident of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, or Virginia (excluding metro DC). Be a legal resident of the U.S.

Attend a U.S.-accredited school full-time.

Plan to (or have) filled out the FAFSA and accept student aid

Remain in good academic standing

Provide a credit-worthy co-signer residing in the United States.

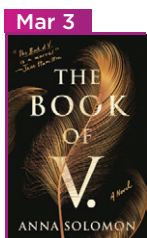
JELF's mission is to help as many students as possible live with as little student debt as they can. "I want to thank JELF for all the support over the years both financially and emotionally," said

(continued on page 9)

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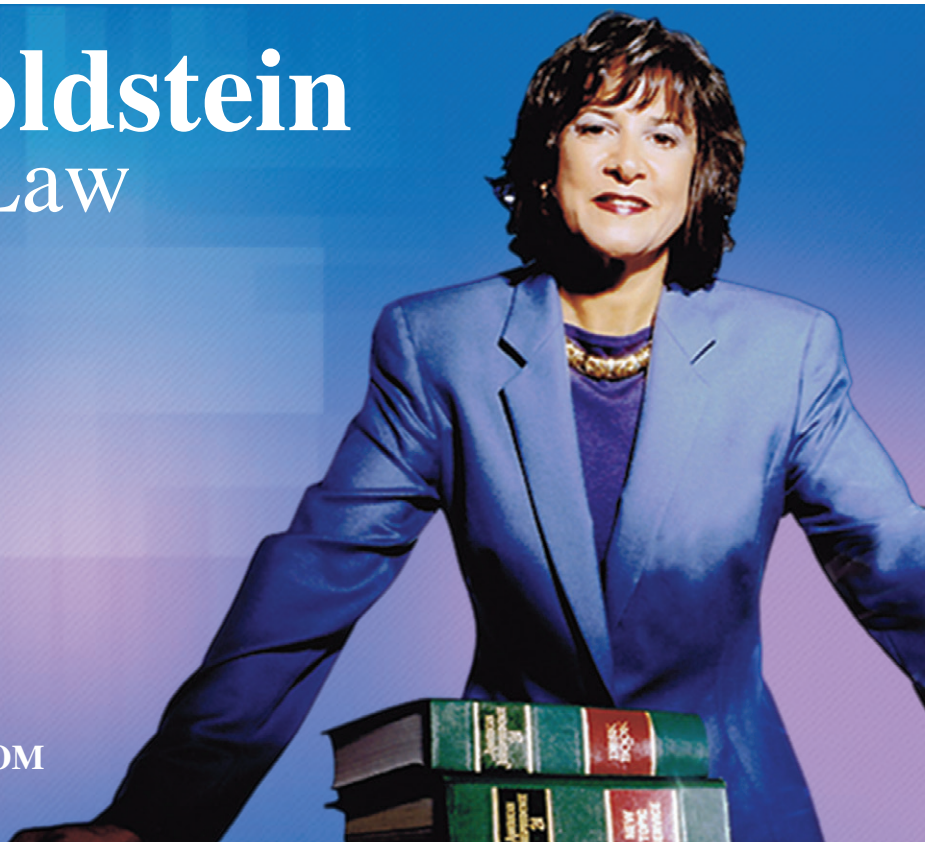
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Generations at Shalom Park: On Its Way to You



By Jeannie Bellew

Generations at Shalom Park has been a talked-about “coming attraction” for five years. During this time, much has happened behind the scenes, but to the naked eye, you wouldn’t know it. There are no survey markers, no signage, and no bulldozers — yet.

Though the Shalom Park community has been diligently and lovingly protecting its members and employees through 2020 and the worst pandemic in 100 years, Generations has been plotting, planning, and executing its plans for the only culturally Jewish independent living community between Richmond, Virginia and Atlanta, Georgia.

For the last year, Generations, affiliated with Aldersgate, has been working with its regulatory agency, the NC Department of Insurance, to ensure a smooth, governed path to opening its doors in late 2023. There is a four-step approval process governed by the NC Department of Insurance and, to date, Generations at Shalom Park has been

approved for the first two:

The first step, the discovery and notification phase of the project, was approved on February 4, 2020. The second step, the predevelopment phase of the project, was approved on November 30, 2020. This approval includes the green lighting of the disclosure statement and other financial documents and allows Generations to begin accepting reservation deposits.

The two future steps are the beginning of construction and the receipt of the permanent license to operate as a life plan community, after which move-ins can begin.

The home of this new community will be on the 11.5 acres next to Temple Israel at the corner of Providence Road and Jefferson Drive. It will be home to older adults ages 62+ who are looking for an intergenerational and diverse spirit welcoming all faiths, beliefs, and cultures. It will offer the full continuum of well-being and health services for residents as needed through the different

phases of life that affect us all. Residents will find all amenities and services provided along with, and most importantly, a full membership to the Levine JCC located no more than one-third of a mile or a mere 704 steps,

an easy walk, away from any Generations independent living building.

The Generations team has started preselling and is fully engaged in community outreach. If you’d like to learn more about

Generations at Shalom Park, the newest member of our Shalom Park family, please call (704) 532-5400.

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JELF Continued

(continued from page 8)

Joshua over a recent Zoom call. “Without this support, I would not be on the path to becoming a lawyer.”

JELF’s application is open from March 1 to April 30 and then again September 1-30 each year. Students and parents can get more information and sign up for reminder emails about the application period at JELF.org. For more information about JELF, please email JELF’s marketing director at DCohen@JELF.org.

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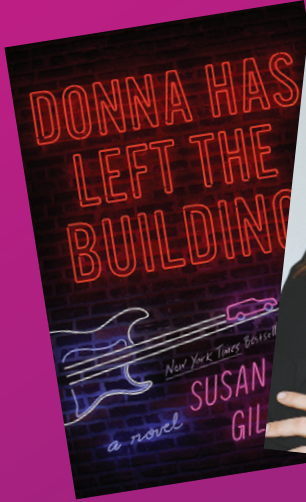
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Female Nobel Laureates

Continued

(Continued from page 6)

winner of the Man Booker Prize for fiction.

Nelli Sachs, 1966

The German-born, Swedish-bred poet and playwright focused most of her work on Jewish grief after the Nazis came into power. She was known for her lyrical style of writing.

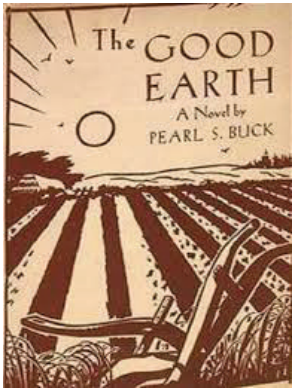
Most famous work: "Eli: A Mystery Play of the Sufferings of Israel" — the 1943 play was the first Holocaust drama ever written.

Gabriela Mistral, 1945

The Chilean poet is the only Latin American woman to have won the Nobel prize. Mistral's poetic themes revolved mainly around Latin American identity

and were written in a powerfully emotional and idealistic style, according to the Nobel committee.

Most famous work: "Desolacion" (Despair) — the 1922 collection of poems was critically acclaimed.



Pearl S. Buck, 1938

The American-born writer spent most of her childhood in China, where most of her work is set. Buck was a prolific writer, penning more than 30 novels, plus biographies, autobiographies, nonfiction books, and short story collections.

Most famous work: "The Good Earth" — the 1931 dramatic novel about village life in China won the Pulitzer Prize for the novel and was a best seller.

Sigrid Undset, 1928

The Norwegian writer was experimental, occasionally writing in a stream of consciousness. Early on in her career, she became extremely interested in Medieval times and wrote many historical novels.

Most famous work: "Kristin Lavransdatter" — the 1920 historical trilogy follows the story of a woman living in the 14th century. The trilogy was essentially the basis for Undset winning the Nobel prize.

Grazia Deledda, 1926

Born in Sardinia, the Italian writer based most of her work on the people of her birthplace, focusing on themes of love, sin, and family. She was the first Italian woman to win the prize.

Most famous work: "La Madre" — the 1920 novel told the story of a Sardinian mother, whose son falls in love with a beautiful widow.

Selma Lagerlof, 1909

The Swedish-born writer was the first woman to win the award. The Nobel committee described her work as lofty, vivid and spiritual, mostly known for her children's books.

Most famous work: "The Wonderful Adventures of Nils" — the 1906 book follows the life of a young boy named Nils Holgersson

Sources: USA Today and Wikipedia

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~ JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES ~

JFS Awarded Grant From United Way to Serve Pineville Community

By Howard Olshansky
Executive Director,
Jewish Family Services

Jewish Family Services (JFS) is pleased to announce that it has received a grant from the United Way of the Central Carolinas to provide mental health, parenting, and case management services to residents in the Pineville community who are struggling with mental health issues or who need assistance connecting to services that will help them manage their day-to-day lives.

Not too long ago, the United Way invited JFS to apply for a Community Impact Grant. Never having been a recipient of one of its grants before, JFS was pleased to be acknowledged for the good work we do surrounding mental health and to be tapped on the shoulder to apply for these dollars. Knowing there was already a relationship in place between the Jewish community and Sterling Elementary School, which is in the Pineville community, it made sense to take a closer look at the United Way's priorities and how JFS could use its expertise to meet a community

need while also expanding our services.

North Carolina has long had higher poverty rates than the United States as a whole; in 2019, the state had the 13th highest poverty rate in the country, and at 13.6%, the poverty rate was three percentage points higher than the United States rate of 10.5% (American Community Survey 2019). The Pineville community's poverty level surpasses even that, with 20% of its population living in poverty and with social service support in that area limited.

In consulting with existing community partners like the schools and Pineville Neighbors Place, a grassroots organization that helps connect members of the community struggling with food and financial insecurity to resources, it became apparent that there is a gap in the need for mental health services and resources currently available in the Pineville community. This is where JFS comes in.

Though the primary focus of this grant will be to provide mental health services, we know that

if a family is struggling to make ends meet, it is not going to engage in emotional supports until its basic needs are addressed. So using its current, successful practice model, JFS takes a comprehensive look at someone's whole situation and then addresses the person's needs, developing and implementing a care plan that matches particular needs to the specific resources required to strengthen day-to-day functioning.

As a one-stop shop social service agency with comprehensive offerings focused on emotional health and well-being, crisis response and assistance, senior engagement, and community education and awareness, JFS can select in-house services or community-based programs to create the best possible outcome for the individual or family. This approach ensures a client in need of mental health support is in a position to gain the maximum benefit from the therapeutic intervention.

Another core piece to this community engagement program is parenting and family

support. JFS is aware that many families are challenged by managing family dynamics and relationships within the family structure and especially with children and youth behaviors. Using the Triple P parenting program model, an evidence-based parenting program, JFS can help parents enhance their parenting skills and establish healthy family relationships.

Further enhancing parenting support, the grant is designed to strengthen parental engagement with the child's school. According to the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, at both the elementary and secondary level, when schools, parents, families, and communities work together, students earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school, and are more motivated. This is true for students of all ages, backgrounds, races, and ethnicities. Therefore, JFS anticipates creating strong partnerships with both Sterling and Pineville Elementary Schools.

To assist with the successful implementation of all these ser-

vices, the grant calls for hiring a licensed therapist who has the skill set to provide the necessary clinical treatment and the capacity to engage within the community, which is critical to establishing and building relationships within the community that will result in connecting families with the resources needed for them to be successful.

JFS couldn't be more thrilled to receive this grant, as it also advances one of JFS's strategic goals of promoting the value of tikkun olam by using its experience and expertise to contribute to enhancing the quality of life in the greater Charlotte community.



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Special Thanks: Shalom Green for growing and harvesting produce for our clients!

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.

Mental Health Issues Are on the Rise, So Why Aren't We Accessing Care?

By Howard Olshansky
Executive Director, JFS

Stress, anxiety, and depression are at an all-time high. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, one in three adults in the United States has reported anxiety or depressive disorder symptoms during the pandemic. The repercussions of the pandemic on certain specific populations are even more concerning.

Data from the same poll show a recent increase from 27% in March to 47% in July in the number of adults over the age of 65 reporting negative mental health effects due to worry and stress. And although the statistical data related to children in our area are lacking, we know anecdotally that being quarantined at home and socially distanced from friends and struggling to keep up academically have taken their toll. According to the CDC, beginning in April 2020, the proportion of mental health-related emergency department visits among all pediatric emergency department visits increased and remained elevated through October. Compared with 2019, the proportion of mental health-related visits for children ages 5 to 11 and 12 to 17 years increased approximately 24% and 31%, respectively.

Stressed out and stretched too thin, health-care workers have been among those hardest hit. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), half of physicians nationwide report feeling anxious because of COVID-19-related concerns. A recent survey found nearly 60% of health-care professionals report experiencing burnout — a significant leap from 40% two years ago. Yet most of them are not receiving mental health treatment.

Several factors are preventing our frontline workers from receiving help. The stigma of being in therapy that exists in the general population is even more pronounced for health-care workers and, in particular, doctors. According to the AAMC survey, only 13% of providers have sought treatment to address pandemic-related mental health concerns. Among emergency physicians, 87% of whom say they've been experiencing increased stress, nearly half report not feeling comfortable seeking mental health treatment. According to one physician who responded to the survey, "I was worried my peer colleagues would see me differently. I worried that the entire leadership would know, and I'd feel like Big Brother was always



watching me. I just didn't want to be perceived as weak." As the pandemic drags on, experts worry that providers will avoid much-needed mental health care for fear of harming their reputations or ruining their careers.

If our medical professionals are worried about the stigma of accessing mental health treatment, imagine being a senior who lived through a time when you were expected to be able to manage your emotions, and it was considered a weakness to access therapy. Or how do you suppose a teen under the microscope of peer pressure feels about asking for help? For adults, it is often a visit to the doctor where the need for mental health support is identified. For children, it is often school personnel who first notice behavioral changes and suggest treatment. But doctors' visits are mostly happening on an emergency basis only, and

children are not in school the way they were before, so mental health issues are not being as readily identified for these populations. The same holds true for our friends, co-workers, or family. With social distancing, our intimate gatherings and group activities are a thing of the past, so the opportunity to share and notice certain red flags is absent.

The irony of all of this is that for many, access to mental health treatment has never been easier. Telehealth removes some of the barriers to getting help, and insurance companies have agreed to pay for it, which has eased many of the challenges of accessing mental health support during the pandemic. And yet, it is not being accessed at the rates expected. JFS wants to help change that. For those members of our Jewish community struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, or the emotional roller-coaster

of the pandemic, we can help. If you do not have insurance or the ability to pay privately, we will ensure you can access the treatment you need. Call us at (704) 364-6594 or email info@jfscharlotte.org.



JFS Monthly Tributes February 2021

For a Speedy Recovery of Marcy Mehlman

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Get Well Soon Ruth Goldberg

Barry Bobrow and Karen

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Kosher Supermarkets Hate Cleaning For Passover As Much As You Do

By Ben Sales
NEW YORK (JTA)

Pomegranate, a gourmet kosher supermarket in Brooklyn, spends \$75,000 every year getting its kitchen ready for Passover.

Hungarian Kosher Foods, a supermarket in Chicago, starts clearing its aisles for Passover eight weeks ahead of the holiday.

The week before Passover,

at Zabar's, a Jewish favorite on Manhattan's Upper West Side, a staff of a dozen works for as long as 18 hours a day to pack a thousand food deliveries.

If you thought your Passover prep was hard, you've got nothing on the managers of Jewish supermarkets.

"We have no choice," said Isaac Bernstein, the culinary director of Pomegranate. "We

have to do Passover. We don't lose money, it's just that a ton of work goes into it. If you look at the effort required and the return, no one would [do it]."

Passover, which comes with its own maze of dietary laws that prohibit even an iota of leavened food (including pasta, beer, bread and pastry), is a boon to kosher and otherwise Jewish grocery stores that specialize in

adhering to the restrictions. But it's also a pain for the staffs of those stores, which need to clear out their entire stock and deep-clean machinery to prepare for a holiday that lasts only eight days.

Even so, managers say the work is worth it. Staying open for Passover is a service to the stores' often loyal local clientele. And for smaller kosher markets that compete with local or national chains, being a reliable address for Passover is a way to raise awareness and attract customers the rest of the year.

"We service the community," said Ira Kirsche, the owner of Hungarian in Chicago. "Even if it isn't profitable, it pays throughout the year because people appreciate it, see what we've done and come back. ... Other people aren't doing the extent we are, soup to nuts."

Hungarian and Pomegranate, which are both fully kosher stores, described similarly arduous timelines to prepare for the holiday. Bernstein adds eight people to his staff of 30 each year for the process. They both have to clear out their shelves and cover them, which eliminates any trace of prohibited leaven. Then they have to arrange all of the kosher-for-Passover items and physically conceal any forbidden food because Jewish law prohibits even seeing leavened products in a kosher shop.

Kirsche estimates that 40 percent of his shelves are concealed over Passover. To move refrigerated goods, he sets up freezer trailers outside the store.

The fish and meat departments — and the kitchen — are even harder. Both stores have to dismantle some of their large-scale tools, like a meat slicer, to

thoroughly clean and boil them in water for the holiday. Bernstein says that because Jewish law prohibits koshering some instruments, he has to purchase new ones for the holiday.

Four weeks ahead of time, Kirsche makes his kitchen kosher for Passover. That entails a thorough cleaning that takes two days, a 24-hour waiting period mandated by Jewish law and then dowsing all the surfaces in boiling water.

In non-kosher stores, "all they have to do is switch out their kosher aisle — it's just a lot easier," Bernstein said. "But kosher markets, it keeps you up half the year. This is the service industry. This isn't slavery. It's really difficult. The tensions are high. All the employees are working crazy hours."

At the Trader Joe's supermarket chain, which stocks kosher items year-round alongside plenty of non-kosher goods, the process is indeed less involved. All Trader Joe's markets have to do is buy kosher-for-Passover packaged food, place it in the kosher aisle, maybe put up a display and voila.

Zabar's, which sells ethnically Jewish foods but is not fully kosher, also doesn't have the stresses of a kosher store. But because it's a popular destination for the neighborhood's many Jewish residents, Passover is still a challenging season. The store, for example, advertises a \$265 seder dinner for six — its website cautions the food is not certified kosher.

"We know how to make 500 briskets," said Scott Goldshine, Zabar's general manager. "It's just keeping the quality to the highest level we know, and trying not to mess up any orders."

And what happens to all of those unsold matzah boxes after the holiday? Stores were touchy about the question.

Some said they discount the leftover Passover goods and others donate them to charitable organizations. But a couple preferred not to talk about Passover leftovers. Whole Foods declined repeated requests for comment, and Seasons, a kosher supermarket in Manhattan, hung up on a reporter twice.

But Bernstein said leftovers aren't really a problem. Profit margins are especially thin on Passover, so Pomegranate looks at what it sold the previous year and buys accordingly. Bernstein said his biggest challenge is getting through the holiday, not dealing with what comes after.

"I just want the Messiah to come so there's no more Passover," he said. "I want it to end, and we can go back to being normal."

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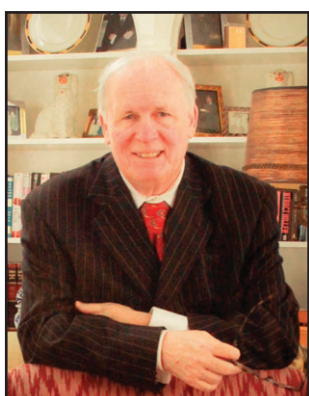
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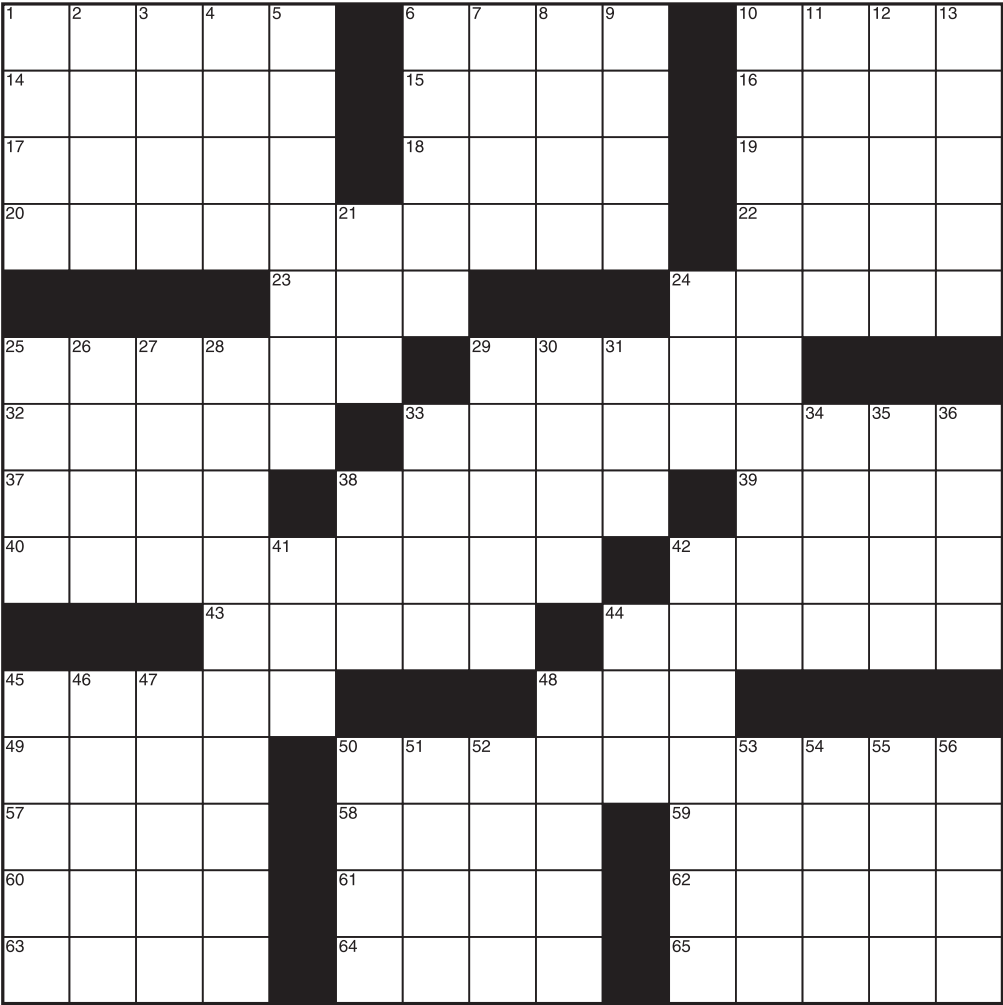
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Thank you, Phil!

ACROSS

- 1. Water collection areas
- 6. Birdhouse nester
- 10. Burns up the telephone line
- 14. Columbia catch
- 15. Lifted, as an anchor
- 16. Dash of panache
- 17. Athenian square
- 18. Old World wild goat
- 19. Bailiff's request
- 20. Indignant displeasure
- 22. Apportion (out)
- 23. Dow Jones listings (abbr.)
- 24. Like some points
- 25. More of a busybody
- 29. Fever or cruiser preceder
- 32. Heroic narratives
- 33. Tears
- 37. Commend a G.I.
- 38. Cause of waste?
- 39. Backyard tree dangler
- 40. Memory stirrers
- 42. Comic-strip wife
- 43. Facilitates
- 44. Starter's need
- 45. Ahead of the bell

- 48. Was out of sight?
- 49. Boot camp truant
- 50. Greens
- 57. Matter of interest?
- 58. Of higher rank than
- 59. Bolivian beast
- 60. Fox or turkey chaser?
- 61. Having no loose ends?
- 62. Urchin
- 63. His partner
- 64. Benevolent order
- 65. Hub for United

DOWN

- 1. Award of merit
- 2. Do more than ask
- 3. Calls from the field
- 4. Unblemished
- 5. Golf coach's concerns
- 6. Instincts sometimes indulged
- 7. Choir member's outerwear
- 8. Without bumps
- 9. Cry to the queue
- 10. Sprouts
- 11. Xenophobe's thorn
- 12. Cookbook instruction
- 13. Ugly expression

- 21. Geologic feature
- 24. Christmas staple
- 25. Head turner?
- 26. Early Ron Howard role
- 27. Developer's concern
- 28. Bits of hail
- 29. Detective's load
- 30. Circus lineup
- 31. Bonnet invader
- 33. Placid, for example
- 34. Commit a pinball foul
- 35. Deducer's word
- 36. Playful pinniped
- 38. Isn't out of
- 41. Verbalize
- 42. Spanish nobleman
- 44. Cherry center
- 45. Inheritance of the meek
- 46. Not in the dark?
- 47. Palindromic spinner
- 48. Chisholm Trail sights
- 50. November exhortation
- 51. Good competition
- 52. Computer whiz
- 53. Far from thrilling
- 54. "Lost Horizon" figure
- 55. Bahrain bigwig
- 56. Fit to be tried?

(Solution on page 42)

SPICE Spring Food Drive for JFS Pantry

On Thursday, March 18, between 10 a.m. and noon, the SPICE group at Temple Beth El will be holding its semi-annual food drive for Jewish Family Services Food Pantry.

The fall food drive was successful because of the generosity of community seniors and their younger friends in growing the food available to Jewish struggling families who are struggling. SPICE wants to

open hearts once again to the plight of the less fortunate at Passover. Can you imagine not having even a box of matzah for the seder because you cannot afford the Passover prices? Thank you for helping these families and JFS!

Make a contactless drop-off on March 18 at the Blumenthal Portico (near the CJE Library entrance at Shalom Park).

Most Needed Items

- Kidney Beans
- Applesauce
- Mandarin Oranges
- Pears
- Jelly
- Pasta Sauce
- Canellini Beans
- Navy Beans
- Spinach
- Flavored Rice
- Grits
- Cake Mix
- Pumpkin
- Pie filling
- Raisins
- Diced Tomatoes
- Bottled Juice
- Bottled Water
- Flavored Water
- Ground Coffee (no pods)
- Tea
- Toothpaste (full-size)
- Facial Tissue
- Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Conditioner





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Getting to Know Nancy Good of The Ruach



“Don’t do something simply because you’re good at it; do it because you’re passionate about it.” This adage perfectly describes my journey with The Ruach. Music and performing have always been my passions; a deep connection to Judaism followed.

Growing up in Los Angeles, I was an eager performer. I began guitar lessons at eight and acting lessons when I was 13. Shortly after, I began performing in a local theater group. Acting was going to be my profession — when I was 18. What followed were years of successes and struggles. It was a typical Los Angeles actor’s life.

In Los Angeles I was immersed in the rock scene, getting to know and hang out with many of the stars of that era. Joan Jett was a close friend, and I almost became the bass player of an all-female rock band.

In 2000, my husband, two preschoolers, and I moved to Charlotte where we became involved at Temple Israel. I still acted in a few commercials, but when

my younger son decided to take guitar lessons at 13, things really changed for me. Bored with my half hour waiting around the music store, I engaged another teacher for refresher lessons. Over the years, my guitar had spent more time in a closet than in my hands. (Blame my kids, who as toddlers found the guitar’s sound hole a perfect place for depositing their blocks.) My guitar teacher encouraged me to start “playing out,” and I soon found myself playing open mic nights and starting a trio called “We’re Not Jane.”

Soon after, I met with Rabbi Faith Cantor at Temple Israel who had heard about my musical ventures and asked whether I would lead a family High Holiday Service. As I was playing guitar in her office, Rabbi Ezring walked in and asked if I would be interested in playing for a Saturday morning Kavanah service he was planning. He said it would be held in the temple’s board room. He expected about 15 to 20 people would attend. I said that sounded interesting. He

said, “Great! Do you know Peter Levinson and his daughter, Jill? She is a good singer, and Peter plays guitar. I would like the three of you to play for the service.”

I said that I did not know Peter or his daughter but that I could play with them for the service. Then I told Rabbi Ezring that my son, Josh, played drums and would like him to join us. He loved the idea.

The Kavanah service was attended by more than 50 people. Standing room only. The seeds of The Ruach were sown.

Shortly after this I began a dual career as “Miss Nancy,” playing and singing for the children of The Charlotte Jewish Day School, Camp Katan, The Charlotte Jewish Preschool, Temple Israel, and Temple Israel Religious School along with being a singer and guitarist for The Ruach.

It was a wonderful way to stay involved at the temple after my children had been Bar Mitzvahed. At first I was conflicted about my double life, as I was still playing in bars and wasn’t sure how that looked to my Conservative Jewish audience. Eventually, playing solo in bars gave way to playing with The Ruach in bars to a more diverse audience with various levels of observance.

With the encouragement and support of what was soon becoming “The Ruach Community,” I began feeling more comfortable as a Jewish musical artist and more committed to my observance of Judaism. Rather than feeling on the fringe, I felt embraced and uplifted. Having a spiritual leader like Rabbi Rachel Smookler has made the ex-

perience even more meaningful.

In the 11 years I have been a part of The Ruach, I’ve discovered that observance has many degrees and many variants of expression. What seemed edgy and unconventional for me now feels natural. My spiritual connection to G-d and the people who surround me is strong and uniquely my own. The Ruach has played in synagogues, churches, hotels, bars, barbecues, and ballrooms

— and don’t forget The Fillmore at The NC Music Factory where we had our largest live gathering for Rosh Hashanah in 2019! What unites us in all those venues is “us,” a community of people brought together by a common desire to connect with each other and with a higher power. I feel extremely fortunate, proud, and blessed to be able to share my passion with The Ruach Community.

When You’re Hungry, Nothing Else Matters

By Rabbi Rachel Smookler
The Ruach

When I put out the call to The Ruach Community to collect the grab-and-go, non-perishable bags to deliver to Roof Above, I had no idea what the response would be. Taking this past year into consideration with no in-person gatherings, I was very concerned that we may have extremely little response to our call to serve the homeless. However, every time the call went out to donate, The Ruach Community members immediately went to the sign-up link and filled up each and every slot for times/donations.

Since putting out the call to donate to an area homeless shelter on Kol Nidre, The Ruach Community has successful-

ly completed three months of meeting our commitment to become an active part of our local community. I receive countless emails from The Ruach Community members who are saddened to find out that they have gone to the sign-up link a little too late, only to find that all slots are full — so much so, that Wendy Gordon Pake (a part of our community helping to make our project a reality) has even begun to find alternative shelters we could deliver our extra bags to. This past month, Roof Above experienced a critical emergency and contacted us to see whether we could provide nearly double our usual donation. Once again, we put out an email of this increased need, and within the same day, all slots were filled.

After sign-ups are complete, here is how our project works: The Ruach Community members drive up to my house. I wait outside all day as car after car, family after family show up, everyone masked and socially distant, and then place all the bags they have packed into boxes that will then go into my car. Thank you so much to my son, Zach, for loading and unloading this month’s donations to Roof Above.

For more information on The Ruach Experience and our community projects, contact the.Ruach.band@gmail.com.

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~ SYNAGOGUES AND CONGREGATIONS ~

Temple Solel's Israeli Passover Plans

By Shelley Pawlyk

While searching for the latest email from Rabbi Steve Burnstein from Kehilat Birkat Shalom in Israel, I smiled when I saw some subject lines that came up with short little memory blurbs: "Coming back to Charlotte," "Pix from the Torah Study," "Hello from across the miles," "Have you arrived safely?" These are all reminders of what seems like a lifetime ago but that took place barely over a year ago. Rabbi Steve answered me back, "So wonderful to hear from you! I hope you, your family, and the community are all safe and healthy during these crazy times. Things are going well here in Israel. With the rest of the world, we're doing our best to cope with the pandemic. Your continued partnership is very helpful. Thank you for your ongoing support. I hope to be able to return to traveling in the not-too-distant future and arrange another visit to your community. Wishing you much light and warmth as we approach Hanukah 2020."

Birkat Shalom is located at Kibbutz Gezer, halfway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, near the biblical site of Tel Gezer. With Rabbi Burnstein's leadership, the synagogue provides an inclusive and inviting Jewish community for Israeli Jews who are looking for a meaningful, egalitarian setting in which to celebrate Jewish life, ritual, and tradition. Rabbi Burnstein succeeded another dear friend and leader, Rabbi Miri Gold, who served the community for 20 years. Find out more at: <https://www.birkatshalom.net/t-en-us>.

Even though his comments were from December 2020, I found myself reminiscing. In December 2019, Rabbi Steve visited Charlotte right before the URJ Biennial in Chicago. It was also the time leading up to the World Zionist Elections, and he was able to share the importance of how deeply the Reform and Conservative movements engage in seeing a Jewish and democratic Israel that cares about the issues of pluralism, equality, and freedom.

"Because of your tremendous turnout and Jewish votes in the Carolinas, Israel experienced a victory; however, the pandemic broke out, and the results released in March 2020 were not as widely shared. We were allotted 152 mandates out of 525 for the World Zionist Congress. The largest Zionist party in the United States, ARZA/Vote Reform and Reconstructionist Movement, was the clear winner with



Rabbi Steve with the congregation

nearly 10,000 votes ahead of the next nearest slate, increasing our vote by an impressive 50%."

Looking back, we were not only able to spend time with Rabbi Steve here in the Carolinas but also were able to attend his lecture in Chicago. He said, "If we study the Bible, we need to know about Israel." He described the seven species listed in the Bible as wheat, barley, grape, fig, pomegranates, olive (oil), and date (honey) found in Deuteronomy 8:8 and then held up examples of the symbols and asked, "Why these things?" People made guesses, but he explained, "If we were in France, perhaps we would be celebrating with croissants, but the Bible is based in Israel, and these are the elements to remind us of our connection to the land."

This year Rabbi Steve is going to speak to us about similarities and differences between Passover in Israel and here in the Carolinas. All are invited to attend via Zoom on Sunday, March 7 at 9 a.m. EST, which will be 4 p.m. in Israel. Visit our website at www.templesolelSC.org for more information.

We appreciate the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and the allocations that make it possible for beneficiary agencies such as ours to host special speakers. If you didn't make a pledge on Super Sunday, February 14, it's not too late to show your support: <https://jewishcharlotte.org/donate>.

Please join Temple Solel for our virtual second night Passover seder on Sunday, March 28 at 7 p.m. This abbreviated seder is family friendly and will last about an hour. It is a post-dinner event, so join us after your Pass-

over meal to recount the story of our Exodus from Egypt. Pre-registration for this free event is required for all members and any guests by Saturday, March 20. Please register at <http://bit.ly/SolelSeder21>. If you have any additional questions, please email us at info@templesolelsc.org.

29707. For more information see templesolelSC.org, write us at info@templesolelSC.org or call (803) 610-1707.



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Temple Kol Ami Book Club Thrives During Pandemic

By Shari Baum

Reading and learning are certainly central tenets of Judaism. Each Sabbath, a portion from the Torah and the Prophets is read. On Purim, we read the Megillat Esther, and on Passover we repeat the story of our redemption from slavery in the Haggadah. All of this reading is done in a communal setting that encourages debate, analysis, and lively interaction. Thus, with this Jewish value of reading and learning, the Temple Kol Ami book club was started in February 2020 with our inaugural book "Gateway to the Moon." Pre-pandemic, we could meet in person. However, we have not let a pesky virus impede our love for reading and discussions. Luckily, to quote Steven King, "Books are a uniquely portable magic." Our book club meetings have carried

on through Zoom, and we could even have a lovely outdoors, socially distanced gathering on a crisp, fall afternoon.

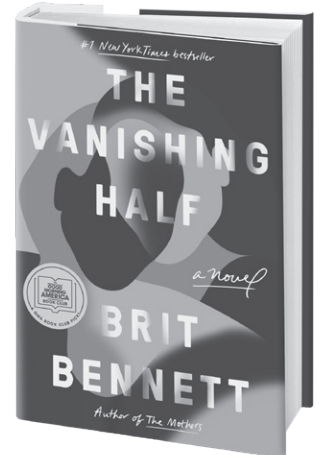
Our books have run the gamut from Jewish historical fiction to personal memoirs. We have decided that all book selections do not need to have Jewish content, but we hopefully have great content to engender a thought-provoking discussion. Most recently, we had a wonderful discourse on "Finding Chika" by Mitch Albom (last year's Main Event speaker) led by Rabbi Bruce Aft. Next up is the #1 New York Times bestseller "The Vanishing Half" by Brit Bennett. We will meet via Zoom on March 21 at 7 p.m. and would love for you to join us! Please email us at yorksynagogue@gmail.com for the Zoom link. Book club meetings are generally every



two months, so keep an eye on our calendar at www.templekolamisc.org for future dates and book selections.

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 Re-

form congregation comprising Jews from diverse backgrounds. We hope you will join us soon at one of our virtual services (first and third Fridays of the month) and find your Jewish home in our welcoming community.



"The Vanishing Half" is Temple Kol Ami's book club pick for March.

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Get Excited for Passover 5781 With Temple Beth El

By Rabbi Dusty Klass
Temple Beth El

Crisis breeds creativity. While all of us sitting at our Zoom seder tables last year hoped Passover 2021 would look different from Passover 2020, we will still gather over Zoom for seder and services. However, a year of pandemic living has taught us all a couple of things, and we are excited to get even more creative with all of you for Passover this year!

Our TBECLT Gateway will serve as our Passover hub, as it

has for many of our 5781 holidays thus far. It will be fully updated with events and programming, along with seder supplements and other resources for planning your own seder, including a particularly special handout for kids (of all ages) to use as part of our community second night seder.

We will kick off our Passover celebrations on Sunday, March 21. Mark your calendars for that afternoon and join us for our first-ever Parking Lot Passover: A Drive-Through Seder Experience! Prepare to start Passover on the right foot — er, wheel? — by driving through the different steps of the seder, and leave with treats to help you celebrate at home.

On Sunday, March 28, the first full day of Passover itself, we will begin with a Festival Morning Service at 10:30 a.m. and continue with a Passover Sing-Along with Ms. Patty at 4 p.m., followed by our Temple Beth El Second Night Seder at 6 p.m.

Who will find the afikomen first? You have the whole week to find out — throughout the holiday, all are invited to join in our community-wide Afikomen Scavenger Hunt, presented by our teen youth group, LIBERTY.

We will also join together a number of times to celebrate Passover on Facebook Live. Potential events include an exploration of all of the modern-day additions to the seder plate, a debate about the "right" way to make matzah brei (should it be savory or sweet? The world may never decide), a brainstorm of our favorite matzah pizza toppings, and a charoset taste test.

On Saturday, April 3 at 10:30 a.m. we will gather for a Shabbat Morning and Festival Service with Yizkor — an opportunity to honor and remember all those whose place at the seder table we miss. When the sun goes down that evening, we will offer a final toast to freedom from slavery with a Post-Passover Havdalah Pizza and Pinot.

Chag Sameach — Happy Passover to all!

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event schedule

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

Parking Lot Passover: A Drive Through Seder Experience
Sunday Afternoon

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

Festival Morning Service
at 10:30am

Passover Sing-Along
at 4:00pm

Second Night Seder
at 6:00pm

WEEK OF PASSOVER • MARCH 27 - APRIL 3

Community-wide Afikomen Scavenger Hunt

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

Shabbat Morning and Festival Service with Yizkor
at 10:30am

Post Passover Havdalah Pizza and Pinot
7:00pm



From the Bimah



See Yourself in the Passover Story of Resilience



By Rabbi Asher Knight
Temple Beth El

It's hard to consider that we have lived through more than a year of COVID. Last year at Passover we said, "Mah nishtanah halilah ha-zeh: Why is this night different from all other nights?" But the difference wasn't just in eating matzah. Our first pandemic Passover tasted like a bitter herb dipped twice into saltwater tears. For many, it was the first time celebrating a holiday on Zoom. Others faced the holiday with isolation, loss of employment, and all the unknowns that lay ahead. As novel as Passover was last year, each of us carried on in the uncertainty of an unfolding pandemic and in the hope of a temporary disruption.

A year later, we will ask the question again. Our lives have changed in so many ways. Each of us has struggled with the ongoing pain and trauma of a world upended. We are cogni-

zant of the distress, damage, and losses felt by many in our community. We've been pulled in a million directions: health hyper-vigilance and surrendering to what's beyond our control, staying hopeful, and grieving lives that have been dramatically altered or lost altogether. We've had to educate our children, keep our jobs, and find ways to relax as we spend day after day, week after week, physically distanced.

The Passover Haggadah provides an important framework for the resilience of our people. The Haggadah explains, "B'chol dor vador chiav adam lirot et atzmo k'ilu hu yatza mi-mitzrayim. In each and every generation, a person is obligated to see oneself as if he or she exited from Egypt." We aren't the first generation to celebrate Passover during difficult times. We are descendants of people who observed Passover through Babylonian and Roman persecutions. It was our families that observed Passover during and after the Crusades, pogroms, and the Holocaust. It was our families that made their way through dark and painful moments, choosing to elevate a timeless story of redemption, freedom, and the will to overcome.

If there is ever a year when we need to place ourselves inside of the Passover story — to see ourselves as though we had

personally exited from Egypt — it is this year. One of the ways that we create resilience is through the stories we tell and through the heritage we choose to lift up. Our lives have changed dramatically. Realities hit us over and over again in waves. This year, we can see ourselves in the Passover story.

We each experienced Egypt moments of pain, Exodus moments of hope, and Sinai moments of connection. We have learned and grown. Passover is about that rebirth, the budding of newness that reminds us of

the resilience that lies within each of us and within our community. We are the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of people who chose to worship a compassionate, loving, and gracious God, who gave life and supported them upon their own journey through darkness. Our current journey is challenging in its own right. Passover beckons to us to make our way boldly. As Michael Walzer wrote in "Exodus and Revolution," "Standing on the parted shores of history we still believe what we were taught

before we ever stood at Sinai's foot, that wherever we go it is eternally Egypt, that there is a better place, a promised land; that the winding way to that promise passes through the wilderness. There is no way to get from here to there except by joining hands, marching together."



Lessons From the Five Cups



By Rabbi Michael Wolk
Temple Israel

It is hard to believe that it has been almost a year since last Passover. When we planned our seders in April 2020, we were at the beginning of this terrible pandemic and did not truly understand just how much suffering we would experience and how long it would take to work our way to freedom and normalcy. At this time last year, Zoom was something novel, and we felt a degree of empowerment in using technology to overcome the dangers that prevented us from celebrating Passover together even while we missed our family. But this year, we are tired of Zoom. A year of social distancing has exhausted and demoralized us, and we just want to be free. As more and more of us get vaccinated, we can see the path to freedom, but we are not there yet. Too many of us are still in danger.

At this moment in our story, we should focus on the lesson of the five cups of wine. At each

seder, we drink four cups of wine and leave a fifth, the cup of Elijah, untouched on the table. While the multiple cups of wine make the seder more entertaining, they also have religious significance. When God promises to redeem our ancestors from Egyptian slavery in the book of Exodus, God uses four verbs: VeHotzeiti (I will free you), VeHitzalti (I will deliver you), VeGa'alti (I will redeem you), VeLakachti (I will take you). Tradition teaches that each one of these verbs represents a level of redemption from slavery because the redemption did not happen all at once; moving from a life of oppressed slavery and fear in which our ancestors could not make their own choices to being a free and confident people takes time and development. The first level of freedom was the salvation from harsh labor, which took place when the plagues started. The second level was salvation from servitude on the day the Israelites left Egypt. The third level was the splitting of the sea when the Israelites realized that they no longer had to be afraid of the Egyptians. Finally, the fourth level of redemption took place at Sinai when the Israelites became the Jewish people in a relationship with God that included responsibilities we were obligated to fulfill. When we drink a cup of wine at the seder for each step toward redemption, we are celebrating that we have reached a new level of freedom. The Cup of Elijah represents an additional level of freedom that we have yet to attain.

As we mark the second Passover of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will not yet feel free, as most of us will be celebrating virtually. At Temple Israel, Cantor Lissek and I will be leading a Zoom seder on the second night of Passover. It is not what I want to be doing, but it will enable us to come together for one of our most beloved rituals. But even as we are not yet fully free, it is important to mark how much closer we are to freedom than at this time last year. The Israelites were quick to lose faith in Moses and in God when Pharaoh did not set them free immediately. Though it would be easy for us to take a nihilistic approach to our situation and say that nothing matters if we cannot go back to our old lives right now, we should instead continue to have faith in the advice of our public health professionals and celebrate the miracles that are the new vaccines.

In the Haggadah we read, "This year we are slaves, but next year we shall be free." We chant this aspirational line even as we enjoy our festive seders. I would add a new verse for this Passover — this year we are socially distanced from those we love, but next we shall all be together.



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

In February's edition: Israel's latest COVID-19 treatment had received worldwide acclaim.

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From the Bimah



Passover Equates Freedom, How Do We Define Freedom?



By: Rabbi Yossi Groner
Congregation Ohr HaTorah

Passover by all measures is a monumental and well-known holiday. Whatever the level of observance, Jews from most backgrounds know that this holiday is important to us as a people.

We could categorize three approaches to Passover: 1) philosophical and conceptual, 2) emotional and sentimental, and 3) practical and ritual.

I would like to start from the third category and journey to the first category.

The practical is what most people are engaged in, as actions speak louder than words. The mere thought of Passover brings to mind all the extensive preparations necessary to ensure a proper and kosher Passover, such as cleaning, scrubbing, and ridding the house of all things chametz. Add to that all the shopping for kosher Passover foods and all the cooking and prep. Along with that come the rituals of the night of Pesach with the matzah, wine, and all the seder needs.

The emotional part of Passover is centered on family and friends who gather annually to celebrate the holiday together. For centuries, the Passover seder served as the multigenerational event of the year, absent Bar/Bat Mitzvahs or weddings. There is a high sentimental value placed on these family gatherings, as the structure of the seder is to have the children involved by asking the four questions or deal-making with the afikomen.

The philosophical aspect of Passover, which is the driving force of the holiday, is the idea of freedom. After all, Passover marks the liberation of the ancient Israelites from their Egyptian bondage some 3,300 years ago. The concept of liberation and freedom is thematic throughout the Haggadah and also forms the basis for many of the rituals

observed on the night of Passover.

The first passage of the Haggadah after the four questions begins with the words "Avadim Hayenu L'Pharaoh b'Mitzrayim: We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and G-d took us out with a mighty hand." The text continues, that if not for this miraculous act of G-d, we would have still been enslaved to the Pharaohs in Egypt. The miracle of Passover was the first event that allowed for the abolishment of slavery, which broke the chains of bondage of the ancient Israelites and eventually of slaves in later generations.

Later in the Haggadah we say that in each and every generation we are mandated to see ourselves as being liberated from slavery and experiencing freedom as if it were just granted to us. In other words, Passover breaks the oppressive act of human slavery. Every year on the night of Passover, we need to reflect on the concept of freedom and be thankful to G-d for granting us this basic human right of being a free people.

Freedom comes in two forms: freedom from external control and freedom from internal slavery. Both freedoms are important, as true freedom can only be achieved when we are free externally and perhaps most importantly, free internally. Academics refer to this as personal freedom. This is achieved when a person realizes that he or she is under the influence of society and decides to rise above it by reaching deep within and being authentic with the inner soul.

People can be free externally yet completely enslaved internally. Others can be enslaved externally yet free internally. Two examples from the 1970s come to mind, and although a bit extreme, they highlight the difference between the two freedoms quite well.

Howard Hughes, one of the richest and most influential people in the world, had all the material riches imaginable at his fingertips. Yet he was enslaved to his own fears and phobias to the point that he lived as a recluse in his later years.

On the other side, Natan (Anatoly) Sharansky, famous Refusenik, who was incarcerated by the Soviets for his pro-Israel activities and was sent to the

infamous Gulag, saw himself as the most liberated person in the world. His actions and behavior reflected this sense of independence even when he was locked up in solitary confinement. Sharansky proudly displayed his Jewish ideals and did not see the chains of prison as a hindrance

Internal freedom is achieved when a person is free from inner apprehension that restricts them from following the call of their inner soul. Internally free people are not driven by what their peers will say. When a Jewish person pursues their Jewish fulfillment with clarity and confidence and are not deterred by peer pressure or "What will my neighbors say," they are living the freedom ideal.

to express himself freely and to live accordingly. In some ways, he was more free than Howard Hughes.

Internal freedom is achieved when a person is free from inner apprehension that restricts them from following the call of their inner soul. Internally free people are not driven by what their peers will say. When a Jewish person pursues their Jewish fulfillment with clarity and confidence and are not deterred by peer pressure or "What will my neighbors say," they are living the freedom ideal.

Internally free people are honest with themselves, are authentic to their core, and do not live lives solely to impress others. Personally free people have a healthy self-awareness of who they are and are realistic in their self-assessment of what they can or cannot do.

On Passover night we declare our freedom, not only from external oppression, but also from internal slavery. How does one reach this level of freedom? Judaism points us to our souls, the

G-dly entity within us, the inner core of me, which is the authentic me.

Our goal in Judaism is to sync our soul and its spiritual pursuits with our body and our materialistic pursuits. By harmonizing our divine spirit that dwells in our soul with our physical needs, we come to a balanced way of living that helps us thrive and soar in an unrestricted manner.

This is the freedom we strive to celebrate on Passover. Happy and kosher Passover to all.



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From the Bimah



Gin or Violin: Let the Freedom Begin



Rabbi Chanach Oppenheim
Charlotte Torah Center

A Jewish student at Queens University told me that one evening while walking on campus, he found a barely conscious female student drunk on the ground covered in her own vomit. He turned her sideways and called 911, and she was rushed to the hospital. He later discovered that she had been away from home for the first time and was having a challenge handling the freedom.

We all crave freedom. Children complain they don't like being told they have to go to bed. Teens say there are too many rules at home and school. Middle-aged people talk of mid-life crisis and how they would

like the freedom to explore the world, have new relationships, and not be tied down to job and family. Older people don't like being told by their children how they should spend the remainder of their lives or how irresponsible they are with their health; they want to be left alone — free. Passover is the holiday of freedom, but what does that mean?

In Hebrew, Egypt is called Mitzrayim, meaning limitation or constriction. We all have our personal Egypt — the demons that constrict and limit us such as resentment, fear, discontentment, laziness, arrogance, low self-esteem, and other monsters that dominate our thinking and limit life's choices. To lead an emotionally productive and fulfilling life, we need to leave our personal Egypt by learning to overcome the limitations and constraints of our past.

But freedom has to be coupled with responsibility. Freedom that is merely the absence of restriction will not bring a person to fulfillment. Rabin-dranath Tagore, 1913 Nobel Laureate in literature, gives a metaphor:

Freedom alone doesn't give us purpose; it is the condition allowing us to actualize our purpose, but it is not a goal unto itself.

"I have on my table a violin string. It is free to move in any direction I like. If I twist one end, it responds; it is free. But it is not free to sing. I take it and fix it into my violin. I bind it, and when it is bound, it is free for the first time to sing."

We make a mistake when we confuse freedom with purpose. The violin string has freedom when it rests on the table, but it has no purpose. The only way to give purpose to the string is to restrict it by binding it to the frame of the violin. Freedom alone doesn't give meaning or purpose; it is the condition allowing us to actualize our purpose, but it is not a goal unto itself.

The reason the Exodus from Egypt had to be coupled with the giving of the Torah is because discipline and commitment are prerequisites for using freedom effectively. One needs a system-

atic ideology of values in which vested interests or challenging confrontations don't destroy one's aspirations.

In "Man's Search for Meaning," Viktor Frankl, the Austrian psychiatrist who survived Auschwitz, said that aside from food, the greatest human need is meaning. We live in an era of unprecedented personal autonomy and freedom, but has it made people happier or more fulfilled? Since the end of WWII, the suicide rate has quadrupled for men and doubled for women. Reuters Health reported that "suicidal thinking, severe depression, and rates of self-injury among U.S. college students more than doubled over less than a decade." What are we to make of this? Millions of people, especially young people, have freedom but aren't sure what to do with it. No amount of unbridled behavior, money, or career opportunity seems to provide them with a sense of purpose. They are merely given tools to prepare them for college and a career, and although we all need these tools, we should realize their limitations. A hammer and saw are necessary to

build a house, but the house is the goal, not the tools. When the Jews left Egypt, they were free, but what good is freedom (the tool) without purpose?

Where do Jews get meaning? Since the 60s, Jews have traveled to Tibet, dwelled in ashrams, or joined movements promising to change the world in their search for meaning, but one doesn't need to search farther than our own tradition to find it. We have a guide that has given purpose and meaning and that has withstood persecution, pogrom, and Holocaust as well as eras of providence and good fortune.

Are you a violin string producing beautiful music, or are you lying on the table — free but not free to produce music of your soul? This Passover, try giving your own people and their books of timeless wisdom a chance to help you create your soul's unique music. Call your rabbi to find out how.



Within Each of Us Is a Piece of All of Us



By Rabbi Rachel Smookler
The Ruach

You know it's time to find a new Haggadah when many of the pages are stuck together by what appears to be charoset that fell from the spoon on its way to the Hillel sandwich, when words on the pages are blurred by errant wine drops, which most likely fell off of the pinky fingers of family and guests over the years on their way to dotting the rims of their plates during the recitation of the ten plagues. I realized the need for an updated Haggadah as I prepared to write this article, searching for one of my favorite paragraphs we read during the seder:

"B'khol dor vador khayavim anu lirot et atzmeynu k'ilu yatzanu mimitz'rayim."

In every generation, it is our duty to consider ourselves as if we had come forth from Egypt."

This year, unlike other years when this paragraph feels purely allegorical, I have a new way to understand these ancient words. This is because, during the past year, my husband and I decided to finally get the ancestry test we had always talked about ordering. A few weeks after spitting into a test tube, first my husband's results came back, and the very next day, I received mine. I was so excited to open my 23andMe app which shows the breakdown of your complete DNA profile, along with health reports.

What caused me to think about another important piece in our Passover narrative was the fact that when I opened up my ancestry report, although evidently 99.5% of my genetic makeup is labeled as Ashkenazi Jewish, I was able to see that my trace ancestry contained percentages of "Broadly West African, Native American and finally, Peninsular Arab."

Passover came early for me this year and I was able to fully internalize the verses in our Haggadah from Torah which relate back to the Passover story. Upon entering the Land (Israel) which God has given us, we are commanded to recite the following:

"My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. We cried to the Eternal,

the God of our ancestors, and the Eternal heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. The Eternal freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents, bringing us to this place and giving us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey." (Deuteronomy 26:5-8)

Who knows whether or not the genetic results I received are accurate? But what they did do for me, were to remind me of what I already knew — that our ancestors lived in Egypt, (Africa) for hundreds of years and that our Haggadah teaches us to go back and back and back in our history, retelling our journey every year, remembering our humble beginnings. Within each of us is a piece of all of us. There is no concept of the "other" and there is no room for thoughts of the "other" in all of Judaism. The verse from Deuteronomy really is the entire Haggadah in a nutshell.

These words should be highlighted at all of our seders this year and every year.

May your Passover be filled with health, reflection and joy.





From the Bimah



From Bondage to Freedom Continued



By Rabbi David Lipper
Temple Kol Tikvah

In "Idylls of the King," Tennyson references a story of a lance fashioned from wood that was "storm strengthened on a windy height." It came from a tree standing lone and solitary on a deserted mountain, battered and beaten by the wind's fury. Summer and winter, it stood strong against the fiery blasts of summer heat and the snow and ice of the winter's chill. Ice and snow, wind and rain — all were beaten back by this most sturdy of trees. The roots held fast; their grasp triumphed over every condition that sought to uproot them.

Here we have an important parable for life. Storms rise, vent their fury over our lives and leave for certain their telltale scars. But they also leave behind an impenetrable strength born in the crucible of life and create qualities of strength unimaginable. Stored deep within us, often beyond our own understanding, is a fountain of strength that when pushed to the limits of our own comprehension, reaches out and grasps hold of us and carries us through the storm.

Had we simply turned away in our darkest moments, we might have left, and our culture would have been sublimated into the general society, forever ending the Jewish journey of life. Rather, our approach to dark days and difficult times is told by the philosopher Philo when he writes, "Blessed are they to whom it is given to resist with superior strength the weight that would pull them down." (Philo)

Not only do the quiet, fruitful times of life make us grow, but more often than not, our inner growth comes from the battles in life's ordeals and disasters. Storms are a natural component of life on this planet. Similarly, they are a part of our own personal journey as the storms of life rage against our security and safety. Whether we, like Tenny-

son, can fashion a lance from the storms of our life, or fall victim by our lack of defense, depends on the quality of our spiritual resources and the faith stories and practices we are able to muster to our aid.

The Exodus story is the most important story in our people's past and present. The story is much more than the recollections we share sitting at our homes while munching on matzah. The story of Moses and the Israelites and the burning bush must have had an impact on Tennyson, for the bush in our story is forged in the fires of faith and watered with the tears of our people who sought refuge from the pain and struggle of their lives.

To take us back in time, Abraham, that towering figure of Genesis who left all behind in search of a new home and a new connection to God, is pulled stage by stage from the wealth and security of his father's home in Ur and then Haran to the far desert reaches of the Fertile Crescent. He travels beyond the Pale of Settlement and finds himself caught in the "liminal." That was the space between two worlds, the world of his father and the safety and security of family and the world of Egypt where food was once again abundant. Keeping with the theme of "you can never go back," Abraham presses forward toward Egypt, forever changing the course of human history and especially the history of his family and people.

Abraham opened the door to Egypt and, like the proverbial Pandora's Box, opened the gates of Egyptian bondage. For the next 430 years, Egypt and Isra-

Storms rise, vent their fury over our lives and leave for certain their telltale scars. But they also leave behind an impenetrable strength born in the crucible of life and create qualities of strength unimaginable. Stored deep within us, often beyond our own understanding, is a fountain of strength that when pushed to the limits of our own comprehension, reaches out and grasps hold of us and carries us through the storm.

elite hegemony become the buzz words through which generations of Talmudic and biblical scholars would funnel the longings of our people. First for food, then for freedom, our people sought the guidance and direction of a higher power. Their hope found in the voice from a bush, solitary and lonely, burned but not consumed, hardened by nature, much like the tree of Tennyson's youth and the staff, forged from its branches and watered with the cries of a people in search and in need.

Along came the man, Moses. He heard the cry of centuries of pain and suffering. He sensed the ground shudder while the restless souls of generations cried from beyond this world for rest. He emerged into the world with a conscience hidden from his grasp, and as he matured, the

sparks of that conscience lit his soul afire, and he found himself standing before the reflected image of himself in that lonely, solitary bush growing out of a craggy rock. From that bush flowed words that would ring true to this day, "Shlach et Ami/ Let my people go." To Moses we now turn and to the message of hope and redemption that he carried within.

This is the essence of the Exodus narrative. It is focused on the desire of individuals and then a people to be pulled from a bondage that has held them captive toward freedom that will allow them to be the "masters of their fate," as Henley wrote. This story defines us as a covenantal people, and in it is a lesson that continues in our lives today. We stand on the liminal, that moment between what was and what will be. For us to step forward, we need courage and conviction.

Moses holds the staff out over the waters. I like to think that it was a branch taken from the bush he had found in Sinai so many years prior. It has become an extension of him. As he holds it aloft, the sea parts, exposing the dry seabed. And so, following Moses, we step forward. It is a long and difficult journey. Water splashes us on each side; it is our mikvah. The cleansing waters of the sea surround us and in many ways wash the past away. We are no longer who we were when we first stepped foot into those waters. We are dry, but the tears of joy run down our faces as a far bank appears just beyond the long column of people. Step by step we traverse the dry ground, now soaked with the tears of our brothers and sisters. We left the tears of slavery behind to embrace the joy of this moment.

As Moses was drawn out of the water, so too we are drawn out of our bondage. From the biblical narrative, bondage was mainly a physical struggle against oppression. But all of us can now see there was a spiritual component to that same bondage. For us, living three-plus millennia since that moment on the mountain, we are far beyond the physical servitude of Egyptian slavery. Living in the third decade of the 21st century, we know well the pain of history and the struggles through time of our people in lands near and far. We have journeyed through oppression and exile, time and again confronting the forces that would have destroyed us.

Martin Buber sought to teach a philosophy of life built around the concept of covenantal dialogue. His view was that we have levels of relationships in our lives, casual and intimate. It is in the most intimate of relationships that we gain the deepest insight into our partners and ourselves. He called that an "I/Thou" moment. Buber felt we must, in order to thrive in the world of faith, focus our efforts on creating an intimacy with God — that it was through our relationship with God, in the most personal and profound way, that we could find the path to true living and sacred redemption. Redemption is found not by fleeing from one's bondage but by facing it with a partner, for in that sacred partnership is found the strength to survive all bondage.

In the Exodus story, God finds the Israelites in our suffering because we never broke the covenant or gave up our faith. God was present in our lives, and we turned daily for God to help. God heard our cries, and God's answer was the greatest redemption ever experienced.

For us today, the question about our own deliverance from our own bondage moments hangs on the relationship we have built with God in our own lives. A terrible virus may afflict us, oppression may once again rear its ugly head, new bondages may come, but Judaism teaches that there is always a sunrise after darkness. The key to seeing that sunrise is our faith in that Divine relationship that guides and sustains us in both good times and bad. Storms will come and go, life will deal us inequities, we may stumble and fall, but with our faith in God and our belief in the renewing relationship with God, we shall stand tall and grow.

May the Holy One of blessing guide your way, and may you and yours make the journey from bondage to redemption.

Have a Zissen Pesach!

The inspiration for this piece can be drawn to a remarkable sermon written by A. A. Steinbach entitled "Through Storms We Grow," published in 1964. A copy of his collected sermons holds a prominent place in my rabbinic library.



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TORAH TOTS



BIM BAM SHABBAT AND PASSOVER FUN!

Friday, March 12, 5:30 P.M.

Join your Torah Tots friends along with Rabbi Kornsgold and Mr. Caleb for a great time celebrating Shabbat and Passover! This will be a brief, fun-filled service for your little ones, including all their favorite songs and dances for Shabbat and Passover! Visit the Upcoming Programs page at templeisraelnc.org to join us!



TEMPLE ISRAEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

TASTE OF GAN (Kindergarten) OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, March 14, 1 P.M. on Zoom

Bring your singing voices and meet Rabbi Kornsgold, Rabbi Wolk & Cantor Lissek to learn what all the buzz is about! Please let us know you are coming by visiting templeisraelnc.org/event/gan-open-house1.html. Families new to Temple Israel who enroll a child in the Gan (K) class will receive a one-time, complimentary one-year family membership.

YOUTH

ANNUAL CHOCOLATE SEDER WITH A TWIST (GRADES 3-12)

Sunday, March 21, 7 P.M.

Ever want to eat your favorite chametz before you completely clean your house for Passover? Join TI Youth Groups for our Annual Chocolate Seder - with a twist! Visit the Upcoming Programs page at templeisraelnc.org to join us!



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

PRE-PASSOVER PASTRIES IN THE PARK

Wednesday, March 24, 6 p.m.

Details forthcoming. For more information or to RSVP for any event, email torahontapclt@gmail.com. If you would like to be added to Torah on Tap's email listserv, email Alan Johnathan at ajohnathan@templeisraelnc.org.

LIFELONG LEARNING

MONTHLY LUNCH N' LEARN WITH RABBI MICHAEL WOLK

Thursday, March 11 - "Getting Ready for Passover"
12 Noon - 1 p.m.

*Due to a very generous grant received from the Carolina Foundation for Jewish Seniors (CFJS), Temple Israel is pleased to offer a free lunch (**) to the first 25 registrants of each class. Lunches can be picked up at the Temple, the morning of each class.

**Recipient must be a full member of Temple Israel, age 65+



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*Purchase pick-ups take place every Tuesday between 9:30 AM - Noon.

*Alternative pick-up arrangements can be made.

PASSOVER SERVICE SCHEDULE - 2021/5781

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

Search for the Hametz (in your home)

SATURDAY, MARCH 27

Fast of the First Born and Shabbat Morning Services, 9:30 a.m.

Candle Lighting, 8:22 p.m.

No Evening Minyan - First Night Seder

SUNDAY, MARCH 28: 1st Day Pesach

Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.

Pesach Evening Service, 5:30 p.m.

2nd Night Annual Community Seder (Virtual), 6 p.m.

Candle Lighting, 8:23 p.m.

MONDAY, MARCH 29: 2nd Day Pesach

Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.

Evening Minyan Service, 7:30 p.m.

Havdallah, 8:24 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30: Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31: Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1: Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

Morning Minyan, 8 a.m.

Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2: Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach

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

Candle Lighting, 7:27 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3: 7th Day of Pesach

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

Pesach Evening Service, 5:30 p.m.

Candle Lighting, 8:28 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 4: 8th Day of Pesach

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

Evening Minyan Service, 5:30 p.m.

Passover Ends/Havdallah, 8:29 p.m.

*All Candle Lighting Times are based on GPS location for Temple Israel.

Let Our People Sing:

**2nd Night Virtual Seder with
Rabbi Wolk and Cantor Lissek**

Sunday, March 28, 6-8 p.m.

Please join us this Passover for Temple Israel's Annual 2nd Night Community Seder*, led by Rabbi Michael Wolk and Cantor Shira Lissek. These are extraordinary times we are living in, but we can all still gather virtually in song and tradition. The Seder will be musical, engaging and fun for the entire family!

This year we are thrilled to offer kosher "Seder-to-Go" options (by Izzy's Catering). For details and/or to place an order, visit the Upcoming Programs page on templeisraelnc.org.

*The 2nd Night Virtual Seder will immediately follow the 5:30 p.m. evening Passover service. To join in, visit the Livestream page on templeisraelnc.org

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR ANY OF OUR PROGRAMS,
PLEASE VISIT TEMPLEISRAELNC.ORG FOR UPDATES UNDER "UPCOMING PROGRAMS."**

Unique Passover Plans at Chabad for 2021

Unique pre-Passover classes will be held on March 16 and 23

On the first night of Passover 2021, March 27, a fifth question might be added: Why is this Passover different from all other Passovers? There are two differences we need to contend with this year. One is the ongoing COVID restrictions, and the second is that Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat.

The planning and preparations for Passover are different this year on many levels. Instead of inviting people to our community seders, we will be bringing our seders to people at home. In addition, since Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat, many of the rituals done on Erev Pesach need to be performed on Thursday and Friday before Passover. The fast of the firstborn is observed on Thursday, March 25. Subsequently, the Siyum of a Talmudic Tractate is held on Thursday morning to help people avoid the fast (to learn more about this, visit Chabadnc.org/Siyum). Although the consumption of chametz ends on Shabbat morning, the burning of the cha-metz is held on Friday,

March 26, before 12:26 p.m.

Also, the Shabbat day meal, which includes challah, must be concluded by 11:23 a.m. This causes our Shabbat morning service to begin at 7:30 a.m.

To help our community prepare for these out-of-the-ordinary pre-Passover rituals, and also to gain a better understanding of the Passover seder, Chabad of Charlotte will conduct two unique Passover classes on two consecutive Tuesdays, March 16 and 23 at 8 p.m. via Zoom. The classes will be led by Rabbi Yossi Groner of Chabad of Charlotte.

The two classes will be filled with tips, guides, and fun facts about this year's unique calendar as well as important and helpful information on how to conduct a seder at home.

To register for the class, please send an email to rabbicohen@chabadnc.org or call our office at (704) 366-3984.

Chabad to distribute Passover Kits to local families

Chabad of Charlotte is reaching out to shut-ins or anyone in need of Passover kits for the Passover seders. In addition to



Shmurah matzo available through Chabad

the Passover kits, Kosher Charlotte will be offering an extensive Passover menu from the Kosher Charlotte kitchen at the Epstein Family Chabad Center. Kosher Charlotte is a subsidiary of the Charlotte Jewish Day School and can be reached through its website at kosher-charlotte.com.

Shmurah matzo available through Chabad

A beautiful tradition in many Jewish communities is the use of round shmurah matzo for the Passover seder. One of the reasons for this custom is that shmurah matzo is the closest replication of the original matzo the Israelites ate when they left Egypt in haste. This is especially true of the hand-baked shmurah matzo where no machinery is used and the matzo is prepared and baked by hand in the old-fashioned way.

In addition, a reason we use shmurah matzo is that it is baked with extra supervision and care, which begins from the time of selecting and milling the grains for wheat, and continues through the final process of baking the matzo. Thus the name shmurah, which means guarded. The matzo is made of only two ingredients, natural unbleached wheat and pure well water. The entire process of baking the matzo, including the mixing and kneading, needs to be completed in less than 18 minutes.

The matzo is baked in an old-style brick oven fired by wood

logs, which reaches very high temperatures. The average time it takes to bake the matzo is less than three minutes. The matzo bakery shuts down production every 18 minutes and goes into a total scrub down. After a careful inspection of all the hand equipment, the bakery starts up again. The oven remains fired up all day as the intense heat helps sanitize the oven interior.

A limited amount of shmurah matzo will be available for sale at Chabad of Charlotte by special order at \$25.00 per pound (whole wheat also available). If you are interested, please visit our website at www.chabadnc.org or call our office at (704) 366-3984.



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Community Passover Schedule 2021/5781



Chabad of Charlotte

Tuesday, March 16, 8 p.m.
Tuesday, March 23, 8 p.m.
Rabbi Yossi Groner of Chabad of Charlotte will lead two classes to help prepare for this unique Passover. The two classes will be filled with tips, guides and fun facts about this year's unique calendar as well as important and helpful information on how to conduct a seder at home.
To register for the class, please send an email to rabbico-hen@chabadnc.org or call our office at (704) 366-3984.



Temple Beth El

Sunday, March 21, Afternoon
Parking Lot Passover: A Drive Through Seder Experience
Sunday, March 28, 10:30 a.m.
Festival Morning Service
Sunday, March 28, 4 p.m.
Passover Sing-Along with Ms. Patty
Sunday, March 28, 6 p.m.
Second Night Seder

Week of Passover
Community-wide Afikomen Scavenger Hunt
Saturday, April 3, 10:30 a.m.
Shabbat Morning and Festival Service with Yizkor
Saturday, April 3, Time TBD
Post Passover Havdalah Pizza and Pinot
www.tbectgateway.com



Temple Kol Ami

Sunday, March 28, 6:30 p.m.
Second Night Virtual Community Seder
All welcome!
E-mail yorksynagogue@gmail.com for Zoom link.



Temple Kol Tikvah

March 8, 6:30 p.m.
Virtual Multigenerational Women's Seder, sponsored by Temple Kol Tikvah Sisterhood.
March 14, 4 p.m.
Ganza Mishpacha: Pesach How-to

Virtual Workshop for Families, Sponsored by the Caring Circle at Temple Kol Tikvah
March 28, 10:30 a.m.
Virtual Pesach Morning Worship Service
March 28, 6 p.m.
Virtual Seder, sponsored by Temple Kol Tikvah. Cost: \$54 for family of four (members), \$72 (non-members) Includes food and haggadot
April 3, 10:30 a.m.
Virtual Pesach Yizkor Service



Temple Israel

Friday, March 26
Search for the Hametz (in your home)
Saturday, March 27
Fast of the First Born and Shabbat Morning Services, 9:30 a.m.
Candle Lighting, 8:22 p.m.
No Evening Minyan - First Night Seder
Sunday, March 28
First Day Pesach
Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.
Pesach Evening Service, 5:30 p.m.

Second Night Annual Community Seder (Virtual), 6 p.m.
Candle Lighting, 8:23 p.m.
Monday, March 29
Second Day of Pesach
Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.
Evening Minyan Service, 7:30 p.m.
Havdallah, 8:24 p.m.
Tuesday, March 30
Third Day of Pesach
Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach
Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 31
Fourth Day of Pesach
Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach
Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 1
Fifth Day of Pesach
Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach
Morning Minyan, 8:00 a.m.
Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, April 2
Sixth Day of Pesach
Hol Ha'Mo-ed Pesach
Shabbat and Pesach Evening Service, 6:15 p.m.
Candle Lighting, 7:27 p.m.

Saturday, April 3
Seventh Day of Pesach
Shabbat and Pesach Morning Service, 9:30 a.m.

Pesach Evening Service, 5:30 p.m.
Candle Lighting, 8:28 p.m.
Sunday, April 4
Eighth Day of Pesach
Pesach Morning Service (Yizkor), 9:30 a.m.
Evening Minyan Service, 5:30 p.m.
Passover Ends/Havdallah, 8:29 p.m.

*All Candle Lighting Times are based on GPS location for Temple Israel.

To join in, visit the Livestream page on templeisraelinc.org



Temple Solel

Sunday, March 7, 9 a.m.
Rabbi Steve Burnstein from Kehilat Birkat shalom in Israel will speak about similarities and differences between Passover in Israel and here in the Carolinas. All are invited to attend via Zoom.
Visit our website at www.temple-solelSC.org for more information

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Safe Travel: What's Next?

By Roni Fishkin
Director of Marketing and Events, Mann Travel

While 2020 was a year of disruptions, cancellations, and disappointments in the world of travel, 2021 is poised to be the year of change and recovery. What will the new normal look like? What can we expect when we are able to safely travel again? The questions loom large for anyone who has missed exploring our world and is anxious to hit the road. Here are a few things we predict:

Technology will plan an even larger role in our travel experiences moving forward. To keep guests safe, most hotels and resorts have implemented contact-less procedures to ensure as little face-to-face interaction during check-in, food deliveries, cleaning, and check outs.

In addition, automatic doors will begin to replace entrances that once required pushing and pulling, and elevators will increasingly use key cards to activate so buttons don't have to be pushed by everyone.

While many of these tech improvements were on their way before the pandemic, now they are poised to become standard more quickly than anticipated.

Flexibility will become a big buzzword for travelers wanting the ability to change plans without paying a hefty price. In the past, many vacations required full payments months before the anticipated travel and often had cancellation penalties resulting in a significant financial hit.

Today, airlines have waived their change fees, and tour companies and cruise lines are offering trip protections and cancellation reinsurance so travelers have the confidence to move forward with plans.

Extended stays will be one of the outcomes of this year's lockdowns. The pent-up desire to travel and look at something besides your own four walls will result in longer vacations for many. While the first time people venture outside might be a two or three-day road trip, soon the desire to travel to more far-flung destinations will take hold. The industry anticipates longer stays also because of the opportunities to work and study remotely.

At the same time, private homes and villas will grow in popularity. The longer stays are easier in a home environment

where you don't have to eat out for every meal. In addition, the safety and security travelers will feel in a private home with just their own family is a huge draw.

The importance of trusted brands will also grow moving forward. Tried and true compa-

ing by opening up the ability to book this far in advance and promoting itineraries and special deals for the future.

The reduced occupancy we will probably see in hotels, and so forth, will undoubtedly make it a bit harder to book your first

choice if you don't plan early. The trend to book far into the future will take hold as travelers understand the best deals and the best options will not happen last minute.

Roni Fishkin is the director of marketing and events at Mann

Travels, a full-service travel agency serving the Carolinas since 1979. With 9 area offices, Mann Travels is the local expert for all travel and vacation planning.



Community Buy-In: An Essential Part of Cemetery's Future

By Craig Goldstein

In my years of living in Charlotte, I have seen the Jewish community evolve into something no one could have imagined. Charlotte, for Jewish individuals, is unlike any other city in the country. How fortunate we are to have all our major organizations on one campus and to have a place that we can feel Jewish without fear or hesitation. There is one crucial institution that many may overlook, as it is not on the Shalom Park campus and is only used during times of grief, The Hebrew Cemetery.

I am sure that many do not realize that one of the first missions of any Jewish community is to establish a place to bury the

dead. Though this duty was fulfilled by the founding members of the Charlotte Jewish community, it is up to the rest of us to ensure that this consecrated ground is properly cared for and left in pristine condition for future generations.

To make this happen, the cemetery needs "buy-in" from the community. The cemetery has a few different ways you can directly engage — become a member, make a donation, and/or buy a burial plot.

It is everyone's responsibility to take part in maintaining and supporting this essential organization. The cemetery is an independent institution supported by its membership. The He-

brew Cemetery board implores everyone to become a member and make a donation. And if you are interested in a burial plot, please call Sandra Goldman at (704) 569-1859 to discuss what options are available and work best for you. As it has often been said during the pandemic, "We are all in this together." These words also apply to the cemetery because it will take all of us to make sure that this sacred place is available for many generations to come.



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Mandating Holocaust Education and House Bill 437: A National Debate

By Talli Dippold

Over the past two decades, legislation mandating Holocaust education in the US has been a topic of intense debate. The value of Holocaust education is not being disputed, but rather the requirements, assessment, and the funds budgeted to support such a mandate are a focus of national and state-wide deliberations.

At the federal level, the Never Again Education Act was signed into law on May 29, 2020. This federal legislation established a new grant program through the U.S. Department of Education to fund training and provide resources for educators to effectively teach the Holocaust and other genocides. The legislation provides \$2 million a year, for five years, to be given to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. This allocated funding will expand USHMM's resources, enabling educators across the nation to access professional development programs and curricula promoting the importance of preventing genocide,

hate, and bigotry against any group of people.

In North Carolina, NC House Bill 437, the Gizella Abramson Holocaust Education Act, passed the NC House of Representatives on April 16, 2019, and was incorporated into the general budget by the NC Senate a month later. The Senate allocated a \$700,000 line item to fund Holocaust curriculum development and teacher training. Much to the dismay of its advocates, Governor Cooper vetoed the proposed budget making it necessary for the Holocaust Education Act to now be reintroduced as a stand-alone bill in both the NC House and Senate.

NC House Bill 437 would have required Holocaust and genocide education to be part of the N.C. public school curriculum. It would ensure that middle and high school students have an understanding of the geography, history, and political systems that allowed the Holocaust to happen. These lessons would be integrated into English, social studies,

and other courses. In addition, HB 437 covered the creation of a state-approved Holocaust Studies elective for middle and high school students.

The North Carolina proposed bill is named for Gizella Abramson, a Holocaust survivor and a founding member of the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust. Ms. Abramson was a tireless educator who shared her testimony with thousands of N.C. students in her lifetime. Her son, Michael Abramson, currently the chairman of the N.C. Holocaust Council, is championing this legislation. If HB 437 was signed into law, the Holocaust Council, in partnership with the N.C. Department of Public Instruction and the N.C. Center for the Advancement of Teaching, would be tasked with curriculum development and teacher training.

Educators from the 16 states where Holocaust education is mandated, have learned that a system of accountability and adequate funding accompanying

such legislation is critical. Without buy-in from local school systems and corresponding teacher training, a statewide mandate fails to advance the goals of Holocaust education.

According to Miriam Klein Kassenoff, the director of the Holocaust Teacher Institute at the University of Miami, "Simply passing a Holocaust bill without appropriate funding can be most detrimental in furthering Holocaust education. Stakeholders must agree that sufficient funding would be available to train teachers and for teachers to access resource material, curriculum, and lesson plans to meet the goals of the mandate in a pedagogically sound way."

Abramson, whose N.C. Holocaust Council has trained about 500 teachers each year since the mid-1990s, offers an alternate perspective. Another path "is to pass the Holocaust Bill and use private and corporate funding to create the curriculum and to train the teachers. An argument can be made that a mandated Holocaust

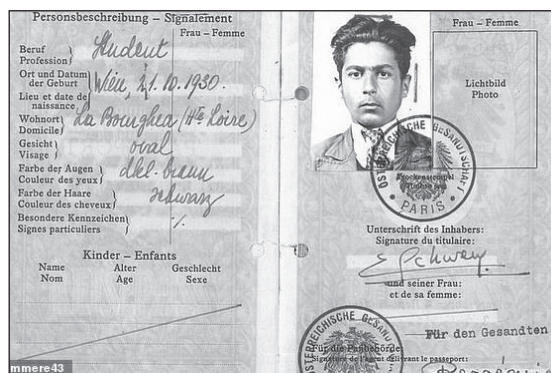
education bill will encourage school systems to ensure that its teachers are trained to teach the Holocaust. Perhaps that's the best we can do right now."

Ultimately, the Holocaust Council has endorsed the strategy espoused by Kassenoff and is working with the General Assembly and the Governor for line-item funding for the Holocaust Education Bill. In the meantime, even without a mandate, hundreds of educators across the state incorporate the lesson of the Holocaust into their curricula utilizing the abundance of available local, statewide, and national resources.

Talli Dippold is an adjunct professor of Holocaust Studies and Associate Director of the Stan Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice at Queens University of Charlotte. dippoldt@queens.edu

The North Carolina Council on the Holocaust is pleased to launch a quarterly newsletter of events and programs relating to Holocaust education in North Carolina. The Holocaust Council is organized under the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and supports North Carolina public school teachers in teaching Holocaust and inclusion curriculum. The newsletter can be accessed at: <https://ncholoocaustcouncilworkshops.org/nc-holocaust-council-newsletter>. Please also review the website that hosts the newsletter at <https://ncholoocaustcouncilworkshops.org>. Please view our regular webinars on the website.

Jewish Man Leaves \$2M to French Mountain Town That Hid Him From Nazis



By Philissa Cramer
(JTA January 2021)

A man who died in December reportedly left a significant gift for the French town that shielded his family and thousands of others from the Nazis during World War II.

Eric Schwam, who died at 90 on Christmas Day, willed his estate to Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, the mountain town where his Jewish family hid for two years, according to CNN.

Le Chambon-sur-Lignon in France is one of only two locales honored collectively by Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust museum for rescuing Jews. (The other is Nieuwlande, in the Netherlands.) The town and its Protestant villagers are estimated

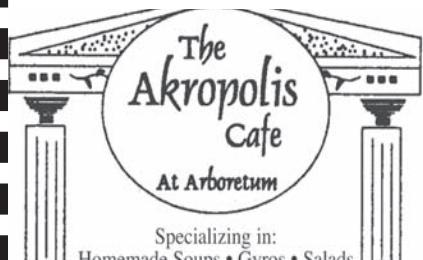
to have saved 2,500 Jews and more recently have taken in refugees from the Middle East and Africa.

The town is seeking more information about Schwam, who was 12 when he arrived in the area with his parents and grandmother as a refugee from Austria. Ac-

cording to French media reports, Schwam — a retired pharmacist in Lyon who married but had no children — had visited the town a decade before his death and indicated to its mayor at the time that he might honor it in his will. But the size of the gift, as much as \$2.4 million, was a surprise.

Schwam requested that his gift be used to fund scholarships and local schools. "We are extremely honored and we will use the sum according to Mr. Schwam's will," Deputy Mayor Denise Vallat told CNN.





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Kashariyot and Their Role in Holocaust Resistance

By Talli Dippolid

March is Women's History month — a perfect opportunity to unearth stories of heroic women from the past whose voices have been historically ignored. Women have always played a critical role in society — in biblical times and in modern times, in times of war and in times of peace, and notably during the Holocaust.

As the Nazis ghettoized the Jewish people from 1939 to 1941 during the Holocaust, a need arose for connection between those in the ghetto and those on the "outside." This life-threatening role of reconnaissance, rescue, and resistance quickly fell to women (as men could be identified by their circumcisions) who became known as kashariyot. The Hebrew word kashariyot comes from the root kasher meaning connection. These women, who were deeply associated with varied youth movements before the war (from political to Zionist), fearlessly and selflessly fulfilled whatever tasks necessary to save their people or help them die with dignity. They lived dual lives. They lived outside the ghetto walls, taking on Aryan identities that allowed them to function as spies; they visited within the ghetto walls, offering comfort and desperately needed resources.

Though it's impossible to truly know the extent of the resistance, we know that it was widespread throughout occupied Europe and that its forms extended far beyond bearing arms to include spiritual resistance. Such acts included creating cultural institutions, providing clandestine educational opportunities, observing religious holidays and rituals, publishing and distributing underground newspapers, and collecting and hiding documents. The devastating outcome has historically overshadowed the incredible attempts made to save and preserve human life and



legacy. It was the heroism of the female kashariyot that made much of this resistance possible.

As conditions became dire and ghettos were being liquidated, the kashariyot were instrumental in obtaining weapons, gathering intelligence, and training those in various youth movements to fight. Their work supported the armed resistance that took place in more than 100 ghettos and camps.

Gusta Davidson Draenger, a courier in Krakow who was known by her Polish alias "Justyna," was captured by the Gestapo. Although she and her husband, Shimshon Draenger, were executed by the Nazis in November 1943, her words live on. From her prison cell, with hands broken from torture she'd endured, she wrote a diary on scraps of toilet paper that were found under the floor of her prison cell after liberation and turned into a book. She professed, "From this prison cell that we will never leave alive, we young fighters who are about to die salute you. May the memories preserved on these scattered bits of paper be gathered together to compose a picture of our unwavering resolve in the face of death."

It is estimated that there were hundreds of kashariyot, but be-

cause of the nature of their work, information is extremely limited. Most were tragically killed in the line of duty. We know that some endured tremendous torture without revealing information that would have jeopardized the missions and work of their comrades.

The kashariyot are unsung heroes who were highly regarded and cherished by leaders of their time, and they deserve to be remembered for their heroism. Elie Wiesel wrote, "One must marvel even more at the fighters and couriers. Instead of falling into despair, they found reasons and strength to help others."

At the Stan Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice, we honor and commemorate the kashariyot not only during

Women's History month but all year. We are committed to educating about the resistance during this horrific chapter of history to further a deeper understanding. Renowned historian Emmanuel Ringelblum wrote, "The story of the Jewish woman will be a glorious page in the history of Jewry..." It is not too late for their page to be written.

Five years ago this winter, we began our work building the Stan Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice. To commemorate our fifth anniversary, we will host a virtual celebration on

Sunday, March 21, at 5 p.m. The evening will be a reflection of our journey. The highlight of the event is the world premiere of the film "I Danced for the Angel of Death, the Dr. Edith Eva Eger Story." You won't want to miss this incredible event as we continue the journey of offering transformative Holocaust, human rights, social justice, Jewish studies, and Jewish life programs to the Charlotte region! To register, please visit our website: Stangreensponcenter.org.

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Bal Taschit and Beyond: Certified Wildlife Habitat

By Lisa Shpritz

During these challenging times, nature has never been more important. Spending time outside and gardening are great ways to unwind and to connect with our wildlife neighbors. Here are some ideas for gardening with children of all ages and then learning how your yard can become a certified wildlife habitat!

Gardening With Children

You can help children create a wildlife habitat garden right outside their door and introduce them to the wonders of the natural world. Gardening for wildlife allows children an immediate way to make a real difference for wildlife and the environment. Adults can help the children:

Make the Garden Their Own

Ask children what sort of wildlife they want to invite to the garden. This will help children identify which plants to include in their garden. For example:

- Monarch butterflies require milkweed and nectar plants
- Birds require plants that provide seeds and berries
- Salamanders require old logs and moist areas

Identify a designated spot for the garden where children are free to dig, plant, and explore with a quiet seat for observing wildlife.

Personalize the garden by building or decorating bird houses, stepping-stones, or other functional artwork for the garden.

Help children purchase a few budding or blooming native plants that already contain nectar to quickly attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators.

Engage the Senses

Plant fragrant, colorful, textured native plants along with herbs. Add grasses for movement and a water feature for light and sound.

Observe, Reflect, Learn

Provide a magnifying glass.

Help kids draft notes in journals, draw pictures, or take photos in the garden to reinforce what they have learned and enjoyed.

Search your neighborhood for these backyard animals:

- Daddy Long Legs
- Robins
- Great Horned Owls
- Monarch Butterflies

Source: <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Create/At-Home/Kids-Garden-for-Wildlife>

Your Yard Can Be a Certified Wildlife Habitat!



If you enjoy time outside, here is a really fun and easy activity for the whole family. By adding a few simple wildlife-friendly elements to your yard, you can be recognized as a certified wildlife habitat by The National Wildlife Federation (NWF)!

Wildlife habitat gardens are a haven for local birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. If you tell NWF how your yard or garden provides habitat, it will recognize it as a Certified Wildlife Habitat. Once certified, you can share your accomplishment and commitment to helping wildlife with your neighborhood by purchasing and posting a Certified Wildlife Habitat® sign.

A habitat needs to provide resources from all the five essential elements: Food, Water, Cover, Places to Raise Young, and Sustainable Practices. If your habitat provides the following for wildlife, then you can be a certified wildlife habitat.

FOOD: Your habitat needs three of the following types of plants or supplemental feeders:

- Seeds from a plant
- Berries
- Nectar
- Foliage/Twigs
- Fruits
- Sap
- Pollen
- Suet
- Bird Feeder
- Squirrel Feeder
- Hummingbird Feeder
- Butterfly Feeder
- Nuts

WATER: Your habitat needs one of the following sources to provide clean water for wildlife to bathe in and to drink:

- Birdbath
- Lake
- Stream
- Seasonal Pool
- Ocean
- Spring
- River
- Butterfly Puddling Area
- Rain Garden
- Water Garden/Pond

COVER: Wildlife needs at least two places to find shelter from the weather and from predators:

- Wooded Area
- Bramble Patch
- Ground Cover
- Rock Pile or Wall
- Cave
- Roosting Box
- Evergreens
- Brush or Log Pile
- Burrow
- Meadow or Prairie
- Dense Shrubs/Thicket
- Water Garden or Pond

PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG: You need at least two places for wildlife to raise their young:

- Mature Trees
- Meadow or Prairie
- Nesting Box
- Wetland
- Cave
- Burrow
- Dead Trees or Snags
- Dense Shrubs/Thicket
- Water
- Water Garden/Pond
- Host Plants for Caterpillars

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES: You need to employ practices from at least two of the three categories below to help manage your habitat in a sustainable way. To help wildlife, we advocate employing one or more practices from each category:

Soil and Water Conservation:

- Riparian Buffer
- Capture Rain Water from Roof
- Xeriscape (water-wise landscaping)
- Drip or Soaker Hose for Irrigation
- Limit Water Use
- Reduce Erosion
- Use Mulch
- Rain Garden

Controlling Exotic Species:

- Practice Integrated Pest Management
- Remove Non-Native Plants and Animals
- Use Native Plants
- Reduce Lawn Areas

Organic Practices:

- Eliminate Chemical Pesticides
- Eliminate Chemical Fertilizers
- Compost

Source: <http://nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Certify>

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 @ShalomGreen_CLT, and visit our website at www.shalomgreen-CLT.org.



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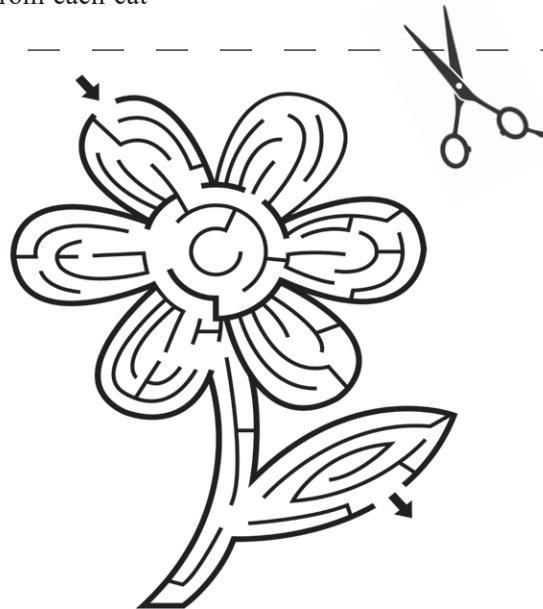
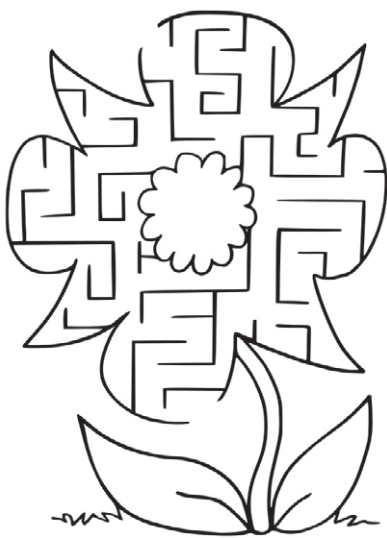

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~ SCHOOL NEWS ~

Judaism in the Preschool: Inspired by Jewish Calendar

By Rachel Berendt, Becca Green and Lindsay Romero

Operating a preschool during the global pandemic has pushed us to explore different ways to bring Judaism to life within our walls. In previous years, the Charlotte Jewish Preschool (CJP) has had a Judaica specialist to focus on Jewish holidays and values each week. This year, we were able to bring Judaism into each and every classroom on a more consistent basis, as we could no longer have a specialist or use a shared space. So how do we do it?

Every classroom teacher takes part in annual Judaic orientation in which we explore the Jewish calendar and learn about the five core values that prop up our school: kavod (respect), kehillah (community), b'tzelem elohim (we are all created in God's image), tikkun olam (repairing the world), and limud (learning). We follow the Jewish calendar when planning our classroom themes and activities, and when there is not an upcoming holiday, our values take a starring role in the classroom. Furthermore, each month our teachers



TK students celebrating Havdallah

meet as a team with the director of education (and former Judaica specialist), Becca Green, to discuss upcoming holidays and brainstorm ideas for use in the classroom. They expertly weave our Judaic curriculum with the Reggio Emilia philosophy of education to develop creative ways to meet the educational needs of all students.

With this strong training as a foundation, teachers then apply what they've learned to their classroom. In every classroom you'll hear students saying the blessings before eating — mezonot before snack and hamotzi before lunch. In one of our 3-year-old classes, students set

their intentions as they prepare for Havdalah on Monday mornings. They each take a moment to do some deep breathing to get in the right frame of mind. The kids decide what they want to inhale (they usually suggest happiness or calm) and what they want to get rid of/exhale (usually unhappiness or frustration). Teachers use the soothing music of Debbie Friedman, and as the music plays, they talk about what kind of week they want to have and what kind of friend, classmate, brother, sister, son, or daughter they want to be.

In a 2s classroom, you can hear teachers making sure everyone in the room has kavod (respect) in his or her heart. Each morning they rub their hand over their hearts and sing the Shema and Modeh Ani in Hebrew and in English. In many classes, mitzvah notes are the highlight of the day and a vital part of their classroom's parent engagement. In Ms. Betty, Ms. Claire, and Morah Rachel's class, the mitzvah tree is currently covered in beautiful snowflakes! Students love hearing what their parents have written about them: One person

was kind to his baby brother, another used good table manners, and one student got dressed for school all by himself — these are all mitzvot because the children performed kibbud av v'em — they made their parents happy.

Our CJP students love to do the mitzvah of tzedakah. Twice this year they have done major collections for the food pantry at Jewish Family Services (JFS) — once at Sukkot and once for Thanksgiving. Around Hanukkah many families sent in gift cards so those who are struggling could have a happy holiday. Our students were filled with joy as they carried the gifts to JFS and handed them over. It's never too soon to teach our little ones to be mensches!



3-year-old class enjoying Tu B'Shevat seder

Our teachers have embraced this opportunity to expand their own knowledge base and bring Judaism to life in their classrooms. You can follow us on Facebook at Charlotte Jewish Preschool or on Instagram @CharlotteJewishPreschool to get an insider look at our classrooms and what our students are up to!



Students celebrating Sukkot



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New Admissions Associate Shares Her Passion for CJDS

By Alison Lerner

Anyone who knows me knows I am a huge fan of the Charlotte Jewish Day School (CJDS). Both my kids graduated from Charlotte Jewish Day School, one in 2009 and the other in 2010. I have remained a lay leader, on the board or a committee, or have helped with a project here and there ever since.

So when I recently mentioned to Mariashi Groner, the head of the school, that I was looking for a part-time job where I could contribute to something meaningful, I could not have been more thrilled with the phone call I received later that day...“How would you like to help manage our admissions?” If I had to create a job for myself, I don’t think I could have come up with a better one!

Talking about the CJDS and the influence it has on our children, their families, and our community has been something I have been doing for years. I am so proud of the education, both Jewish and general, that its students receive. They become life-long learners and adept at critical

thinking in a time at which it has never been more necessary. The Jewish values that are the foundation for that education help create truly ethical future leaders of our community because they have been taught that each person is unique and significant, respected and accepted. Judaica is taught in a way that brings joy to each student. Learning Hebrew adds even more richness — in addition to the cognitive benefits of a second language learned at such an early age. Day school graduates become proud and confident members of their Jewish communities.

I have spent the first few weeks as admissions associate contacting prospective CJDS parents. I have been asking for feedback about their perceptions of school, whether they have questions or concerns, what other schools they might be considering, and so forth. Inevitably, the most engaging and enjoyable part of the conversation is letting them know how wonderful the day school education is and how my personal experience might relate to theirs.



Alison and her family in Israel

CJDS is going to have a transitional kindergarten (TK) class for the first time in many years. For many families, TK is an obvious choice, but for those who have been told by their preschool teachers that their child would benefit from TK, it may be a surprise to hear and a difficult decision to make. When my son Sean was in the 4s and planning to go to CJDS the following year, Fern Sanderson, the then-director of Jewish Preschool on Sardis told us that Sean could use an

extra year before kindergarten — that he was physically small and somewhat emotionally immature. “But he’s so smart! And he’s ready!” I remember crying in her office. Fortunately, I knew enough to realize that she only had Sean’s best interests in mind and that I needed to get a grip! TK was the best thing we could have given Sean at the time — it was truly a gift. He had time to mature, developmentally and emotionally, but was still in a “big kid” environment where he

was being introduced to elementary school.

Sharing stories like this and others with prospective CJDS parents, while learning about what they want for their children, allows me to share my passion about a school that many in our community don’t know that much about. Each family that comes to CJDS is looking for the next step for its children and has specific dreams about what its children will experience. I am fortunate to work with these families to navigate this decision. I can only hope that their children, and the families too, will benefit from CJDS, just as mine did.

If you are considering TK, elementary school, or middle school (yes, you heard me!) for your child anytime soon, please contact Alison at alerner@cjdsschool.org or (704) 366-4558.

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Better Together Is Better Together!

By Haven Lail

When I started at Hebrew High, I was in a pre-adoptive placement with my adoptive family. I was not raised in any religion with my biological family. I quickly fell in love with Judaism when my adoptive mom introduced me to it, and now I am converting with Rabbi Dusty Klass.

I was very nervous starting Hebrew High! I didn't know anyone. I wasn't raised Jewish like everyone else was. I was worried that I wouldn't make any friends. Once I started, I knew it was the place for me! Ever since my first night, I have not missed even one night because I love it so much! As we live in Hickory, it is a long drive to get there, but I don't mind it at all because I learn a lot about Judaism, I'm learning Hebrew, and I have made some good friends.

Last summer, I started participating in a program through Hebrew High called Better Together. Better Together pairs teens like me with senior citizens so that we can learn about one another. In Better Together,

I learned about what it was like growing up Jewish many years ago, and I shared my story of converting and becoming part of a family where my adoptive mom was also converting. I also made a good friend! Bob Jacobson and I have become friends, and I like spending time with him!

Now, every Friday, I celebrate Shabbat with the seniors from the Carriage Club. I lead the Shema every week. Sometimes, my adoptive mom and I make challah and bring it to them. I love all the seniors I've met through Better Together, and I am glad that Hebrew High gave me this opportunity. As part of the Better Together program, there was an essay contest about an experience in Better Together. Below is the essay I submitted and that I won with:

Every Friday, my adoptive mom and I have a tradition. We make a lot of challah, and we deliver that challah to elderly people in our community. I have learned a lot by doing this simple activity with my mom each week, and I really like perform-

ing this mitzvah.

Shortly before the world shut down because of COVID, I met a lady named Ruth. She lives in a senior assisted-living apartment about two miles from my house. Ordinarily we are rushed in our deliveries, but this particular Friday right before Purim, we got up early so the challah (and the hamantaschen) were ready to deliver before 10 a.m.

Miss Ruth opened her door, and I knew I loved her instantly! Her small apartment was as neat as a pin, and there was Judaica everywhere! She invited us in, got us a soda, and we sat down to talk as we (well, mostly me!) ate the hamantaschen. Miss Ruth told us how she grew up Jewish here in the Hickory area. She taught us that the first Jewish family moved here in 1861 and the first permanent Jewish resident of Hickory moved here in 1916. She even helped me with my Hebrew homework! I wished we could have stayed and talked to Miss Ruth all day! Before we left, Miss Ruth taught me all about her Judaica and promised me one of her family menorahs

so I can have an actual piece of Jewish history rather than just the menorahs we bought at Target!

Another senior I met through Better Together is Miss Bella. Miss Bella is one of my favorite people! I have adopted her and her husband as my grandparents, and I go to see them often. I learned that Miss Bella is a convert, just like me! Her life has not been easy. Her first husband abandoned her, and two of her six children died. But Miss Bella is filled with joy, even though her life hasn't been easy.

I learned a lot that Friday. Yes, there are differences between people who are elderly and me. But those differences are small in comparison to our similarities. Like Miss Ruth, I am proud to be Jewish and love Hebrew. I am proud to be a Jew by choice, just like Miss Bella. Also, like Miss Bella, my life hasn't been easy. It's hard to be put in foster care at 12 and adopted at age 14. That story is uniquely mine. But like Miss Bella, I choose to live joyously. Better Together is more



Bob Jacobson and Haven Lail

than the name of the program I am in. Better Together is a reality because we really are better when we are united as one Jewish family. Because we can learn so much from one another and enjoy being together, I know the world really is a better place when we are Better Together!



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~ YOUTH VISIONS ~

Moishe House Launches “Expedition Maker” to Help Find the Next Great Jewish Artist

By Lisa Klig, Director of Moishe House's Camp Nai Nai Nai

Moishe House, the international leader of peer engagement for Jews in their 20s, recently launched Expedition Maker, an immersive, reality TV-style competition show for Jewish creatives, artists, innovators, and designers. Ten “Chosen Makers” from around the world are competing for the prize of \$5,000 over four weeks in back-to-back weekly challenges in which their skills, creativity, and ability to improvise will be on full display. Viewers have the chance to vote for their favorite projects each week and to decide which creators will move on in the competition.

Expedition Maker is the latest production from Nai, the experiential brand powered by Moishe House. Nai encompasses Camp Nai Nai Nai — Moishe House's own Jewish summer camp for adults, and Expedition experiences like Expedition Nai, Expedition For a Cause, and Expedition Love in the Sukkah that have engaged more than 1,800 people from around the world, offering

live and virtual experiences to help Jewish young adults engage safely with one another. Now Moishe House is giving its global audience another fun, interactive way to stay connected and engaged with Jewish culture, inspired by the timeless camp activity: crafts!

“The format of Expedition Maker takes the successful reality TV formula a step further, by giving viewers the opportunity to truly connect and build a community with the contestants,” said Lisa Klig, director at Camp Nai Nai Nai. “Interactive digital experiences have flourished within the Moishe House community, helping us reach more people than ever before.”

The panel of judges is composed of three esteemed leaders of Jewish nonprofit organizations that work with Jewish artists: Rebecca Gruber, founder and di-



EXPEDITION
maker

rector of Asylum Arts; Adina Polen, founder and executive director of Atiq: Jewish Maker Institute; and Yoshi Silverstein, founder and executive director at Mitsui Collective. After the finalists complete their four challenges, the judges will have the final say on which maker receives the grand prize at the finale.

The 10 creators competing in Expedition Maker, who were selected from a pool of nearly 100 applicants from around the world, are creating one project per week in response to a prompt, inspired by a Jewish holiday or that week's Torah portion. They represent nine cities in the United States and Israel and specialties across a wide array of mediums. The 10 competitors include:

- Hadar Cohen, 28, a feminist multimedia artist, educator and healer from Los Angeles, Cali-

fornia

- Kayla Ginsberg, 28, an illustrator and comic artist from Chicago, Illinois
- Yehoshua Hooper, 37, an artist and Jewish educator from Denver, Colorado
- Rachel Jackson, 28, an artist from Somerville, Massachusetts
- Alix Kramer, 25, a master's student and knitter from Chicago, Illinois
- Noam Mason, 22, a gender-queer textile artist and teacher from Worcester, Massachusetts
- Mia Schon, 33, a mosaic muralist from Tel Aviv, Israel
- Hillel Smith, 36, an artist and designer from Washington, D.C.
- Eli Kaplan Wildmann, 37, a designer for theater, urban installations, and tactile visual books from Jerusalem, Israel
- Eugene Zeleny, 31, a Russian-speaking, Jewish mechanical engineer from Newton, Massachusetts

Episodes are streaming weekly from February 21 through March 21, 2021. Alongside each episode will be free interactive playshops in which the audience can learn

a DIY skill from the makers and meet fellow fans. The audience will also vote for the makers they want to move forward each week. To be a voting member of the audience, interested Jewish young adults ages 21-39 around the world must register online to participate.

Audience registration for Expedition Maker is currently open and will run until March 17, 2021. To learn more or to register, visit the Expedition Maker website at www.expeditionnai.com/maker.

Moishe House is the leading organization for engaging twenty-something Jews. For more information, visit <https://www.moishehouse.org/> and follow Moishe House on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.





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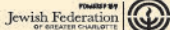
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Charlotte BBYO: Keeping Charlotte Jewish Teens Connected

Teens are not in school, most of their sports activities have been canceled, and through it all, Charlotte BBYO chapters are thriving! Whether meeting in small groups in person or participating in programming on Zoom, the teens have not missed a beat. The chapter leaders have recruited new members, held creative programs, and participated in three high-energy virtual conventions. Charlotte BBYO has two BBG chapters (teens who identify as female) and two AZA chapters (teens who identify as male). BBYO is open to all Jewish teens grades 8-12. For more information, email Eastern@bbyo.org or call (704) 944-6734. Here is a snapshot of their year so far.

Chai Chaverim BBG, Zoe Wojonich, N'siah (president)

Chai Chaverim has had a great first term! Our chapter welcomed 10 new members whom we adore. We've had an amazing mix of virtual and COVID-safe in-person programming. Ear-

lier in the year Chai Chaverim got active and had a blast with outdoor yoga and kickball programs. From Saturday night Havdalahs and Big-Lil family reveals to official board meetings and midterm elections, Chai Chaverim has continued to see big smiles, laughs, and a whole lot of love. Looking forward, we are excited about an upcoming female empowerment program with two BBG chapters from California and Virginia. Our sisterhood is stronger than ever as we look ahead to an amazing second term.

Hank Greenberg AZA, Sam Baumstein, Godol (president)

Despite the setbacks from COVID-19, Hank Greenberg has had a great year. At the beginning of the fall term, we were fortunate enough to run our fall kickoff, a pizza-making competition, and other great in-person programs like Spikeball and Slam Poetry Night. Even though we have shifted to running programs virtually, we have contin-

ued to have great programs and to grow the chapter. Some of our most popular programs that we held over Zoom have included an interactive scavenger hunt, Trivia Night, and Jackbox TV. On a regional level, we have kept busy, improving ourselves as leaders and as Jews by attending Regional Execs, New Member Weekend, Regionals, and most recently, International Convention. We hope to continue building strong bonds, growing the chapter, and taking part in engaging online programs for the next quarter of the year.

Ohavim BBG, Anya Dippold, N'siah (president)

This year Ohavim BBG has had many successful in-person and virtual programs. My chapter has been able to meet in person for fun, socially distanced programs outdoors when COVID cases are relatively low, and we meet virtually when COVID cases rise. We have welcomed 13 new members! In person we have been able to have tons of

fun programs learning about Israel, antisemitism, social justice, and more. In addition, we have had fun programs where we make crafts or play games! When we meet on Zoom, we try to make our programs as fun as possible by dropping off goody bags to members' houses with materials for the program and a special surprise! On Zoom we have held programs like Jeopardy, upcycling old clothes, cookie decorating, and so much more! We look forward to planning more hybrid programs in the upcoming months!

Mickey Barak Aberman AZA, Jacob Russak Godol (president)

Mickey Barak Aberman AZA has been able to sustain and even progress its impact on young, Jewish males despite the difficult times we are all facing. Earlier this year when we were able to meet in person, we had great turnouts at programs such as whiffle ball, Spikeball, and man vs. food. Our chapter

uses competition to enhance the skills of teamwork, grit, and sportsmanship. Currently we are only holding virtual programs on Zoom. We have had programs that include heated debates about sports news in both America and Israel and have also run a widely successful Jeopardy program led by our chapter secretary. Once in-person programs begin again, we have many fun programs planned including paintball, top golf, and educational programs for our members and prospective members.



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Friendship Circle Teen Friends Speak Out

At Friendship Circle, we believe that everyone has a unique purpose and is deserving of genuine friendship. Teen friends are introduced to friends with special needs where they build relationships based on shared interests, respect, caring, and just plain old fun! The celebration of each person's abilities, not disabilities, and an understanding that everyone is special and adds unique value to the world is central to being a teen friend.

The teen friends' commitment and willingness to spend time hanging out and learning from their special friends is highlighted by the fact that none of the teen friends receive any volunteer hours or credits for participation. They participate simply to build friendship. This is a reminder that today's teens are capable of being compassionate and dedicated to making a difference in the lives of every child and adult they meet.

Meet three teen friends as they describe what Friendship Circle and being a friend means to them:

Zach Bershad: Throughout my time volunteering as a teen



Zach hanging out with his special friend

friend with Friendship Circle, I have gained a lot of insight into what it truly means to be a friend. I came into the program expecting to be paired with a buddy and play some games every once in a while; however, in the couple of years that I have been participating, I have developed a much deeper connection with my friend Jacob. Even through the restrictions that the pandemic has brought us, we continue to play hangman (our favorite game) over FaceTime and talk about anything between school

and Disney shows. Being a teen friend has given me the opportunity to learn how essential empathy is in friendship. Although it is often hard to relate to my buddy, every time we talk, I am able to develop more effective communication strategies to grow our friendship. Four years ago, I would get frustrated at the awkward silence that is common while hanging out with my buddy, but part of being a teen friend is learning how to understand the other person on a deeper level through the awkward moments. There is so much personal responsibility to be learned through a genuine friendship, and to me, above all, being a teen friend means creating sincere friendships.

Olivia Potie: Being a teen friend for the past several years has been an awesome experience, and I am so grateful to be part of such a special, caring community. The friendships I've formed at Friendship Circle have taught me how much we can all benefit from showing up for each other, even if it's through the simplest acts like sharing a laugh or just being silly together.



Olivia walking down the Purim catwalk

My friends have also helped me learn so much about myself, like how to embrace my creativity and dance or have fun like no one is watching. Most importantly, before becoming a teen friend, I never considered how much one genuine friendship can mean to someone. But this realization led me to approach all aspects of life in the same way that I approach Friendship Circle programs, by being a good friend to those who need it and always keeping in mind how far true friendship can go.

Ben Green: As an organization filled with endless opportunities for teens looking to develop relationships, Friendship Circle serves as a critical component of Charlotte's thriving teen-friend community. Having been able to engage in various diversified activities, it would go without saying that my position as a teen friend is something I am beyond grateful for. Whether it's an outdoor, drive-through carnival where you're getting soaked by buckets of water or an online baking activity where you're mastering culinary arts, you can always depend on your special friend to be there. As a teen friend, the special friendships I've gained act as a source of growing excitement, granting me something to look forward to as I go about my week. Being able to laugh, reflect upon your weekends alongside another, and share memorable times all represent the unmatched qualities of being a teen friend. Continuing to monitor our teen friend community's growth, I'm looking forward to all it has to offer in

(Continued on page 42)

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Wishing you and yours a healthy and joyous Passover.

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at publix.com/passover.



To Your Health

Conversations About Healthcare Empowerment: When You're Diagnosed With Cancer



By Lorrie Klemons,
MSN, RN, CDP

As we all know, cancer is a devastating disease. It not only is devastating to the patient but also devastates everyone who cares about the patient. Once you have been diagnosed with cancer, your life is never the same. Every ache, every pain, every bump, and every lump make you worry that your cancer is back. Regardless of what type of cancer you are diagnosed with, all persons

with cancer share the same anxieties and fears. Everyone wants the best treatment available. Everyone wants to live.

When you are diagnosed with cancer, you put your fate into the hands of the cancer specialists. They will determine the best form of medical treatment for your cancer, which can include surgery, chemotherapy (drug therapy) or radiation therapy. You may be treated with one or all three of these treatment modalities.

While you must have faith in your doctors, you can also make sure that you are informed about the type of cancer you have. Ask questions. Ask lots of questions. Ask for clarification when you don't understand the answers. Ask how to spell the terminology your doctor uses. Write down your questions before you visit the doctor so you don't forget to ask them. Write down the

answers if you feel you need to. Bring an advocate with you to every appointment. When you are stressed out, it is often hard to concentrate or recall conversations. You may also not ask the important questions. Your advocate will help remind you of the discussion and ask the questions that need to be asked. It is helpful to have the same advocate with you for each doctor visit so that person will be familiar with your illness and the prescribed treatment.

Seek out a second opinion if you feel compelled to do so. Patients do this all the time, and it will not jeopardize your relationship with the primary doctor. Most insurance companies will gladly pay for a second opinion. You will feel more in control of the situation if you get the second opinion, and it will also give you a sense of security assuming that both doctors agree on the

diagnosis and treatment modality. You can become confused if you get two different opinions from two (or more) doctors. At that point you may want to do some research on your own to determine the best course of action to take. Though you may be compelled to crisscross the globe going from doctor to doctor for a cure, this is not to your advantage. It will be too exhausting, too expensive, and too emotionally draining. At some point, you will have to put your trust in one doctor.

Be sure to let loved ones and friends support you in this journey. They can help you physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Do not shut them out. You will need them now more than ever. Don't be ashamed to ask for help. Tell people what you need and how they can help you. You cannot do this on your own.

There are many places where

cancer patients can go for information, resources, and assistance. Some of these include:

The American Cancer Society: (800) 227-2345, www.cancer.org

Cancer Care: (800) 813-HOPE (4673), www.cancercare.org

Cancer Spiritual Support: www.mystronghold.org

Cancer Information Service: (800)-4-CANCER (226237)

CaringBridge: www.CaringBridge.org

Lorrie Klemons, MSN, RN, CDP is a Certified Dementia Practitioner, Patient-Senior-Caregiver Advocate, Educator, Consultant, Speaker, Author, Warrior Mom, and End of Life-Death Doula Reach out to Lorrie for any healthcare advocacy or empowerment needs you might have at lorrieklemons@gmail.com. www.KlemonsHealthCareConsulting.com.

Hearing Aids vs. Amplifiers



Madison Levine

By Madison Levine,
Levine Hearing

Hearing Aids vs. Amplifiers? I get asked this question all the time! According to the Cochlear Center for Hearing and Public Health, it is estimated that approximately 38.2 million Americans grapple with some form of hearing loss. This makes hearing loss one of the most common health complications in the US. Since I believe (and research backs me up here) that hearing better makes you feel better, I want you to understand the merits of using either hearing aids or amplifiers to improve their hearing.

Did you know that hearing aids and amplifiers can look the same, but the two are totally different items with different uses? The outer shell is pretty easy to

make, but the computer inside it is what will separate the quality of sound.

What Is the Difference Between Hearing Aids & Amplifiers?

For starters, amplifiers or personal sound amplifying products (PSAPs), as they are commonly known, are devices that take all the frequencies in a given environment and equally raise the volume. PSAPs don't suppress the background noise but instead amplify every sound that is on their radar. Since most individuals with hearing loss struggle when they are in noisy situations, it means that these devices can only be ideal if they are used for leisure. By that I mean, one-on-one situations with zero background noise.

Therefore, if you are talking one on one with somebody or want to improve the sound during recreational activities such as theater and bird watching, amplifiers are the perfect solution. However, if you want a device that selectively fine-tunes all frequencies when you are in noisy situations, you can bet that PSAPs won't help. I have read some really misleading advertisements recently with titles like, "PSAPS: the greatest invention of 2020," while ampli-

fiers have actually been around for decades.

On the other hand, hearing aids have made immense advancements in the last 10 years and are professionally designed and customized devices that take into account every frequency of an individual's hearing loss. These devices make all sounds clearer, not just louder. They evaluate the noises around you, categorize them by the type of noise, and then use compression to help you focus on the speech you want to hear. Hearing aids help you hear sounds more clearly, while amplifiers help you just hear them louder. Hearing aids are regulated and classified as Class 1 medical devices by the FDA, and are best prescribed by a hearing healthcare professional (like me!), while amplifiers are still marketed in something like the Wild West. There are few regulations on what they can and can't say or promote.

Hearing aid or psap

Also, amplifiers are generally made in a one-size-fits-all approach. The picture on the right is a common fit that I see for an amplifier. It is sticking out of the ear and is quite noticeable. A custom fit hearing aid like the image on the left is much more discreet and is also more comfortable

for daily wear. Hearing aids can even be made completely custom in the ear canal with no portion behind the ear. That custom fit is impossible for a mail order or over the counter amplifier.

The Bottom Line

While amplifiers are cheaper and readily available, they are not meant to be used for hearing loss. They might seem like a quick fix, but they may make your hearing condition even worse. They are designed for people with standard hearing capability who still want to amplify sound for recreational purposes.

On the other hand, hearing aids are an investment in actually

correcting your hearing loss and in improving your overall health. So, before you spend your hard-earned cash on a sound-improving device, make sure you visit us at Levine Hearing, get checked and tested, and try out a customized hearing aid that resonates with your hearing issues.

Madison Levine's daughter will tell you that her mommy "helps people hear better." In fact, Madison is a second-generation Hearing Instrument Specialist. She founded Levine Hearing, near the Arboretum, in 2015 as an independent practice focused on individualized patient care.



~ WOMEN'S NEWS ~

Save the Dates: W.O.W March and April Events

By Sara Oppenheim

January was a fun month with two activities from Charlotte Women of Wisdom (W.O.W.). First, we hosted a movie night and discussion of the film "Fill the Void." Many women watched the movie on Amazon Prime to take part in the discussion. The film is a drama about Shira, an 18-year-old in Tel Aviv whose sister dies in childbirth, and Yochai, her late sister's husband. Events occur that create an opening for Shira and Yochai to look at their relationship and both of their feelings toward Shira's nephew, Yochai's son. Shira is pressed by her family to marry Yochai, but the rabbi refuses to marry them. Even though you missed our discussion, watch the video for more details — it's a good one!

Later in January, W.O.W. prepared for Tu B'Shvat by hosting a Scones and Tea Party, featur-

ing Londonite Ilana Levin. Lady Ilana, as we call her, took us on a history trip of tea, beginning with Chinese and Indian origins through the English addition of sheep dung for color (in the 1700s — no need to worry about that addition anymore)! Participants now know the proper (read: English) way to brew and drink tea. One of the many great ideas I learned from Ilana was to place warmed water in the teacup prior to brewing, which makes the cup warm and ready to hold the proper temperature for the tea! We all munched on honey cherry scones with our PG Tips tea and delighted in Lady Ilana's reading of the tea party from "Alice in Wonderland." Ilana is an expert storyteller, so look for another event featuring her teaching us about expert storytelling later this year.

W.O.W.'s Purim event and fundraiser on February 21 was

the Laughter Games Workshop with video coach Debbie Hirsch of Israel. For an hour, we joined the Fun Club and learned to live with more fun and positive energy in our lives!

March is going to be another blockbuster month with our Pesach Event and Book Club.

On March 14 at 7:30 p.m., join W.O.W. for an interactive pre-Passover event: Pesach Recipe Tips and Tricks Exchange. Do you have a family recipe that is the bomb? What is your most delicious Passover family memory or Passover family tradition? What are your tips and tricks for good substitutions and best methods for baking your delicious Passover cookies and cakes? Do you have a Seder brisket recipe? Connect to Passover foods with us and share your stories!

Email us at WOW@CharlotteTorahCenter.com, and then

share at the March 14 event! You'll take away new tips, recipes, and ideas to make your Pesach even more delicious!

On Tuesday evening, March 30, we look forward to your joining us for our Book Club meeting on "Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality and a Deeper Connection to Life — In Judaism," by Sarah Hurwitz. Ms. Hurwitz is a political speechwriter and attorney who began her Jewish inquiry in earnest at 36 years old. Her book is one way in which she shares her insights in an engaging, upbeat way.

Save April 18 at 7:30 for a Challah Shapes experience! Make your own recipe, make ours, or buy challah dough in advance and learn how to shape your challah into different forms, from a Shlissel challah, Torah scroll, animals, and even napkin rings!

Please go to W.O.W.'s website

at <https://charlottewomenofwisdom.com/> for more information about W.O.W. and about our events. W.O.W. is a nondenominational group for Jewish women to engage, learn, and connect. No synagogue affiliation is necessary. We have more fun, enlightening, educational, interesting events in the works for 2021 and look forward to your participation!



W.O.W.
Women of Wisdom
Charlotte

Passover Already? Hadassah Happenings for March and April

By Aileen Greenberg-Kriner

How can it be Passover already? I just packed away the Purim costumes! I never feel ready for the next holiday, but one of the things I like about Judaism is how one holiday seems to flow into the next.

Passover brings lots of memories that make me smile. My grandparents hosted two very big, very long seders each year. When I was a young child, my parents knew I couldn't sit that long, so they let me play under the dining room table. I still remember my uncle's surprise (fake, I learned when I was older) when I knotted his shoelaces together.

I'll never forget trying to make a seder five days after our first child was born. I was at the table wearing a nightgown and holding an infant. We didn't have a roasted bone, so I cut out the picture of a chicken from the Empire chicken box. I didn't have time to make charoset, so we put an apple, a walnut, honey, and a cinnamon container on the seder plate. I was such an emotional wreck; I think I could have cried the salt water we needed to dip the parsley in.

When our children were young, I tried to make Passover prep fun. They loved checking the kitchen cabinets with a feather and a flashlight to make sure there weren't any "bad" crumbs hanging around. I remember reading children's Passover books to them at the seders instead of reading the Hagaddah because it was so important to me that they understood why we were celebrating.

Last year, we had a Zoom seder with our adult sons and daughter-in-law. This year will be another Zoom event but with

the addition of our new grandson, Asher Solomon. I'm so excited to let him play under the table in a few years and create special Passover memories that he can write about when he is older.

Getting Your Zzzzzs

Thursday, March 4, 7 p.m.

We are excited to host Nicole Fox, MD, who will speak about getting a healthy night's sleep without medication using cognitive behavior therapy. Dr. Fox is double board-certified in both psychiatry and lifestyle medicine. Her full-time practice focuses on the intersection of mind and body. Dr. Fox is a lifetime member of Hadassah and is the daughter of Nadine Fox, VP, Zionist Education, Southern Seaboard Region. This event is open to all. Register at www.hadassahcltevents.org.

Keepers of the Gate

March 14

Join Hadassah Charlotte's Keepers of the Gate. Enjoy a virtual tour of the famous Marc Chagall Windows at Abell Synagogue at Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem in Jerusalem. After the video, Barbara (BG) Goldstein, deputy executive director of Hadassah offices in Israel, will be live on Zoom to share her knowledge of the windows and the impact this gift from Marc Chagall has had on Hadassah.

Become a Keeper of the Gate! Keeper gifts begin at \$1,000/year. Keepers of the Gate is Hadassah's premier annual giving program, raising more than \$75 million in needed funds to ensure Hadassah's mission continues from year to year. Step up your existing giving level or

consider a new gift by contacting Laurie at laushein@gmail.com or visiting www.hadassah.org/keepers.

Sip and Shop

March 1-31

On Passover, we are commanded to drink four glasses of wine at the seder. Let Vintners help you fulfill the commandments with a special Passover event all month long. Mention Hadassah when you purchase your Passover wine from its large selection (list at www.hadassahcltevents.org), and 10% of your purchase will be donated to Hadassah. Feel free to share this with family and friends, even if they aren't Hadassah members. L'chaim!

A huge thank-you to our chapter partners Vintners, Malak Jewelers, and online Judaica store Modern Tribe, which all generously donate a percentage of our purchases to Hadassah. Mention Hadassah when you make your purchase. For Modern Tribe, use the link <http://modern-tribe.com?aff=92>.

Living History

March 15, 7 p.m.

Join us on March 15 at 7 p.m., as Suly Chenkin shares the fascinating story of her experience as a Holocaust survivor. Suly was 10 months old when her parents were forced to move to the Kovno Ghetto in Lithuania. Suly speaks regularly at the Levine JCC Butterfly Project. Please register at hadassahcltevents.org. A Zoom link will be emailed prior to the event.

Check It Out

Third Friday of each month, 11:45 a.m.

Upcoming meetings: March 19 and April 16

Take note! Hadassah Lunch and Learn has changed its name to Short Story Discussion Group to more accurately describe what it does — discusses short stories with Jewish content. Next meeting: March 19, Reading to Jacob on page 97 of "Many Seconds Into the Future," by John J. Clayton. April meeting: April 16. For additional information, email Amalia Warshenbrot at AmaliaIma@ATT.net or Linda Levy at levyollie@aol.com.

Mammovan at JCC

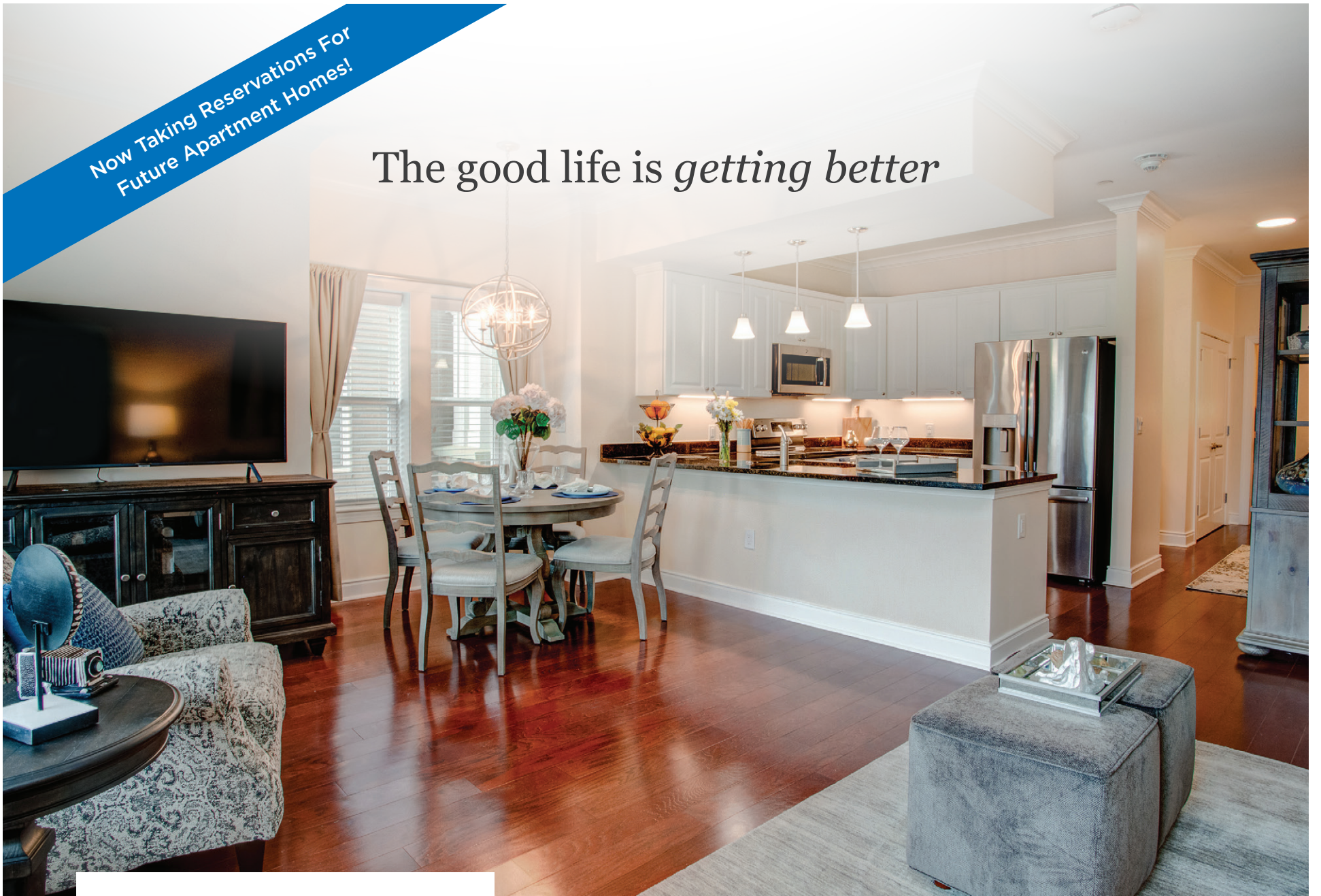
April 5, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

The Mammovan will be at the JCC on April 5 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Walk in, or schedule an appointment by calling (704) 384-7226. Screenings will be done by Novant Health Breast Center professionals. If you can volunteer to help or have questions, please contact Lori at lptrap@aol.com.

For more information about Hadassah Charlotte events, check our website at hadassahcltevents.org.

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Friendship Circle Continued

(Continued from page 37)

the near future. Relationships can come and go, yet those created in the hands of the Friendship Circle organization can last for many years to come.

Four principles of becoming a teen friend are: understand the perspective of individuals with special needs and recognize their unique abilities, build a more inclusive community by having fun and sharing with others, and learn from our special friends. The words above illustrate that special friends are the purest teachers and make a difference in the lives of both the teen and special friend. Hats off to all the Friendship Circle teen friends for the difference they are making in their own lives, the lives of their special friends, and for redefining how both groups are viewed in the community.



Ben building a model house during Friends@Home Visit

Friendship Circle is a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. To learn more, visit FriendshipCircleNC.org





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Mazal Tov to Steve and Kathe Cohen on the engagement of their daughter, Tara Cohen, to Steven Caponi in December 2020. Tara is a former Charlotte Jewish Preschool teacher.

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Puzzle Solution

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

(Puzzle on page 15)

Looking Back

Newspaper archives are a treasure trove of collective memories, providing a snapshot of our history. The following is from March, 1990.

Operation Exodus Begins Federation Board Unanimously Supports Russian Resettlement Effort

In keeping with the Charlotte Jewish community's commitment to our global Jewish community, the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the Charlotte Jewish Federation unanimously agreed to participate in the resettlement locally of Soviet Jews.

The Council of Jewish Federations, in an historic and unprecedented request, has asked Federations throughout the United States to help resettle 80,000 Soviet Jews who are waiting for placement. In keeping with the equitable, collective responsibility formula developed by Mendel Berman, President of the Council of Jewish Federations and his task force, Charlotte has agreed to participate by beginning to resettle Soviet families.

According to the request of CJF and UJA, communities throughout the United States and Canada are being asked to resettle families and raise money to help defray the cost of resettlement of Soviet families emigrating to Israel. In addition to the 40,000 Soviets who much be resettled in the United States, the North American Jewish community is asked to help raise an additional 420 million dollars above and beyond their regular obligations to help defray the emergency costs of Israel's resettlement and needed aliyah. This special campaign has been named "Operation Exodus," and will be implemented in Charlotte later this year.

In addition to resettling a number of wSoviet families or raising our fair share of dollars to go into the national pool earmarked to help defray the cost of resettlement in the United States, we must also raise 56% of our 1988 campaign result which translates into \$660,000 payable over a three-year period. What makes this effort even more challenging is that the dollars are needed now since the needs of the emigres must be met through the building of houses in Israel, job training in Israel, teaching of English and Hebrew, and the list goes on and on.

Locally, the Charlotte Jewish Federation is spearheading the development of a coalition for Soviet Jewry, which will be a communalization of the total effort to help meet the needs of Soviet Jews. All agencies and organizations will be participating in this historic event. As developments break, the Jewish community will be kept informed.

Passover Recipe: Pomegranate Candied Walnut Charoset

Ingredients

4 gala apples, peeled and diced
1 cup pomegranate seeds
1/3 cup Manischewitz
1/3 cup pomegranate juice
1 teaspoon lemon or orange zest (optional)
1 cup walnut halves
4 cups vegetable oil
1/4 cup sugar
2 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions

Line large baking sheet with parchment paper. Whisk together sugar and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon in a bowl.

In a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil to 350°F. Fry walnuts until golden brown, about 30 seconds, being careful not to burn. Using a slotted spoon, transfer walnuts from skillet to bowl containing sugar mixture. Toss walnuts in sugar, then spread on baking sheet. Cool 15 minutes, then chop roughly.

Combine nuts, remaining 1 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, apples, pomegranate seeds, zest, wine and pomegranate juice. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Find this and other Passover recipes at <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher>



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