

The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS

Celebrating Jewish Life

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December 2023

Temple Israel Honors Leon and Sandra Levine With Shofar Award at This Year's Fundraiser

By Ken Garfield

With love and admiration, Temple Israel honors Sandra and Leon Levine, whose generosity embodies the true meaning of l'dor v'dor: for all generations, forever.

Sandra is humbled to accept this year's Shofar Award, the congregation's highest honor, for their family's lifetime of devotion to Temple Israel. Though Leon (OBM) passed away on April 5, his legacy endures. That's why this recognition means so much to Sandra. It's not about them. It's about what they have done, and continue to do, through The Leon Levine Foundation. It's about setting an example for the rest of us to practice tzedakah (charity), and to pay our blessings forward — from generation to generation.

"We feel good about this honor," Sandra says, "because people are recognizing the good the Foundation is doing."

Dream: B'Yachad! is the theme of the Dec. 3 Winter Concert Fundraiser, during which the Shofar Award will be presented. The shofar is a powerful symbol of honor, as the ancient ram's horn sounds forth our devotion to our faith. And what a perfect title for the evening. B'Yachad means "together." As one, we stand in appreciation for all that the Levines have done for their spiritual home of 50 years — Temple Israel. Sandra and Leon were married there. Their children were raised to love God and their fellow man there. And when Leon, a youngster from Rockingham, N.C., realized his dream of opening a chain of

Family Dollar stores to serve everyday folks, it opened the door to another dream: sharing his family's blessings.

Temple Israel has been profoundly impacted by the Levines' generosity. The congregation has received more than \$2 million from The Leon Levine Foundation, leading to the creation of spaces like the Sandra and Leon Levine Social Hall and the Mindy Ellen Levine Chapel, named in memory of their daughter. These spaces have become vital parts of the community's life — places to pray, learn, serve, mourn, and celebrate. Rabbi Michael Wolk reflects on the Levines' influence: "Everything we do is because they helped us with this incredible space we have."

The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, another beneficiary of The Leon Levine Foundation, has received upwards of \$16 million, with a strong focus on supporting Israel. Sue Worrel, Federation's CEO, speaks to more than just financial aid: "Sandra and Leon's embrace of Jewish causes here and abroad goes beyond financial support. Their wisdom and encouragement inspire us to do this vital work. With Sandra's support, the Foundation's generosity, and in Leon's memory, we carry on."

Shalom Park, too, stands as a testament to their giving spirit, having benefited from millions of dollars for various capital projects and its endowment. At its heart lies the Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center, a hub that invites people of all beliefs and backgrounds for



Sandra and Leon Levine

learning, fellowship, and exercise.

Since its formation in 1980, The Leon Levine Foundation's impact has been nothing short of remarkable. The Foundation has donated an astounding \$458 million to various causes across North and South Carolina. This generous sum, largely focused on Jewish values, human services, health care, and education, includes \$61 million specifically directed towards Jewish causes and institutions. Impressively, \$43.5 million of this amount

has been allocated to initiatives in the Charlotte region alone. This level of giving is a profound testament to the Levines' commitment to enriching lives and supporting communities across a broad spectrum of needs.

The gathering honoring the Levines will feature inspirational music performed by Cantor Shira Lissek and special guest, Cantor Dan Singer. How sweet, because Shira and Sandra have become, in the cantor's words, "... really good buds. We connect on music."

They connect as well around the spirit of the evening, and the mission shared by Temple Israel and the family we honor. To help build a better future. To help our neighbors fulfill their dreams, whatever challenges stand in the way.

"Climb Ev'ry Mountain" will be sung at Dream: B'Yachad! As Cantor Lissek says, "The music is all about dreams."

Temple Israel president, Amy Udoff, who worked with the Board of Trustees, Temple staff, and the Dream: B'Yachad committee to make this celebration possible, speaks for all whose lives have been enriched by Sandra and Leon Levine.

"I grew up right here at Shalom Park and at Temple Israel. When I was younger, I heard their names and about their generosity, but I never understood it. Now that I am older and have children of my own, who enjoy Camp Mindy and the Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center, running around Temple Israel's Sandra and Leon Levine Social Hall after Friday night dinners and having Junior Congregation in the Mindy Ellen Levine Chapel, I see it. I understand it. It is l'dor v'dor. I thank Sandra and Leon from the bottom of my heart for providing it from generation to generation."

Freelance writer/editor Ken Garfield helps Charlotte's Jewish institutions and charitable causes tell their stories.

Charlotte Shows Up to D.C. in Record Numbers To March for Israel

By Shira Firestone

On November 14, 2023, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC) made a significant impact at the March for Israel on the National Mall in Washington D.C. Playing a pivotal role amidst the largest turnout in U.S. history, JFGC galvanized our community's support, contributing to the success of this unprecedented event. Mobilizing at least 250 Charlotte-area attendees, JFGC demonstrated its unparalleled capacity to unite and lead. The extensive logistical feat of chartering three bus-

es and coordinating others who drove or flew on short notice highlighted the organization's commitment and capability. The Leon Levine Foundation through a grant to the bolster JFGC's infrastructure during these times, removed financial barriers that would have otherwise existed, allowing JFGC to effectively respond to the tremendous community interest in attending the rally.

The March for Israel, co-organized by the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) and the Conference of Presi-

dents of Major American Jewish Organizations, was historic not only in its cause but also in its scale. Over 290,000 participants demonstrated in person, with an additional 250,000 joining via livestream, making it the largest pro-Israel Jewish gathering in U.S. history.

Douglas Greene, JFGC government and public affairs associate, shared his perspective: "The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte stood united with almost 290,000 individuals at this historic event. JFGC's

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From the Editor

Celebrating Jewish Life



Shira Firestone, Editor CJN

As the year winds down, it's become my tradition to pause and reflect on our collective journey, as reflected in the pages of The Charlotte Jewish News (CJN). This is a time for me, as your editor, to evaluate how well we've achieved our goals of informing, representing, and engaging the greater Charlotte Jewish community. Yet, this year, I find myself not simply asking myself how we're doing at achieving these goals, but why we set them in the first place.

While informing, representing, and engaging are the operational pillars of the CJN, they exist for a greater purpose – to celebrate Jewish life. I don't often enough mention it by name. But it's right there, emblazoned

on our masthead.

Perhaps the reason I seldom mention this mission by name is that I've assumed it to be self-evident. Isn't celebrating our Jewish identity inherently a part of who we are? But the events of the past two months have brought a fresh perspective, revealing a profound shift in our community dynamics. Where once the CJN might have sought to ignite engagement, I now see a community fervently reaching out, hungry for connection and unity in a way I've never before witnessed. Hungry to find ways to more deeply and solidly ground themselves in an identity.

Despite rising fears of antisemitism, which initially led some to conceal symbols of their faith, a contrasting and powerful narrative has emerged. Stories of re-embracing our identity have outnumbered those of fear. For every tale of a hidden Star of David or a covered kippah, there are three of individuals proudly retrieving these symbols from obscurity. They are being worn not just as symbols of faith, but as proud declarations of identity. Blue shirts, and blue ribbons are widespread. These are even more than declarations, at its heart,

these are celebrations.

In the wake of the attacks on Israel on October 7, our Jewish community has experienced a complex array of responses. On one hand, we are grateful for the outpouring of support and concern from many outside our community, a testament to the bonds of humanity that transcend religious and cultural divides. Yet, this period has also been a stark reminder of the isolation and misunderstanding we often face. Many of us have encountered moments of alienation, revealing the harsh reality of indifference or, more painfully, latent antisemitic sentiments previously overlooked in our broader social circles. These experiences have been eye-opening, prompting us to reevaluate

our connections and compelling us to seek a deeper engagement with our own community. And as we engage more deeply, we find a renewed sweetness to celebrating. We don't take it for granted. We're not mindlessly practicing our Judaism. We're showing up fully.

From my vantage point as editor, I see the tapestry of our community in its entirety — the broad strokes and the intricate details. Each article, event, and story weaves into this tapestry, revealing an undercurrent of this collective celebration.

As the central communication vehicle for our community, CJN's role in informing, representing, and engaging is vital. And as I look back over the past year's issues, I believe we're

doing it well. But more important is our overall purpose — to Celebrate Jewish Life. So I ask myself, how are we doing at celebrating Jewish life, both as the CJN and as a community? My answer is simple: with heartfelt fervor and renewed commitment. We are not just marking our traditions; we are living them vibrantly, embracing our heritage with a newfound appreciation and strength. In this way, we are truly *Celebrating Jewish Life* — not just in the pages of the CJN but in every facet of our community's existence.

Shira

March for Israel

(Continued from page 1)

mobilization of staff, families, and community members was a testament to our unyielding support for Israel. This rally was more than symbolic; it was a powerful declaration of solidarity, strengthening our community's resolve and fostering connections that reinforce our commitment to Israel's cause."

The March for Israel was more than an event; it was a powerful demonstration of the Jewish community's unity and commitment. In a time marked by rising antisemitism, this unprecedented turnout sent a clear message: the majority of Jews stand firmly together in their support of Israel. This historic gathering dispelled any misconceptions about the Jewish community's stance, showcasing our unwavering commitment to Israel's defense, the denouncement of growing antisemitism, and a call for the immediate release of hostages held by Hamas.

From the podium, voices of prominence amplified that commitment. U.S. Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt powerfully denounced antisemitism, saying, "I



An estimated 290,000 people showed up for the March for Israel in Washington D.C.

can tell you without hesitation, regardless of party or political persuasion at the White House or in the Congress, at home and abroad, this government stands shoulder to shoulder against Jew hatred. We stand arm in arm to combat antisemitism." She continued, "Today in America we give antisemitism, no sanction, no foothold, no tolerance. Not on

campus, not in grade school, not in our neighborhoods, not in our streets of the streets of our cities, not in our government, nowhere, not now, not ever."

Israel's President Isaac Herzog joined virtually and poignantly emphasized the rally's purpose: "80 years ago, Jews came out of Auschwitz and vowed never

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Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

- December 1 — 4:53 p.m.
- December 8 — 4:53 p.m.
- December 15 — 4:55 p.m.
- December 22 — 4:58 p.m.
- December 29 — 5:02 p.m.

The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS

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Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte chartered three buses to transport Charlotte residents to the rally.

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

Empowering Change: The Role of Jewish Women's Philanthropy

By Elina Mazo, JFGC Director of Donor Engagement

"In a world where philanthropy knows no bounds, women have been at the forefront of change. Among these inspiring individuals, Jewish women have played a particularly crucial role in shaping the landscape of charitable endeavors." These were the words with which Karen Spiegler and Amy Mann Novick, members of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte's (JFGC) Women's Philanthropy Committee, greeted more than 100 Jewish women gathered on Oct. 22 at a special kickoff event for Women's Philanthropy.

The event began with a moment of silence and a prayer for Israel, a poignant reminder of those who have lost their lives in the Israel-Hamas war. This somber reflection set the tone for the day, emphasizing the importance of the Israel Emergency Campaign and Federation's vital work in the community, as shared by the Federation's Board president, Risa Miller.

Congresswoman Kathy Manning, a trailblazer in her own right, was the special guest at this empowering brunch, which marked the beginning of an exciting year ahead for Women's Philanthropy. Her leadership as a prominent figure in American politics, the first woman to



Sue Worrel, JFGC CEO and Representative Kathy Manning

chair the Board of Trustees at the Jewish Federations of North America, and the first Jew to be elected to Congress from North Carolina, made her the perfect guest to align with this year's theme, "Inspiring Women Leaders." Throughout this year, Federation will acknowledge and celebrate the women who have shown what it means to lead with grace, compassion, and an unwavering commitment to making a difference.

Manning's presence underscored the power of women in leadership roles. In a casual question-and-answer setting with Sue Worrel, JFGC's CEO, she shared her own experiences and insights into the world of female leadership and philanthropy,

emphasizing the importance of women's contributions in shaping a better future for all.

The Women's Philanthropy group exists to serve the goals and mission of the Jewish Federation and to strengthen the influence of women as philanthropists and decision-makers. It aims to present women with opportunities to impact our Jewish community in two ways: first by offering women multiple opportunities for engagement, involvement, and connection to the Jewish community; and second by increasing fund development through the Federation's Annual Campaign, additional giving opportunities, and endowments. At the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, women giving on their

own account for more than one-third of the Federation's Annual Campaign.

The kickoff event was a testament to the vital role that women play in any philanthropic effort. Jewish women have been at the forefront of countless charitable initiatives, whether on a local or global scale. Their passion, empathy, and resourcefulness have driven significant change in various communities. This brunch served as a reminder that women are not only influential in philanthropy but also instrumental in shaping the future of charitable endeavors.

After listening to Rep. Kathy Manning, we invited the women to engage in meaningful conversations with others at their table.

Each table lay leader received a card with thought-provoking questions asking the women about other inspiring women in their personal lives and how the Federation has inspired them to be more active and engaged in their local community.

As the Sunday brunch came to a close, the women in attendance left with a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm. The event marked the beginning of an exciting year ahead, filled with opportunities for these Jewish women to make a difference in our community. Whether it's through fundraising, volunteering, or advocacy, the women

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March for Israel

(Continued from page 2)

again ... Let us cry out together. Never again. Never again. Never again is now."

The National Mall was a vivid tapestry of support, blanketed with signs in support of Israel and people waving national flags, both American and Israeli, but also with signs depicting the faces of the 240 hostages still being held by Hamas. Families of hostages spoke movingly to a crowd that chanted "Bring Them Home."

Hope and optimism for our people's future were on display as Jewish youth, nationally and from Charlotte, were visible and strong at the rally. National leaders of Hillels, BBYO's, and other organizations set the tone for the rally with preliminary remarks, songs, and spoken word. From Charlotte, approximately 20 teens were in attendance, representing every youth group available in our city. USY, NFTY, BBYO, ClubZ, and CT-teen were all represented. Alan Johnathan, director of youth and family engagement, noted, "Much like our Jewish community in Charlotte, every teen had



Charlotte teens showing their support for Israel

various reasons for going ... they could come together with their fellow Jews in solidarity to show ahavat Yisrael, love for the Jewish people and Israel."

The teens had much to offer, but they came home with something important, as well. Jonathan continued, "The overwhelming majority of our teens found the experience fun. For almost 22 hours, they were surrounded by their Jewish peers, singing, laughing, chanting, praying, and enjoying the moment, something some had not truly had a chance to do since

Oct. 7. After weeks of being bombarded by antisemitism and the deafening silence of their peers, they could come together with their fellow Jews in solidarity to show ahavat Yisrael, love for the Jewish people and Israel."

The March for Israel was a clear declaration of our community's solidarity with Israel and our determination to fight antisemitism. The message was unmistakable: America and America's Jews stand with Israel.

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Miss Debby's Best-Loved Children's Books

The December Dilemma



By Debby Block

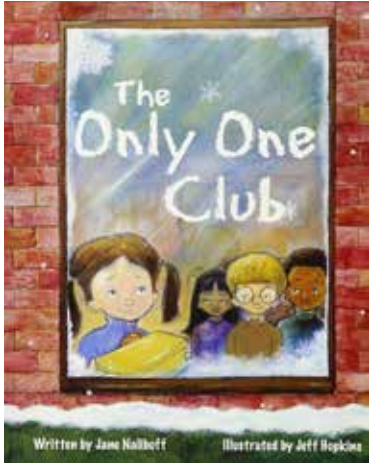
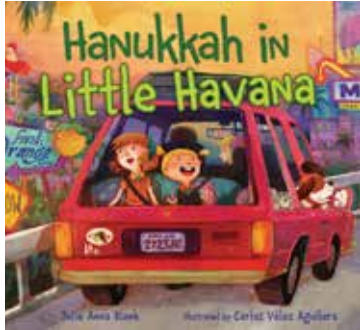
Are you “Chanukah” or “Christmas?” For Jewish families that celebrate Chanukah exclusively, children often feel like outsiders who are missing out on Santa, trees, lights, and even reindeer. I remember clearly that my youngest son was always so disappointed that we did not put lights on our house, like all the others in the neighborhood. Some families may decide to create a special blend of the holidays, especially many interfaith families. According to PJ Library, 51% of PJ Library families have at least one parent who didn’t grow up Jewish. For those families that choose to cel-

ebate both holidays, it may be challenging to determine how to add meaning to each holiday celebration. This CJN article will explore the celebration of Chanukah in diverse families and diverse environments. My two favorites are “Nonna’s Hanukkah Surprise” by Karen Fisman and “The Only One Club” by Jane Naliboff. Rachel and her family celebrate Chanukah. When Rachel visits her Italian grandmother, she brings along her brand-new Chanukah menorah. Sadly, Rachel forgets her new menorah on the airplane. Nonna, Rachel’s non-Jewish grandmother, saves the day by creating a unique Chanukah surprise that delights everyone. I recommend “Nonna’s Hanukkah Surprise” for children ages 3-7. “The Only One Club” is about the only Jewish girl in the class. Instead of feeling badly about being different, Jennifer feels proud and decides to initiate a club for herself which she names The Only One Club. All the other students are also eager to join the club, and fortunately, each stu-



dent has a unique characteristic. In the end, Jennifer makes and gives a badge to every classmate that says “The Only One Club.” I love this book and highly recommend it for children ages 5-8. Chanukah takes on many diverse characteristics depending on your family’s traditions and place of origin. “Hanukkah in Little Havana” by Julie Anna Blank explores the Sephardic traditions of Cuban Jews in Miami, which include eating “buñuelos” (almond doughnuts) topped with guava jelly. There is a joyous quality to this book brought to life with the bold, colorful illustrations by Carlos

Vélez Aguilera. I recommend this book for children ages 3-7. “Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas” by Pamela Ehrenberg is a sweet picture book about a multicultural family celebrating Chanukah. Since Mom is Indian and Dad is Jewish, they incorporate traditional Indian food into their Jewish celebrations. Instead of latkes, this family celebrates Chanukah with delicious Indian dosas. Bringing humor to this picture book is the little preschool sister who loves the dreidel song. I recommend this picture book for children ages 3-7. Exploring a mix of two traditions is the picture book “Daddy Christmas & Hanukkah Mama”



by Selina Alko. From latkes to Christmas trees, from dreidels to angels, this book may provide a picture of celebrating both holidays. I would recommend this book only for families that celebrate both holidays. No matter how you celebrate Chanukah, may it be a joyous holiday filled with light, delicious fried foods and family!





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Conversations with CMS Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Date: Wednesday, December 6th - 7:00-8:30 PM
Location: Gorelick Hall

Conversation with UCPS Office of the Superintendent

Date: Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 - 7:00-8:30 PM
Location: The Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts

All locations are at Shalom Park
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Register at jewishcharlotte.org

For questions contact Douglas Greene ,
Government Relations & Public Affairs Associate at
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Sue's Bookshelf



By Sue Littauer

What better way is there to escape the random demands on our time during December than to sneak away and settle in with a delightful rom-com novel? Look no further than the three novels by Jean Meltzer: "The Matzah Ball," "Mr. Perfect on Paper," and "Kissing Kosher."

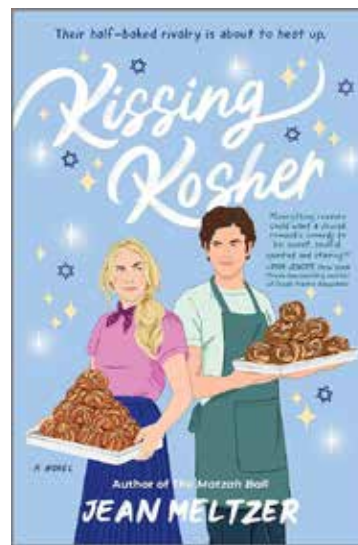
Jean Meltzer has the unique distinction of being the world's

only Emmy Award-winning, chronically ill and disabled, rabbinical school drop-out. Yet, it is this extraordinary background, coupled with a firm belief in holding onto your joy and seeking out happy endings, that forms the basis of her diverse work.

"The Matzah Ball" is about Rachel Rubenstein-Goldblatt, a young woman who has secrets. She lives with a chronic illness, is the daughter of a rabbi, and loves Christmas. She is a prolific, beloved author of Christmas books, which she writes under a pen name. When her publisher asks her to write a Chanukah book, her escapades and secrets begin to unfold. Often hilarious, filled with Jewish humor and love of family, "The Matzah Ball" is romantic and heartfelt.

"Mr. Perfect on Paper" is equally heartfelt, romantic, and Jewish. As the creator and CEO of the popular Jewish dating app J-Mate, matchmaker Dara Rabbinowitz knows the formula for lasting love — at least, for everyone else. When her beloved bubbe shares Dara's checklist for "The Perfect Jewish Husband" on national television, charming news anchor Chris Steadfast proposes they turn Dara's search into must-see TV. You guessed it — Chris is not Jewish, but otherwise checks off everything on Dara's list.

Jean Meltzer's third book is "Kissing Kosher." It's a modern Jewish take on the Romeo and Juliet (perhaps closer to the Hatfield's and McCoy's) love story



filled with faith, family, and fabulous desserts. A chronic debilitating illness, the search for a recipe for pumpkin spice babka, and the love and respect for family sum up the direction of this novel. "Readers will devour this one-of-a-kind novel, covering everything from relationships, intimacy, and sex, to family dysfunction and intergenerational trauma. Jean writes romance the

way your Bubbe bakes challah — with devotion, delight, and loads of love." — Lynda Cohen Loigman, bestselling author of "The Matchmaker's Gift" and "The Two-Family House."

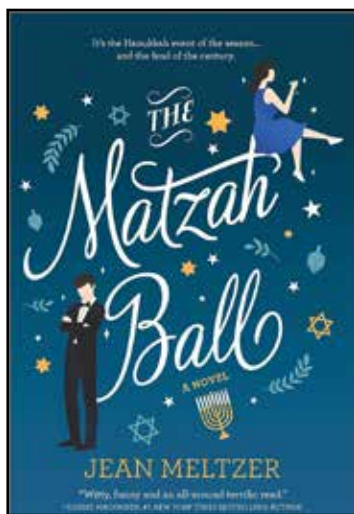
A fourth suggestion is perhaps my favorite of them all. "Unorthodox Love: A Novel" by new author Heidi Shertok is a cleverly written, beautiful love story that's hard to put down. It is very Jewish and teaches in a very natural way about many of the laws and rituals of Orthodox Judaism. It's funny and fast-paced and is about family loyalty above all else. It's the story of 29-year-old Penina, a smart-mouthed, infertile orthodox woman searching for a husband, and her boss Sam Kleinfeld, a rude, hunky, sexy secular Jew. This is a love story that you won't soon forget.

All of these books can be described as follows: "A luminous celebration of all types of love, threaded with the message that everyone is worthy of it." — Rachel Lynn Solomon, author of "The Ex Talk."



All are available as e-books and can be checked out from the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library at the Center of Jewish Education at Shalom Park. Visit www.jewishcharlotte.org.

Enjoy!!!



Women's Philanthropy



(Continued from page 3)

who gathered that day were inspired to continue their remarkable work. As they connect over a common cause, these women are paving the way for an exciting year ahead, full of promise and positive change. Their dedication and passion continue to make a profound impact on society, one act of kindness at a time. As the Federation continues its mission to support and empower, it encourages everyone to stay tuned for updates and future event dates.

Don't miss out on what's to come — let's continue to make a difference, together.

For more information and questions, please reach out to Elina Mazo: Elina.mazo@jewishcharlotte.org



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JOSHUA COHEN

The Netanyahu's:
An Account of a Minor and Ultimately Even Negligible Episode in the History of a Very Famous Family

SUN | March 17 | 7 PM



ARMANDO LUCAS CORREA

The Night Travelers

THU | March 7 | 7 PM

DANIELLE FRIEDMAN

Let's Get Physical:
How Women Discovered Exercise and Reshaped the World

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EINA DAI RANDEL

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cluded a few Winthrop University students, equaled about half their congregation size, a record for them. Temple Kol Ami, which holds services every other Friday, planned to hold their Unity Shabbat on Nov. 3.

The more than 200 hostages still held by Hamas weighed heavily on everyone's minds, prompting poignant prayers for their safety and return during all the services. These heartfelt moments often included the painful reading of individual names. Across the city, congregants donned blue ribbon lapel pins as part of the JFNA's #blueRibbons-forIsrael global solidarity campaign. This blue ribbon serves as a powerful symbol of support and solidarity for the safe return of the hostages held by Hamas

terrorists, signifying unity with the hostages, their families, and all those deeply concerned about their well-being.

At the combined Temple Israel/Temple Beth El Shabbat, Rabbi Wolk noted that while protracted disputes over judicial reform almost caused a civil war in Israel, when Oct. 7 occurred, the conversation changed and Israelis are now united in their support of their fellow countrymen and determined that the hostages be brought home safely.

Looking at the Shabbat table on the Temple Israel bimah, Rabbi Wolk asked, "Who is missing at our Shabbat table?" Then, like at the other Unity Shabbatot, he read the names from posters of kidnapped Israelis, including the Bibas Family, Israeli Argentines — Shiri, Yarden, and their two young boys, Ariel age 4, and

the youngest hostage, Kfir, nine months old.

To honor all the hostages, Temple Israel's Cantor Lissek sang an adapted version of the song "Bring Him Home" from "Les Misérables" (previously done by soloists in the Israeli opera and now being shared in congregations around the world.)

Exploring the parashah of the week, Rabbi Knight spoke to the type of covenant that Abraham entered into with God: a commitment to a new kind of faith focused on compassion and responsibility. Beth Sly, a member of Temple Beth El, came to the service for the comfort of the community and to get a sense of how to respond to her young adult children who are distressed over the situation in Gaza. She was heartened by the following words of Rabbi Knight: "Cer-

tainly we safeguard our own, and we also recognize the profound duty to shield the innocent. If we neglect this, the consequences of terrorism are not just physical harm but a loss of our very essence, our purpose-driven faith. We could run the risk of forgetting that the divine spark resides in the soul of every child. Such is the essence of a Unity Shabbat like this."

Ruth Goldberg, a member of Temple Israel, who was 17 years old when Israel became a state in 1948, was one of many who watched one of the various Unity Shabbat services via Zoom. Despite the screen between her and the Shabbat service, she felt close to the congregation: "When I saw the empty Shabbat table on the bimah it really hit me. And there was the bar mitzvah child having to stand up in front of so

many people. But he did it with such poise. He reflected the strength and unity of the Jewish people."

The Unity Shabbatot held across our community acknowledge how we gather and pray differently, yet demonstrate our greater shared response to the tragic events unfolding in Israel. They exemplify the resilience and solidarity of the Jewish community. This solidarity serves as an example of the unbreakable bonds that bind the Jewish people together, reminding us that unity is the bedrock of hope that will guide us forward as a community and provide a source of strength for each of us.

LIBRARY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

GRAND RE-OPENING MID-JANUARY 2024



During the renovation period, library programs will continue. See jewishcharlotte.org/cje for more information. A lending library program is available in the teen room, directly across from the library on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesday from 10am – 2pm, and on Sundays from 10am – 12pm. E-books, online resources, and book drop locations are accessible throughout the renovation.

For inquiries email
library@jewishcharlotte.org



Jewish Family Services To Honor Barbara and Jerry Levin at Live Laugh Give 2024

By Julie Loftis, JFS Marketing Specialist

Live Laugh Give co-chairs, Adina Loewensteiner and Blair Goldsmith, are excited to announce the honorees for Live Laugh Give 2024. "This year we are thrilled to recognize Barbara and Jerry Levin for their many contributions to the Jewish community and the greater Charlotte community," they said.

The couple, long-time residents of Charlotte, have contributed greatly to the building of Charlotte's Jewish Community Center and the Greater Charlotte community. They have demonstrated a strong belief in philanthropy and community improvement through their actions and financial support.

Jerry's work at Lebo's Inc., the family business, was transformative, expanding it from a family shoe store to an expansive retail operation featuring footwear, riding wear, and dancewear. Under his guidance, Lebo's has become a leading supplier of dance apparel nationwide. Jerry's civic engagements include roles with Temple Israel, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, Jewish Heritage Foundation of North

Carolina, the National Shoe Retailers Association, Charlotte Ballet, Jewish War Veterans, and serving as local chairman for Israel Bonds for the past 15 years.

Barbara, a Providence, R.I. native with Charlotte roots, married Jerry in 1951. Her community involvement is extensive, with active roles in organizations such as the B'nai B'rith Girls, WSOC Radio, Charlotte Ballet, Children's Theater, and as a Braille transcriber. She has served as president and is a Life Member of Hadassah and has been involved with Temple Israel, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, Lion of Judah, Charlotte Jewish Day School, and the Levine JCC. Both Barbara and Jerry were among the original supporters of the acquisition of Shalom Park, with Jerry also contributing to its governing documents.

Live Laugh Give will feature comedian and actor Modi Rosenfeld, who has been featured on HBO, CBS, NBC, ABC, Comedy Central, Howard Stern, and E! Entertainment. Born in Tel Aviv, Israel, Modi emigrated with his family to the United States at the age of seven and was raised on



Honorees Barbara and Jerry Levin

Long Island. Equipped with a sharp wit and a knack for reading an audience, Modi has gone on to become a successful fixture in New York's vibrant comedy scene, often doing bits that incorporate his heritage, and he is a hit with diverse Jewish audiences as well as fans of all backgrounds and beliefs. Now a regular performer at New York and Los Angeles comedy clubs, Modi also headlines around the country and

across the globe.

Live Laugh Give Comedy Night unites supporters, donors, volunteers, and community members for "a night of laughter, a lifetime of healing." The decision by Jewish Family Services to host a comedy event as a fundraiser is deliberate. Numerous studies confirm the extensive physical and mental health benefits of laughter. As noted by MayoClinic.org, laughter's short-term advantages include the stimulation of various organs, the activation and subsequent relief of the stress response, and the reduction of tension. Over the long term, laughter can bolster the immune system, alleviate pain, enhance personal satisfaction, and elevate mood. "When we were planning this event, our goal was to create an enjoyable and entertaining experience that would bring people together," explained Susan Meyer, development manager and co-creator of Live Laugh Give.

All proceeds from the event support the diverse programs and services of Jewish Family Services, aimed at improving the lives of individuals and families. These services encompass

therapy, parenting support, financial and food aid, resources for domestic violence, activities for seniors, case management, and support for Holocaust survivors, families, and caregivers. The JFS staff combines expertise and compassion, focusing on the dignity of their clients, to craft personalized assistance plans. Their commitment lies in uplifting, fortifying, and empowering those in need at their most critical times.

Mark your calendars for Live Laugh Give on June 9, 2024, for "a night of laughter, a lifetime of healing." To explore sponsorship opportunities or to honor the Levins, please reach out to Susan Meyer at (704) 364-6594 or via email at Susan.Meyer@jfscharlotte.org. Learn more about JFS of Greater Charlotte at jfscharlotte.org, by emailing info@jfscharlotte.org, or by calling (704) 364-6594.



Live Laugh Give
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A BENEFIT FOR
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Honoring
Barbara and Jerry Levin
Sunday, June 9, 2024

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**Jewish Family
SERVICES**
Engaging • Connecting • Healing

The Mental Health Impact of the War in Israel

By Howard Olshansky, JFS Executive Director

The attacks by Hamas in Israel left us devastated. As the days went by we were horrified by images of young festival-goers fleeing for their lives, families being forced from their homes and taken hostage, children being murdered, and kibbutzim being destroyed. Since Oct. 7 our community has come together

through vigils and unified Shabbat services, support sessions, and workshops to cope with the trauma from this war.

Trauma affects people differently. For those who have experienced trauma in the past, the scenes unfolding on television could reopen old wounds. Whether it's the aftermath of robbery, assault, or the loss of someone dear, such events can

be reawakening. Holocaust survivors might find themselves confronting old horrors anew. Connections to Israel, whether through family, friends, or a shared sense of homeland, affect us all, influencing our collective mental well-being.

Beyond the immediate grief of the 1,300 Israelis lost and more than 200 taken hostage, the war has also heightened antisemitism in our communities and on college campuses. This rising hostility can deeply affect you, whether you're the parent of the sole Jewish child in a classroom, a college student feeling isolated, or an employee in a less-than-supportive workplace. The mix of sadness, anxiety, and fear — even when not fully acknowledged — can disrupt everyday life. Symptoms might include sleep disturbances, changes in appetite, increased irritability, or a withdrawal from social interactions. These are common indicators of stress impacting mental health.

So, how do you manage these emotions? Understanding that everyone is different, below are some general ways to help manage your stress and anxiety:

- Moderate your media intake. Set specific times for news consumption to stay informed without being overwhelmed.
- Prioritize self-care. A balanced diet, regular exercise, and

sufficient sleep are essential to mitigate stress.

- Practice relaxation techniques. Yoga, mindfulness, and even simple breathing exercises can alleviate anxiety.

- Stick to your routines. Regularity in daily activities, like meals and chores, can reinforce a sense of control.

- Limit alcohol and substance use. These can worsen stress and lead to dependency.

- Talk to a trusted person. Sharing your concerns with a calm confidant can help manage your anxiety.

You may feel frustrated by not being able to “do” something to help. Below please find a few suggestions specific to the situation in Israel that can help you feel like you have contributed:

- Write a letter to your legislators asking them to support Israel.

- Donate to the Jewish Federations of North America Israel Emergency Campaign through The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (www.jewishcharlotte.org).

- Offer to write a supportive letter to those with family in Israel to express solidarity.

- Attend programs sponsored by one of our community's Jewish institutions to stay informed.

- Engage in prayer, privately or at services, for spiritual comfort.

Most importantly, if your stress, anxiety, depression, and/or another mental health issue is impacting your day-to-day functioning, reach out for professional help.

Contact Jewish Family Services at (704) 364-6594 or email at info@jfscharlotte.org.

Jewish Family Services Tributes October 2023

Happy Anniversary

Paulette and Joel Cohen

Alan and Linda Gack, Michael and Wendy Hennes, Vicky Wainwright

Charlotte and Jerry Miller

Frank and Cheryl Rotatori

Happy Birthday

Andrea Cronson

Milton and Karen Silver

Jerry Levin

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Ada Shapiro

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Anita Shapiro

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

In Honor of

Erica Hennes, Matthew Hennes, Ilana Hirschmann,

Hannah and Chris Hulon

Joel and Paulette Cohen

Sari Rosenberger's Bat

Mitzvah Project

Jill Blumenthal

In Memory of

David Kornblatt

Gary Silverstein

Julie Ann Rosenbaum

Paul and Lynn Edelstein

Nathan Thrope

David and Beth Thrope

Joseph Weisman

Nadine Fox

Fred and Violet Winton

Nadine Fox

Mazel Tov

On the marriage of

Jenna Bernstein and Daniel

Buettel

Paul and Lynn Edelstein



Jewish Family Services Volunteers & Donors October 2023

Volunteers: Jessica Alfandary, Marcia Arnholt, Mike Arnholt, Daniel Benjamin, Andrew Bernstein, Suzy Catenazzo, Harvey Chesler, Dan Coblenz, Jonathan Collman, Andrea Cronson, Julie Dermack, Joni Deutsch, Sheryl Effren, Terri Fishman, Rachel Friedman, Robert Friedman, Meredith Gartner, Richard Goldsmith, Jennifer Golynsky, Gail Halverson, Sydney Heiberger, Rebecca Hockfield, Oren Hubara, Tara Hubara, Dawn Hubbs, Bob Jacobson, Rikki Kinitsky, Etti Krausse, Jennifer Koss, Elliot and Stephanie Kreitman, Marcia Lampert, Eric Lerner, Adina Loewensteiner, Matt Luftglass, Gene Marx, Frada Mozenter, Wendy Petricoff, Barbara Rein, Nina Rose, Marilyn Schuster, Janice Shubin, Cindy Siesel, Louis Sinkoe, Harry Sparks, Lorin Steifel, Steve Teich, Gail Vogel, Nancy Wielunski, Amanda Zaidman

Mitzvah Baskets: The Spiegler Family in honor of Ethan Spiegler's bar mitzvah

Food Drives: Hebrew High

Special Thanks: Ballantyne Jewish Center for donation of challah

Hadassah Meal Preppies: June Hirschmann, Judy Kaufmann, Penny Krieger, Donna Lerner, Heidi Rotberg, Elissa Vining, Kyle Vining

Shalom Green: Thanks to all Shalom Green volunteers for providing fresh produce to our pantry clients.

Food Pantry Donations: Thank you for continuing to donate to the food pantry. We continue to collect donations every other Wednesday at the portico entrance to the Blumenthal Center for Jewish Education Building at Shalom Park.



Jewish Family SERVICES

Emergency Numbers

Suicide Crisis Lifeline: 988

Greater Charlotte Hopeline: (980) 771-HOPE (4673)

Crisis line for parenting, DV, and sexual assault

Mobile Crisis: (704) 566-3410

24-hour behavioral health

Jewish Family Services

(704) 364-6594 or info@jfscharlotte.org

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Religious Life

Our Visit to Israel During a War: A Family Story

By Rabbi Chanoch Oppenheim,
Charlotte Torah Center

This is a tale of two stories. Story one: We had made arrangements months ago to attend our oldest grandson's bar mitzvah in Israel, but then tragedy and war struck. Even if we had wanted to attend, our flight was canceled. Story two: Our son, Aaron, and his family who live in Israel were visiting for the holidays. Although it was apparent that Israel would take action, in the aftermath of Oct. 7, no one knew the exact details. When the magnitude of the action that would be taken on Israel's part became clear and Aaron saw that his combat reserve group was being mobilized, he called the commanding officer of his unit and asked for guidance. He was told to return immediately. The only airline flying to Israel was El Al, and with much trepidation, we left at 4:15 a.m. to take Aaron and his family to the airport.

When Aaron reported for duty, they didn't even have a rifle for him due to the sudden influx of soldiers. Normally, about 70% of reservists show up for duty, but now it was 130%! Aaron was in an urban combat unit, so he couldn't proceed with the work he was highly trained for. I can't say we were disappointed because the intelligence work he was tasked with was not only crucial but also interesting and safer. That lasted for about a week, and then he was provided with a rifle, and his mission

changed.

In the meantime, we were uncertain about whether we should make our way to Israel for our grandson's bar mitzvah. Israel was at war in Gaza and preparing troops on the Northern border, while rockets were falling in different locations. How would this affect the safety of towns and cities across Israel? After much soul-searching and consultation with people on the ground, Sara and I decided to go. I am neither a trained soldier nor a pilot, but strengthening family connections and supporting the next generation is a way Jews have historically resisted those who sought to destroy us. The Midrash (Vayikra Raba 11:7) mentions that the Romans understood this when they made decrees closing down Jewish schools with the rationale that if there are no baby goats (tyushim), there will be no adult goats (gediim). Our children and grandchildren said that if we chose not to go, they would understand, but their tone and tenor conveyed the message that it would be extremely meaningful if we were there. So, off we went, and I write these words from the Holy Land, a place we are fortunate enough to be in at the moment. Not only does our family appreciate that we are here, but so do all the people we meet, who feel encouraged that people are traveling to Israel during this time.

Back to Aaron. Would we have a chance to see him? I don't



Aaron and Rabbi Oppenheim

know of any army in the world that would allow a soldier, especially during wartime, to leave after his shift for a nephew's bar mitzvah—except one. The bar mitzvah was very emotional, especially considering that three generations were present in the Jewish homeland for this crucial life transition. My grandparents, great-grandparents, and those before them would never have dreamt that we would be able to celebrate this Jewish lifecycle event in our own land, and the emotional experience of seeing Aaron, who fought and continues to do so for the sake of Jews staying here, stirred up a multitude of emotions. It was wonderful to see everyone, and before we said our goodbyes, I asked Aaron if

he could get permission for us to visit him on base.

Fast forward two days, we had the opportunity to visit the base. Before doing so, we wanted to know what we could bring to support the soldiers. We would have loved to collect items while we were still in Charlotte and bring them to Israel as a show of solidarity, but by the time we decided to go and find a flight, there was no time for such preparations. When we asked Aaron what we could bring, he suggested that the best way to help was by providing them with money to purchase tactical gear. We were surprised to learn that even basic items like headlamps, knee guards, lightweight regulation fleece shirts, and more were missing. These items needed to be purchased by the army, and his unit consisted of 30 men, so whatever we contributed would be in units of 30.

With less than 24-hour notice of this special opportunity, there wasn't much time for fundraising, but what followed was so incredible that it brought tears to our eyes. We reached out to the Charlotte Torah Center membership and participants in a new WhatsApp group I started at the beginning of the war called "Guilt-Free Pint-Sized Torah." The purpose of this group was to connect people to Jewish ideas, Jewish pride, and pride for Israel in short two-to-five-minute messages.

Many Charlotte residents, as well as people from across the country, had joined the group, and they came through in an astounding way. In just a few hours, we had raised thousands of dollars. Money poured in from

people of all ages, from college students to retirees. Some even thanked us for giving them a positive action they could take to help the situation, as they had felt helpless being thousands of miles away. Initially, we thought we would make a small contribution to purchase one of the items, but now we had enough to purchase several things. The outpouring of support and unity from the Charlotte Jewish community left Sara and me with a renewed sense of commitment to Jewish engagement in Charlotte.

Finally, we had the opportunity to visit the base. The highlights of what was the most physically and emotionally draining day of our trip will be saved for a future article. These highlights include meeting the Ethiopian rabbi of the base, witnessing the apprehension of a terrorist who was then put in a transfer vehicle heading to Shabak for questioning, experiencing one of the most inspirational prayer services I have ever attended, and discovering the importance of seemingly mundane items like gourmet coffee, a washer and dryer.

The base featured tanks and barracks, and it was revealed that Aaron is a licensed tank driver—quite surprising! It struck me that much of what transpired on the base was a microcosm of a basic Jewish community. However, as mentioned earlier, the full details will have to wait for another time.



Havurat Tikvah Plans Chanukah Celebration

Havurat Tikvah will hold its annual Chanukah Party on Dec. 10 at 5 p.m. at Avondale Presbyterian Church, MacLean Fellowship Hall, at 2821 Park Rd.

Enjoy the warm glow of the Festival of Lights along with latkes, sufganiyot, fellowship and song. Back this year is the ever-popular, clever Chanukah quiz. Participants are asked to bring their candles and chanukiah to light.

To join in RSVP to admin@havurattikvah.org.

Havurat Tikvah is a warm, supportive, and nurturing Jewish Reconstructionist congregation with Shabbat services and a full spectrum of holiday observances, as well as religious educational options for both families and single adults. We are a diverse group of families, singles, and Jewish and interfaith couples

who participate in projects that promote social justice.

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

Havurat Tikvah is an affiliate of Reconstructing Judaism.

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



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Religious Life

Uptown Chabad Gathers Over 60 Strong for Evening of Solidarity and Prayer

By Rabbi Motti Groner

With a heartwarming display of unity and support, the Uptown Chabad community in Charlotte came together with over 60 young professionals on the evening of Oct. 11 for a special event dedicated to prayer and solidarity with Israel. Many pledged mitzvot for the safety and security of our fellow brothers and sisters in Israel.

This gathering was a powerful testament to the unwavering bond within the local young Jewish professional community and their profound connection to the people of Israel. It showcased the resilience and strength of the community as they united in spiritual devotion to express their solidarity during challenging times.

In addition to this event, the Uptown Chabad community extended their support for Israel by hosting a Friday night dinner in solidarity on October 13. Men wrapped tefillin before the start of Shabbat, and the women lit the Shabbat candles.

The Uptown Chabad's event



More than 60 young professionals gather for special event dedicated to prayer and solidarity with Israel.

served as a reminder of the enduring ties that bind Jewish communities around the world and their shared commitment to supporting one another. These events were imbued with meaning, reflection, and a profound sense of togetherness that deeply resonated within the hearts of those who participated.

In a world often marked by

challenges and uncertainties, events like these serve as a source of inspiration, hope, and a reminder that the bonds of faith and unity are unbreakable.





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Celebrate Chanukah

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, @ 5:30 PM

Young Families: Bim Bam Shabbat
Musical Shabbat service with Rabbi Kornsgold & Mr. Caleb. Play dreidel & enjoy a tasty Chanukah treat.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12 @ 6:15 PM

Light in the Darkness: Dreidels & Donuts
Join our congregation as we light candles, sing songs & enjoy food!

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12 @ 7:15 PM

Empty Nesters: It's Beginning to Look a LATKE Like Chanukah
Come join the Empty Nesters as we celebrate the 7th night of Chanukah.
Light food, desserts, drinks will be served.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13 @ 12 PM

STILL Chanukah Luncheon
Celebrating Chanukah with music presented by our own Rabbi Wolk.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13 @ 6:15 PM

Light in the Darkness: Latkes & Lights
Join our congregation as we light candles, sing songs & enjoy food!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13 @ 7 PM

Men's Club Chanukah at The Comedy Zone
Join the Temple Israel men for the stand-up comedy of Jewish comedian, Modi at The Comedy Zone

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14 @ 7 PM

Women of Temple Israel: Chanukah Bingo Bash
Hail in Chanukah with WoTI friends & enjoy light refreshments with a chocolate lovers' bar & an exhilarating series of Bingo games with Bunny. Bring a donation of feminine hygiene products to help us support Alliance for Period Supplies.

For details, pricing, & registration for these programs, please visit the upcoming programs page at templeisraelinc.org.



Religious Life

Reimagining Young Adult and Young Family Communities at Temple Beth El



By Amy Fine

The 2023-24 year is one of great reimagination for Temple Beth El! Five months into the new fiscal year we've already met new members, gained new leaders, and formed bright new ideas. In addition to exploring our congregation's strategic vision for the future and introducing new women's community programming, we're also opening new doors for young adults and families with young children in our community.

In early October, we kicked off a new initiative called TBE Jam. Jam caters generally to young adults in their 20s and 30s looking to integrate Jewish culture and community into their lives. We'll gather to learn, socialize, celebrate holidays, and build connections with others in the same stage of life.

TBE Jam was first announced at this year's Young Adult Sukkot Cookout on Sept. 30 when 30 young people shared a meal, shook the lulav and etrog, and



Young adults learn the art of shaking the lulav and etrog from Rabbi Lexi Erdheim.

gathered around the fire pit for havdalah and an impromptu jam session. We're particularly excited about a new monthly series beginning on Sunday, Nov. 12 at 5 p.m. called Backyard Bunch where we'll meet at the home of Rabbi Lexi Erdheim and her husband, Charlie Cox for dinner, drinks, and discussion about the Jewish perspective on contemporary issues.

The launch of TBE Jam led us to the decision to pivot our well-known affinity group known as

The Porch to focus solely on families with young children. In previous years it catered to both families with young children and young adults. In addition to congregants expressing a desire to build separate groups with a stronger concentration on these different life stages, we have many new young families joining TBE and we'd like to cultivate a community that better helps them integrate into Temple life.

Part of making this change is creating space to present new ideas and solicit feedback from parents regarding what it is they want to see from our programs and events. In the

latter half of October, we held a Porch Reimagination Open Meeting, inviting parents to come share with us, so we can work together to build a new foundation on which this community can grow. It was an invigorating conversation. Temple Beth El's parents are passionate about developing something fun and optimistic about our ability to foster relationships. They voiced a need for community on a smaller scale and a desire to bring it outside the temple walls. We're eager to create a culture that finds a healthy balance between large gathering opportunities for congregants to meet and smaller get-togethers where they

can share a meal or a playdate at their own kitchen table.

In all the excitement of new ideas, we will always find ways to hold onto old favorites. As such, The Porch Southern Fried Chanukah returns this year on Sunday, Dec. 10 at 4:30 p.m. As always, we'll enjoy latkes and fried chicken, light candles, sing Chanukah songs, and participate in some fun new activities we can't wait to tell you about. Register by Wednesday, Dec. 6. We're excited to celebrate the holiday season with new programs, favorite traditions, and gratitude for the Temple Beth El and greater Charlotte Jewish community.

Temple Beth El's SPICE Food Drive Supports Local Needs

By Robert Weiss

Temple Beth El's senior group, SPICE (an acronym for Seniors Promoting Involvement, Connection, and Engagement) has a longstanding tradition of hosting two significant food drives each year—one before Chanukah and another before Passover. These drives are dedicated to supporting the vital initiatives of Jewish Family Services (JFS) that cater to our community's most vulnerable members.

This year, SPICE's food drive is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 6, between 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Donors can drop off bags of goods, grocery gift cards, or checks at Temple Beth El's main entrance during these hours. SPICE volunteers will be there to assist you with unloading and will gladly accept your contributions.

For those who wish to make specific item donations, a comprehensive list of essential grocery items can be found at jfscharlotte.org/food-pantry-needs/. While JFS recommends purchasing grocery gift cards from Walmart or Aldi, donations from other stores are also gratefully accepted. If you prefer to contribute via check, please make it payable to JFS Charlotte, and be sure to mention the SPICE food drive in the memo section. For those unable to visit Temple Beth El on the designated date, you can still make a meaningful impact by mailing your check to JFS at 5007 Providence Road, Suite 105, Charlotte, NC 28226,

specifying that the donation is intended for the SPICE food drive.

Emphasizing the belief that "Seniors Make a Difference," SPICE is excited to match donations during this pivotal food drive. On behalf of the entire SPICE community, heartfelt gratitude is extended to all who generously contribute and continue to support the essential work of Jewish Family Services. Together, we can make a meaningful impact and bring warmth and nourishment to those who need it most.

Temple Beth El Lights Up the Holidays

By Madeline White

Temple Beth El (TBE) is embracing the holiday spirit with multiple community outreach initiatives, offering its members numerous ways to give back to those in need and spread cheer this season.

Project Snowflake Partners with Roof Above

In collaboration with Roof Above, Project Snowflake aims to ensure clients have a warm holiday season. Temple Beth El invites its congregants and the wider community to participate in three ways.

First, a limited number of volunteers are needed to serve breakfast on Christmas Day morning, kicking off with preparations at 6 a.m. with meal service beginning at 7:30 a.m. For those unavailable to assist on Christmas Day, there's an option to drop off breakfast casseroles in advance. Can't cook? Costco gift card donations are also appreciated to help offset breakfast expenses. To learn more about

how to help, contact Nicole Sidman, Temple Beth El's director of congregational life, at nsidman@templebethel.org.

Donation Drive for Local Shelters

As we settle into the colder months, Temple Beth El is taking proactive measures to ensure a warm winter for the city's most vulnerable. This year, in collaboration with Project Snowflake, TBE's Brotherhood has extended its partnership with Roof Above and its men's shelter, the Howard Levine Men's Shelter, by hosting a donation drive focusing on collecting essential warm winter items. Please bring new blankets and towels and new or gently used winter coats, gloves, mittens, and hats for men, women, and children to TBE. Donations are accepted until Dec. 14. We can all make a difference during this chilly season.

Supporting Sterling Families

We are excited for another year of hosting a Giving Tree

for Sterling Elementary School families. This year, we are committing to sponsor 35 families. Each family will receive a \$40 Walmart gift card, in addition to the gifts on their wish list, including cozy winter jackets, books, toys, and more. TBE warmly invites contributions from all. Donors can use the link provided at www.templebethel.org/chanukah or select a "leaf" from the Giving Tree in the lobby.

In the spirit of the holidays, we remain committed to bettering the lives of those in our community. Through these projects, we are reminded of the strength and generosity within all of us. As we light our chanukiot and share in festive celebrations, we give back to ensure that we light up the lives of those around us. From our Temple Beth El family to yours, we wish you a season of warmth, joy, and cherished memories.

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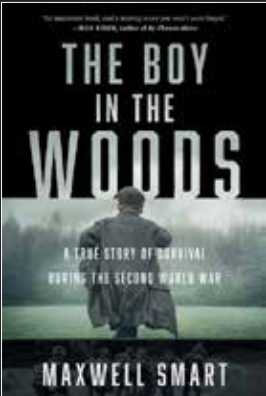
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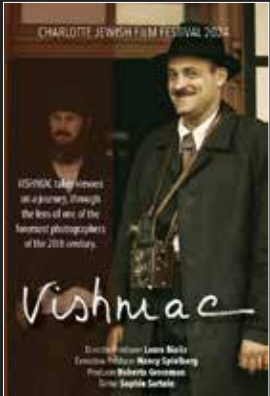
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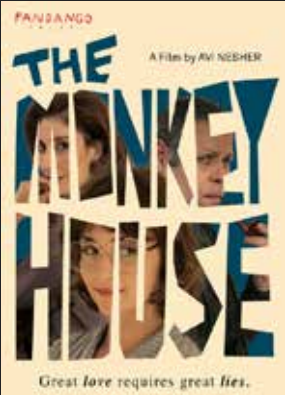
Tue, JAN 30 @ 7:30pm
Temple Israel



Wed, JAN 31 @ 7:30pm
Temple Israel



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Sam Lerner Center



Wed, FEB 7 @ 7:30pm
Sam Lerner Center



Sat, FEB 10 @ 7:30pm
Sam Lerner Center



Sun, FEB 11 @ 2pm
Sam Lerner Center



Wed, FEB 14 @ 7:30pm
Sam Lerner Center



Sat, FEB 17 @ 7:30pm
Sam Lerner Center



Sun, FEB 18 @ 2pm
Independent Picture House



Sun, FEB 18 @ 7:30pm
Sam Lerner Center



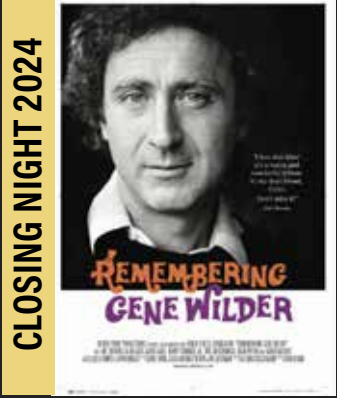
Wed, FEB 21 @ 7:30pm
Sam Lerner Center



Sat, FEB 24 @ 7:30pm
Temple Beth El



Sun, FEB 25 @ 2pm
Independent Picture House



Sun, FEB 25 @ 7:30pm
Temple Beth El

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL All Festival Pass: \$154 December 15 – January 15
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Individual Tickets: \$15: December 15 – February 25

FOR MORE INFO & TO PURCHASE PASSES/TICKETS GO TO CHARLOTTEJEWISHFILM.COM

Religious Life

Reflections by a Member of Temple Kol Ami

By Bonnie Shaw

When the news hit on October 7 about what happened to our brothers and sisters in Israel, I first sat stunned. A friend mentioned it to me at my daughter's bridal shower, and she expressed her deep concern for the Israeli people. I had been so caught up in my morning that I had not checked the internet to see what was happening in the world. So, at first I didn't believe what she had told me. My thoughts immediately went to my cousins who live outside the West Bank, and I started to panic. I reached out to my other cousins, and nobody had heard anything yet. Finally, I was able to speak with my cousin's brother, who let me know that they were OK, but her middle son was called up and he was going to the border of Israel and Lebanon. This all felt surreal.

Then, all the stories started to come out, and we heard what these beautiful people experi-

enced. I was unsure where to direct my feelings. After speaking with members of my congregation and family, I realized that I needed to speak honestly and kindly to those who did not understand what truly happened. Numerous friends of all faiths reached out to me. They expressed their genuine worry and concern. Our world is not evil, but people can be evil. Uneducated people who see only hate, that is evil. That is something that I cannot immediately change. I can embrace the beauty that we have as a people and show that to those around me. I can help people see our faith for what it is. We are a people of deep faith, deep kindness, and deep beauty. We choose to help and not hurt. We choose to protect when necessary. We choose to open our homes to those in need. That is who we are as Jewish people, and that is our job: to show our neighbors and friends who we are. I encourage you all to show the

world that the Jewish people are people of strength, perseverance, and love. When God chose us, He chose us to be models of goodness for the rest of the world. It is evident that we still have work to do. We have a giant task ahead! We must never forget the struggles of our ancestors and the battles we now face. Educating, not hating, is what will honor the memories of those senselessly lost.

Temple Kol Ami has always welcomed people of all denominations of Judaism through our doors. Please join us and see that we worship in a place that welcomes you and will show you care. We must remember that to fight evil, we must continue to create and embrace beauty. The beauty of who we are as Jewish people. One of the ways we are doing that at Temple Kol Ami is by welcoming our dear friend, Joe Buchanan, who will be joining us to share his Americana Shabbat at 7 p.m. on Dec. 8 at Temple Kol



Joe Buchanan

Friday, Dec. 15 at 7 p.m. Bring your chanukiah, and we will light our candles as a community. One that understands the importance of keeping the light shining.

If you live in the York County or the Ballantyne area, Temple Kol Ami might be the place for you! We are a warm and inclusive congregation comprising Jews from diverse backgrounds. We have Friday night Shabbat services on the first and third Fridays of each month. For more information, check us out at www.templekolamisc.org.



Ami. We are so excited to have Joe come to share his joy for Judaism with us, and we look forward to the way he can make song touch our hearts. This is the second time Joe will be with our congregation, and I invite you to join us. This service is free, of course, and we look forward to seeing you all in our sanctuary. Please also join us for our Chanukah Shabbat on

Joe Buchanan Is Coming to Temple Solel for Chanukah: All Are Invited

By Dale Rivers, Temple Solel VP

Hang on to your hats! This year Temple Solel is bringing in Joe Buchanan for a Chanukah concert like you have never heard (or seen) before. The whole Greater Charlotte Jewish community is invited to share a unique evening of original Chanukah music from probably the best-known Jewish country artist. It's all happening Saturday night at the Grace Presbyterian Church at 2955 W. Highway 160 in Fort Mill. The 90-minute show starts at 7 p.m. A \$10 donation at the door is appreciated.

A Texas native, Joe Buchanan makes Jewish Americana music. Grounded in the idea that there is always room at the table, Joe's music highlights the values, Torah, and history of the Jewish people to deliver stories steeped in the struggle and triumph of the human spirit, all while praising God for the goodness in life. It's music that you can crank up to 18.

Raised with one foot in Houston and one in the Texas Hill Country, Joe grew up swinging off ropes on the Frio River and spending time like any kid - trying to figure out what was what. The biggest question was about God and despite a deep belief in a creator, he couldn't find much that he agreed with in what he was hearing. The struggle led to more struggles, and he finally decided that he and God would sort it out later.

Then one day, about 13 years into his marriage, Joe found out that his wife was Jewish. Now, with the discovery of his wife's

heritage, their family started down a path that would change everything. From the first class and a million questions to the mikvah and beyond, Judaism answered every spiritual question and brought an incredible amount of healing. There is one God, we can see God in the world and in others, we are going to struggle - that's ok, we are not damaged goods by any means, and this is the life that matters because this is the one we've been given. Amen.

In the five years since his con-

version, this Americana artist from Houston, Texas has truly found his voice in the history, Torah, and values of the Jewish people. He's toured the United States, leading an original Shabbat service, playing concerts, and giving a workshop called "Choosing to be Chosen" which is all around his conversion to Judaism and the reasons why so many are coming home. Combining elements of country, roots-rock, and folk, Joe's music reaches deep to tell personal stories of struggle and triumph. This

is feel-good, toe-tapping, Americana with a Jewish soul.

If we sound like a Jewish temple you might find attractive, come by and meet us. Temple Solel offers the opportunity to Pray Together, Learn Together, and Do Together. We welcome the presence, enthusiasm, talents, and involvement of all members and guests. We grow with friendship, learning, doing good, and having fun. We are a Reform Jewish congregation that has eliminated the barrier of annual membership dues. While we gladly accept

donations, active participation is much more important to us. We meet at 7 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month. For more information about our services and other events, please visit <https://templesolelsc.org> or call (803) 610-1707. We'd love to meet you.



Annual Hanukkah Concert for the Greater Charlotte Jewish Community



Joe Buchanan's roots and Americana-based songs gave us reflective and meaningful insights into Judaism and our religious journeys."

— Edward Queen, Director of Ethics and Servant Leadership at Emory University

Suggested donation of \$10 per adult



Joe Buchanan

Saturday, December 9 | 7 PM

Grace Presbyterian Church, 2955 Highway 160 W, Fort Mill, SC

templesolelsc.org

info@templesolelsc.org | 803.610.1707

Greenspon Center Helps Bring Light Over Darkness

By Mary Eshet

In the darkest days of winter, the menorah brings light — at Chanukah and beyond.

Kinga Zay, a teacher of German at Providence Day School, graduated with the first cohort of the The Stan Greenspon Holocaust and Social Justice Education Center’s Certification in Holocaust Pedagogy program. “The course really awakened my interest in making a difference by getting more active in teaching the Holocaust right and honoring people we have lost. To honor my Jewish friends and their heritage is an awesome opportunity, an honor.”

Inspired by the certification class, earlier this year Zay organized a program to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, the date marking the liberation of prisoners from the Auschwitz concentration camp. Realizing students needed a basic foundation in understanding the Holocaust, she created a somber walk through history. Inspired by material from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, she created tiles that documented facts and a timeline of events along with photos from the Holocaust. These tiles were placed on

the floor and votive candles were arranged around the materials to create a path.

“It reminded me of a walk through a cemetery,” said Zay. “The tiles were like tombstones.”

The walk concluded on a note of hope, featuring symbols from Jewish traditions and life. “We learned in the program that students need a safe in and out. I wanted to acknowledge and educate about what happened, the atrocities and the pain, but also highlight Jewish traditions and heritage, and show the vibrancy and resilience of Jewish life,” she said. “I wanted them to leave with that.”

Zay is now focused on plans for a 2024 event. She has decided to move the date to February 12–13 to avoid conflict with other events scheduled for International Holocaust Remembrance Day. She hopes to draw more participation from the Jewish community.

“The way we are telling the story needs to change,” she reflected. “I want to focus more on Jewish voices and hope, resistance, and resilience.”

To achieve this, she intends to feature as many of the community’s chanukiot as possible. She shared, “The image of the

chanukiah and its profound significance for Jews across history, including during the Holocaust, is deeply ingrained in my consciousness.” Her goal is to encourage members of the Jewish community to bring in their chanukiot accompanied by their personal stories. These stories may encompass memories associated with the chanukiah, the passing down of the chanukiah through generations within their families, and their own unique Chanukah traditions.

The exhibit will include background on the Holocaust and may feature a few key individuals who worked in the resistance. “The chanukiot and their lights will serve as a beacon of hope,” said Zay.

If you’re interested in lending a menorah and story for the program, contact Zay at kinga.zay@providenceday.org.

Chava Rosenberg, a Queens University junior and president of Queens Hillel, is planning another event to bring light into darkness: Chanukah at Queens. Last year, Hillel worked with artist-in-residence Mike Wirth to create a mural wall near the clock tower on campus, and wove a theme of diversity and unity into the design. Multicultural



Chanukah at Queens includes a beautiful mural, music, food, and celebration; and is inclusive of other faiths and traditions in the spirit of a unified Queens community.

clubs and organizations from the Queens community created the flames for the chanukiah.

The wall turned out to be an example of resilience as well — a major storm swept through Charlotte and washed away much of the beautiful piece. Not to be dissuaded, Wirth grabbed some spray paint from the trunk of his car and recreated a mural — one that lasted all eight days despite the storm, much as the one-day supply of oil in the original Chanukah story lasted for eight days.

The vision for this year is still in progress. Rosenberg says they want to weave diversity and interfaith relations into the theme again, and show light over darkness even as college campuses and the world face tremendous issues. “Each person can bring their own identity and what they

(Continued on page 17)

J

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2 SATURDAYS: December 2 & 9 • 2pm & 7pm
2 SUNDAYS: December 3 & 10 • 2pm
LOCATION: Gorelick Hall at Shalom Park

Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center, 5007 Providence Road | 704-366-5007 | charlottejcc.org

Greenspon Center



Providence Day School teacher and graduate of the Certification in Holocaust Pedagogy program Kinga Zay created a program to educate students about the Holocaust and commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

(Continued from page 16)

are hoping and praying for to the table,” she said. “We want to create a shared vision of what Queens is about. Instead of letting differences separate us, we want to take them and run with them. This is why it works.”

Rosenberg says she can envision the concept but leaves the creativity to Wirth. “I know Mike will create something beautiful,” she said.

“This is what being a Jew in Charlotte is about,” said Wirth.

“With the size of our Jewish community and the combination of people here, everyone is our neighbor. We want to represent through art a hope for a greater life for everyone.”

In today’s world, some may ask if it’s the right time to showcase a chanukiah. “If we don’t shine, no one will do it for us,” said Wirth. “It’s our time. Time to put a beautiful layer on the Chanukah story and eat, pray, and connect with our neighbors.”



Stan Greenspon
Holocaust and Social Justice
Education Center



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Community | **November 20th**

Course Catalog at: charlottejcc.org

Women's News

Hadassah Charlotte Metro Thanks You for Celebrate the TaTas Success

By Aileen Greenberg-Kriner
“Going once. Going twice. SOLD to the woman in the pink dress!” called Steve Turner, auctioneer from J.O.C. Auctions. It was through the enormous efforts of Steve, TaTas event chairwoman, Cindy Bolokofsky, volunteer artists and photographers, generous donors and guests, and a host of Hadassah women and associates, that Hadassah Charlotte Metro exceeded our \$20,000 fundraising goal for 2023 Celebrate the TaTas by more than \$5,000.

Celebrate the TaTas is a two-part fundraiser that began on Aug. 28 and 29 with Painting Days and was followed by The Reveal on Oct. 26. All funds raised were donated to Hadassah Medical Organization in Israel to be used for cancer research. Hadassah doctors and researchers have achieved incredible breakthroughs, and the money raised at Celebrate the TaTas will further support their efforts to eradicate cancer.

Cindy welcomed almost 150 guests to The Reveal, introduced our generous event sponsor, Dr.

Goutham Gosu of Hearing Solution Center, and led the singing of Hatikvah. She then “revealed” the collage of TaTa photographs, which were created during Painting Days. Andrea Testa of ART Productions created a video of the Painting Days artists and models, and Wayne St. John donated the printed portraits and collages.

Sharon Goretsky, president of Hadassah’s Southern Seaboard Region addressed the group, and other regional officers also attended. Guests were treated to lunch at Maggiano’s SouthPark while they bid on both live and silent auction items and tried their luck at the wine cork pull.

Our keynote speaker was Rabbi Judith Schindler — activist, author, professor, rabbi, mother, wife, and breast cancer survivor. Rabbi Judy captivated the room as she intertwined her personal story with the trauma we are experiencing, along with Israel and Jews everywhere in the aftermath of Oct. 7. She spoke of resistance, resilience, survival, and healing, and that, “we all face moments when our lives

are shattered. And that is when the healing process starts.” Rabbi Judy mentioned a doctor and friend’s prescription that, “even when the prognosis is alarming or the outcome is overwhelming, we need to remember that we do not control everything in life. We thus need to maximize life one day at a time — celebrating wins and all good days.” You can read Rabbi Judy’s inspirational speech on her website, www.judydyschindler.com.

Thank you to the Hadassah members who worked so hard to make Painting Days and The Reveal so successful.

This Month's Events

Chanukah begins at sundown Dec. 7. We have the perfect Chanukah gift for the Mah Jongg player in your life! Order the official 2024 National Mah Jongg League (NMJL) card from Hadassah.

NMJL donates proceeds from the sale of their official cards to charitable organizations, including Hadassah. It is a big fundraiser for our chapter. Last year, we received more than \$2,000 which

we sent to Hadassah Medical Center in Israel. You can order cards for multiple people, and you do not have to be a Hadassah member to order your card through Hadassah. Please see the order form on page 19. Order by Jan. 5, 2024.

Join us on Sunday, Jan. 14 for Hadassah Charlotte Metro’s second annual Game Day at Crews Recreation Center in Matthews. Bring your own Mah Jongg set, Rummikub, cards, or any other games you would like to play. Sign up on our website.

Come to our monthly Hadassah Wine & Schmooze at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 5 at Vintner Wine Market in Arboretum. It’s fun!

Short Story Discussion Group meets at 11:45 a.m. on Dec. 8 on Zoom to discuss Sylvia’s Spoon by Michelle Brafman in the book “Frankly Feminist: Short Stories by Jewish Women.” Together, the stories create a powerful portrait of Jewish women’s experience.

Beverly’s Book Nook will not meet in December.

Our December Hadassah

BookTalk has been moved to Jan. 2, 2024. Our book selection is “Fifth Avenue Glamour Girl” by Renée Rosen.

Helpful Info

Our website, www.hadassah-cltvents.org, has details and registration links for our events. If you have questions or need information, email HadassahCLT@gmail.com or call our general phone number, (980) 553-1880.

To learn about membership, contact Lori Trapani or Merrill Schenkel at the phone number or email above, or come to one of our events.

The next Hadassah Charlotte Metro Board meeting is Monday, Dec. 18 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Follow us on Facebook (Hadassah CLT Metro) and Instagram (Hadassah Charlotte Metro).

HADASSAH



Gina Robins, Cindy Bolokofsky, Yvette Jacobson and Rabbi Judy Schindler

Celebrate the TaTas
The Reveal
October 26, 2023

Rabbi Judy Schindler, Honored Guest Speaker

Cindy Bolokofsky, TaTas Chairwoman

Steve Turner, Auctioneer

Full House!

June Hirschmann, Dedee Cygler, Susan Edgerley

Sharon Goretsky, President Southern Seaboard Region

Laurie B. Davis

Barbie Weiner and Marci Goldberg

Laurie Sheinhaus

Marci Willenzik and Karen Futersak

(L) Gina Robins, Chapter Co-President

Julie Novack, Jane Davis, Beth Stillitano

Roz Cooper and Susan Jacobs

Judi Neidenberg, Renee Flash, Susan Edgerley

Betsy Olinger and Ivy Saul

Lori Trapani and Judy Kaufmann

Marci Goldberg and Aileen Greenberg-Kriner

Sara Jacobs and Aliza Bricklin

TaTa Collage

Stuart and Lynne Cojac

Yvette Jacobson, Chapter Co-President

Roz Cooper and Cheri Titlebaum

Anita Strauss-LaRowe and Sandra Goldman

Janice Bernstein

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HADASSAH
Charlotte Metro Area

Women's News

Women of Wisdom Challah Bake

By Kim Maguire

Who doesn't love a challah bake? A group of lucky women baked challot on Sept. 9, 2023, at the Charlotte Torah Center with W.O.W. (Women of Wisdom) and went home with delicious loaves of round challah bread for their Rosh HaShanah celebrations. Our special guest, Fran Dordick, shared her knowledge and expertise in challah baking.

While we combined the ingredients and kneaded our dough, we reflected on the upcoming holidays and their significance. We talked about engaging all of our senses to experience the holidays: seeing friends and relatives at the dinner table; smelling the rich aromas of the foods we prepare; tasting a fantastic meal, especially after fasting; touching and embracing loved ones; and hearing the shofar signal the new year.

We concluded the Challah Bake with a blessing from Rebbetzin Sara O. for the new year, hoping for new friend-

ships, a welcoming community, and opportunities to perform mitzvot. We were encouraged to consider our self-perception, how others view us, and to find divinity in daily life.

The holidays are a special time for commitment and renewal in Judaism, a time to love one another.

Please attend a W.O.W. event to connect with other Jewish women through engaging social and educational activities. Don't miss our W.O.W. Annual Chanukah Party on the evening of Dec. 12, 2023. We will light chanukiot together and have a fun and always entertaining gift exchange. For more info, visit charlottewomenofwisdom.com.



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Two ways to order:

- **Online at:** events.hadassah.org/mahjonggcards
Type Charlotte Metro in Chapter Name box & choose "Southern Seaboard" for Region.
- **By mail. Send form below and check to:**

Hadassah Charlotte Metro, 5007 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28226
Contact Merrill Schenkel at 980-553-1880 or hadassahclt@gmail.com with questions.

Make checks payable to Hadassah, and put Charlotte Metro Mah Jongg in the memo.

Please include the number of cards in your order

☐ \$14 standard print card ☐ \$15 large print card

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City State Zip Code

Hadassah Chapter Hadassah Charlotte Metro Region Southern Seaboard

If you are ordering card(s) that need to be mailed to other addresses, please include each name and address on a separate piece of paper.

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Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community Hosts “Three Rabbis”

More than 100 community legacy donors gathered Nov. 2 for an exclusive event featuring discussions with Rabbi Yossi Groner of Congregation Ohr HaTorah, Rabbi Asher Knight of Temple Beth El, and Rabbi Michael Wolk of Temple Israel. Phil Warshauer, executive director of the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community (FCJC) and the evening's facilitator, described the trio as the “spiritual heart and soul of our community.” The rabbis shared insights into their family histories, their paths to Charlotte, and what inspired them to become spiritual leaders.

Though the event had been planned well in advance of the Oct. 7 incidents, the war in Israel and a rise in antisemitic demonstrations weighed heavily on attendees' minds. Ira Slomka, FCJC board chair, opened the event by expressing a desire to “disconnect from world events for the next hour, to keep things light and enjoyable, and to possibly offer some levity during a particularly stressful time.”



Phil Warshauer, FCJC executive director; Rabbi Asher Knight, Temple Beth El; Rabbi Yossi Groner, Congregation Ohr HaTorah; Rabbi Michael Wolk, Temple Israel

The FCJC, committed to fostering community and honoring members of the community's Book of Life Society, hosted the “Three Rabbis” event. The organization plans to continue such programs for Book of Life Society legacy donors.

Established in 2007, the Book of Life Society recognizes individuals and families who have pledged legacy gifts to local Jewish organizations. Currently, over 400 families have contributed 970 legacy gifts, totaling an estimated \$44 million for the future of Jewish organizations in

Charlotte.

For more details on the Book of Life Society and legacy donations, contact Abby Kleber at the FCJC at 704-973-4554 or akleber@charlottejewishfoundation.org. Interested individuals are also encouraged to contact local Jewish organizations to explore creating a personal Jewish legacy.



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A FCJC program

The following individuals/families are in the Book of Life Society and have granted us permission to share with you that **Charlotte Jewish Day School** has been included as a beneficiary of their legacy gift.

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Susan and Benjamin Aizenman
Michael and Meredith Baumstein
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To learn how you can create your own Jewish legacy, contact Phil Warshauer (704) 973-4544 or Abby Kleber (704) 973-4554.

704.973.4544 • charlottejewishfoundation.org



Ballantyne Jewish Center

Thursday, December 7, 5:30 p.m.
Menorah Lighting at StoneCrest at Piper Glen at the Fountains Plaza
Join us for our 10th Annual StoneCrest Menorah Lighting.
Music, fun activities for the kids, latkes and donuts!
Goody bags with crafts and Chanukah fun for every family.
CMPD and private security will be on site.
Registration not required
www.JewishBallantyne.com

Tuesday, December 12, 5:30 p.m.
Menorah Lighting in Waxhaw
111 E. North Main St. at the Overhead Bridge
Registration not required
www.JewishBallantyne.com



Chabad

Sunday, December 18, 6 p.m.
Miracles of Light — a Chanukah Concert with Nissim Black
Join us for a Chanukah concert featuring the sensational Chassidic hip-hop performer, Nissim Black! This event, beginning with a menorah lighting, will be a powerful display of Jewish pride. Tickets start at just \$36
VIP tickets and sponsorships available.
Sign up at www.Chabadnc.org/nissim



Chabad Young Professionals Uptown Charlotte

Monday, December 11, 5:30 p.m.
Matthew's Giant Menorah Lighting
In front of Matthews, Town Hall
Free and open to the public



Friendship Circle

Thursday, December 14, 5:30 p.m.
Friendship Circle Family Chanukah Party
FriendshipCircleNC.org



Havurat Tikvah

Sunday, December 10, 5 p.m.
Chanukah Party
Avondale Presbyterian Church, MacLean Fellowship Hall, at 2821 Park Rd.
Enjoy the warm glow of the Festival of Lights along with latkes, sufganiyot, fellowship and song. Back this year is the ever-popular, clever Chanukah quiz. Participants are asked to bring their candles and chanukiah to light.
RSVP to admin@havurattikvah.org.



Levine Jewish Community Center & PJ Library

Sunday, December 12, 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m.
Family Chanukah Breakfast with Clifford the Big Red Dog
At the Levine JCC, 5007 Providence Rd.
Join us for a Chanukah celebration featuring a morning filled with a delightful breakfast, activities, and lots of fun with Clifford the Big Red Dog. Ages 6 and under.
Register at www.charlottejcc.org.



Temple Beth El

All events held at Temple Beth El, 5101 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28226
For more information, visit www.templebethel.org.
Friday, December 8, 6-7:30 p.m.
Shabbat Evening Service — Celebrating Chanukah
Bring your chanukiah and two candles to brighten the second night of Chanukah. Join us for a special Shabbat evening service in celebration of Chanukah! This service is designed for our entire community and all are welcome. Stay after and enjoy a Chanukah dinner celebration (Reservations required for dinner.)

Friday, December 8, 7:30 p.m.-9 p.m.
Congregational Chanukah Shabbat Dinner
Join us immediately following the 6 p.m. Chanukah Shabbat Evening Service for a congregation-wide Chanukah celebration! This is a great night to celebrate Chanukah as a community. Dinner will be baked chicken, veggies, latkes and doughnuts.
Register by Monday, December 4.

Sunday, December 10, 4:30 p.m.-6 p.m.
Porch Southern Fried Chanukah
Families with young children, please join us for our highly-anticipated annual Southern Fried Chanukah celebration! Get ready for a night filled with festive fun and something for everyone! We'll be serving delicious latkes, crispy fried chicken, and of course, the traditional candle lighting and singing that make Chanukah so special. We can't wait to see you there!
Please register by Wednesday, December 6.

Wednesday, December 13
Brotherhood Chanukah Dinner and Candle-Lighting, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Join all your Temple Beth El friends at the Brotherhood's special Chanukah Dinner and Candle Lighting with blessings by Rabbi Lexi Erdheim. Bring your own chanukiyot, candles, and appetites for this annual event filled with the joy and good cheer we can all use. In the true spirit of Chanukah, we are asking for your support in bringing warmth to those in need. Alongside our traditional candle lighting ceremony, we will be collecting warm winter items such as coats, gloves/mittens, and hats to aid our local shelters in assisting those most vulnerable during

(Temple Beth El Continued)

the winter season. This year, our partnership extends to the Howard Levine Men's Shelter and A Roof Above in collaboration with Project Snowflake at TBE. Every TBE adult is welcome to attend this special gathering, and the cost is \$18 per person. Good food, great company, plus the abundant joy of giving. We can't wait to celebrate with you.
Register by Sunday, December 10.



Temple Israel

See page 13



Temple Kol Ami

Friday, December 8, 7 p.m. Americana Shabbat with Joe Buchanan
Friday, December 15, 7 p.m. Chanukah Shabbat — Bring your chanukiah!
All events are free of charge and located at Philadelphia United Methodist Church
1691 SC-160, Fort Mill, SC 29708



Temple Kol Tikvah of Lake Norman

Sunday, December 3, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Chanukah Fair
Temple Kol Tikvah
605 South St. Davidson, NC
A one-stop Chanukah shop at Temple Kol Tikvah featuring a great selection of Chanukah items, including dreidels, candles, chanukiot, gelt, children's books, tableware, party goods, socks, and more. Brought to you by Discovered Traditions Gift Shop at Temple BethEl.

(Temple Kol Tikvah Continued)

Friday, December 8
Shabbat with Chanukah Lighting, 7-8 p.m.
Temple Kol Tikvah
605 South St. Davidson, NC
Everyone is invited to bring their own chanukiah to the temple as we light them all together as a community at the beginning of Shabbat services.

Saturday, December 9, 9-10 a.m.
Tot Shabbat
Celebrate Shabbat and Chanukah with songs, stories, snacks, and fun! For ages 0-5.
Register at www.templekoltikvah.org.

Saturday, December 9, 5-8 p.m.
Chanukah on the Green
Davidson Village Green, 119 S. Main Street, Davidson, NC
Everyone's welcome! Candle lighting, donut truck, hot chocolate, Jewish dancing, music, crafts, and games. Fun for all ages! Co-sponsored by Kol Tikvah Temple Youth and the Jewish Council of Lake Norman.
Contact: Allie Redder 704-221-4245
principal@templekoltikvah.org



Women of Wisdom

Tuesday, December 12, 7 p.m.
W.O.W. Annual Chanukah Party
5773 Providence Road, 28226
Join us for dreidels, drinks, donuts, and gift exchange after we light our own chanukiah.
Spin the dreidel and learn some Chanukah wisdom with Sara O., and have a fun gift exchange. Wear your favorite Chanukah sweater.
Chanukah gift exchange: Please buy and bring a wrapped gift of no more than \$18 for the gift exchange.
Chanukah menorah lighting: Please bring your own chanukiah and candles so we can light candles together for the 5th night.
Cost is an \$18.00 donation (not including gift).
To register visit www.charlottewomenofwisdom.com or email wow@charlottetorahcenter.com.

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Sun City Carolina Lakes Community Unites for Peace and Solidarity

By Shira Firestone

In the heart of Indian Land, just eight miles south of Ballantyne, the Sun City Carolina Lakes 55+ community, home to over 5,000 residents, came together in a display of unity on October 24, 2023. More than 200 Jewish and Christian residents from the Shalom Club and the Bible Study Club assembled, in a meeting hosted by the Shalom Club, setting aside religious and political differences to reaffirm their bond as friends and neighbors following the tragic Hamas massacre on Oct. 7 in Israel.

The Shalom Club, with more than 200 Jewish members, and the Bible Study Club, with over 360 members, have shared a cooperative and friendly relationship since their joint 2017 Peace Pole dedication. The Peace Pole, inscribed in 12 languages with "May Peace Prevail on Earth," stands in the main lobby of the Lodge in Sun City as a testament to their commitment to unity. And in August of 2018, only days after the murders at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue, the groups assembled in

memory of the victims and as a reminder of the dark and dangerous reality of antisemitism in the United States and around the world.

Barry Greene, president of the Shalom Club, which began with just five people 16 years ago, underscored the club's role in the greater Jewish community. A purely social, non-religious club, Shalom Club attracts Jews from varying backgrounds with different levels of observance. The club's activities range from movie nights to celebrating holidays together. They also engage in civic activity, such as hosting an annual Holocaust Walk in support of the ADL.

The Oct. 24 gathering featured Douglas Greene, government relations and public affairs associate of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and Bob Poliquin, president of the Bible Study Club.

Douglas Greene spoke about the Federation's current efforts, including its participation in raising funds for the Jewish Federations of North America's Emergency Israel Campaign, raising more than \$500 million



A yahrzeit candle at Sun City stays lit as a reminder of the peace we seek.

for Israel's immediate needs, and the Blue Ribbons for Israel campaign, symbolizing support for the safe return of hostages. Greene's presentation highlighted the Federation's work, both locally and globally, in combating antisemitism. "The turnout tonight and the support from our non-Jewish neighbors are a powerful reminder of the strength of community," Greene remarked, appreciative of the

overwhelming response.

Poliquin observed that even among his non-religious Jewish acquaintances there is pride in "200 generations of cultural traditions that manifest in kindness, generosity, and hospitality," noting that "the theology of their culture is woven into the fabric of their community." Speaking of the importance of community and cooperative relationships, such as that of the Shalom Club and the Bible Study Club, he added that "The Hamas attack crossed an unrecoverable and unforgiveable line," but that "guarding the civility and friendships in our own communities is crucial. If we can't make it work in America, it's not going to work anywhere."

Following the speakers, David Mermelstein, the son of Holocaust survivors, opened the floor for comments and questions. Most of the comments expressed frustration and sadness over ongoing antisemitism and general support for Israel's right to defend itself. Comments also reflected unanimous support for all of the victims of the conflict

who desire nothing more than to live peacefully. Unplanned remarks by some retired Israeli military personnel in attendance added depth and personal resonance to the gathering.

The meeting concluded with the lighting of an electronic yahrzeit candle, symbolizing the community's commitment to remembering those lost in the conflict and hoping for peace. Beside the candle is a small sign, which reads, "This light glows to remind us of the pain and suffering in the Middle East. This light will extinguish when there is peace. We pray for peace."

In a time when reports indicate a 400% increase in antisemitic incidents since the Oct. 7 attacks, the partnership between the Shalom Club and the Bible Study Club stands as a beacon of hope. These collaborations exemplify how unity and understanding can overcome divisiveness, fostering a community determined to walk together in the way of peace.



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Veterans Day at the Hebrew Cemetery

Veterans Day is a time to recognize and honor the men and women who have served our country in both war and peace. Jews, like Americans of many faiths and backgrounds, have served our country since the Revolutionary War. 191 veterans are buried at the Hebrew Cemetery, representing service in all branches, from the Civil War, World War I, World War II, Vietnam, and the Korean War. Veterans Day allows us to focus on our Jewish values of appreciation, social responsibili-



Leonard Marco Marine Corps veteran plays "Taps"



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Cantor Shira Lissek

ty, and being of service to others. Placing American flags on the graves of our veterans allows us to acknowledge the selfless choices and courage of those who protect our nation, our way of life, and the freedoms we all enjoy. It's a celebration marked by intent and commitment. We are thankful to the many families and veterans who joined us this year. We began with a small ceremony in our memorial building, during which veteran Steve Russak reminded everyone of the significance of Veterans Day and urged us

to think of the soldiers currently serving in Israel. As an American flag was folded, Temple Israel's cantor, Shira Lissek, sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," followed by Israel's National Anthem, "Hatikvah," as our thoughts turned to those who have served and are currently serving in Israel. Before everyone collected the flags to place, Leonard Marco, who served in the United States Marine Corps from 1962-1965,

played the poignant sounds of "Taps." Marco, a first lieutenant in Artillery Battery, emphasized the importance of this event, stating, "It is respectful to do this for

those who have passed and to remember their sacrifices, and we need to pass on these memories and customs to the next generation."

The Hebrew Cemetery joins with the community in remembering the names of those who have been buried in the cemetery in the month of October.

Samuella Yanovskaya	4-2-1944	-	10-7-2023
Sam Ebersman	4-2-2001	-	10-22-2023
Alan Hersh	10-23-1951	-	10-28-2023



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Around the Table: The Relevance of the Chanukah Story Today



By Charlotte Rouchouze

In addition to my usual recipe, I must acknowledge the unusually difficult circumstances of this Chanukah season for Jews around the world. To say the last two months have been particularly difficult for the Jewish community would be an understatement. As we come upon the festival of Chanukah, which is perhaps one of the least understood of the Jewish holidays, we can look back and see a story of the Jewish people at war. I asked Dr. Rachel Gordan, professor of Jewish studies at the University of Florida, how she thinks about the evolution of Chanukah in America, and she told me that twentieth century Reform and Conservative observance focused more on the miracle of the oil and less on the militaristic strands of the Chanukah story. These other strands celebrate the Maccabean revolt fought against the Seleucids, a Greek power that dominated the Land of Israel during the Hellenistic period, and who in 168 BC, launched a campaign of repression against the Jewish religion. As Dr. Gordan told me, the fight was also against Jewish co-religionists who embraced Hellenization. The Maccabees were by all accounts religious zealots, and, she says, "Many of us American Jews might relate more to the assimilationism of the Hellenizing Jews and much less to the fundamentalism of the Maccabees, whom we celebrate on Chanukah."

But at its core Chanukah is indeed about asserting difference, and not always peacefully. Adin Steinsaltz's "Change and Renewal," always a source of inspiration for me on the topic of Jewish holidays, brings these strands together.

"Wars, victories and defeats are historical events, and just as they unfold before our eyes, so do they vanish from historical memory. Jewish statehood was lost at least twice, and the Jews wandered countless times from place to place, yet we remained alive. If, however, the people's distinctiveness is lost — even if only once — then it no longer matters whether we have a territory or a flag. Without the people, we have nothing."

As we in the diaspora try to

stand up for our people amidst anger and hate not seen in decades, we must find a way to balance our emotions with our commitment to the principles and traditions that make us who we are. In other words, at some point we must put social media away and instead double down on being Jewish. Keeping holidays present in your home and around your dinner table is, of course, an essential piece of this, and I always hope to give you a recipe to help you do just that.

When it comes to celebrating Chanukah, we of course eat fried foods to remind us of the miracle of the cruse of oil that lasted for eight days instead of just one when the triumphant Maccabees returned to the desecrated Temple in Jerusalem. While latkes are the most iconic fried food in the Ashkenazi world, jelly donuts, called sufganiyot, are the most classic Chanukah food in Israel. The problem I've had is that jelly donuts are not always easy to find, and the ones you do find do not always have the highest quality jam in the middle. An artificial red gel in the center just doesn't do it for me. So I'll share with you this simple hack for creating a delicious sufganiyot bite.

Simply buy your favorite fresh glazed donut, slice in half, fill with a high quality jam of your choice, close back and slice into quarters. My favorite is Smuckers natural strawberry jam or the French brand Bonne Maman if you want to splurge.

As Jews around the world hope and pray for a resolution that will provide long-term peace, security, and prosperity, we also wish that we never lose our essence, which makes it all worthwhile. I wish you a joyous and proud Chanukah.

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



Quick Sufganiyot

4 fresh glazed donuts
1/2 cup good quality strawberry jam such as Bonne Maman or Smuckers natural strawberry
Powdered sugar for sprinkling
Toothpicks for serving

Slice of each donut lengthwise as you would a bagel. Fill with 3 tbsp jam and place the top back on to make a sandwich. Cut each donut in quarters and sprinkle with powdered sugar. Stick a toothpick in each piece and serve.

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Birthright Cancels Israel Trips for December, Citing Security Concerns During Gaza War

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) November 14, 2023 — Birthright Israel has canceled its trips that had been scheduled for December due to safety concerns from the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, reportedly the first time in its history the group has pulled programs due to war in the region.

A Birthright spokesperson told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency the group expects to resume trips soon. The nonprofit's CEO Gidi Mark told eJewishPhilanthropy

that the trips could resume before the end of the year if the situation in Israel becomes "more stable."

Launched in 1999, the organization's free trips to Israel for Jewish young adults have become a staple of many Jews' college or post-college experiences, though participation in the program has waned in recent years. Funding for the organization has also been jeopardized after losing some major donors in recent years. The only previous time the organization has

canceled trips was at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During previous periods of violence in the region, in 2014, 2015, 2018 and 2019, Birthright continued trips as scheduled but altered them to avoid violent areas, according to eJewishPhilanthropy. That meant, in 2019, that trips briefly avoided visiting the same Gaza border communities that were massacred on Oct. 7 of this year. The Kibbutz Movement, which represents some of those communities, criticized

Birthright at the time for its decision, saying the move ran contrary to Zionist values.

Last month the organization had denied rumors of the December trips' cancellations to JTA, saying that they were still on schedule. Birthright typically schedules many winter tours to Israel for college students starting in mid-December.

In the meantime, Birthright is getting hands-on with the current conflict in other ways. The organization is now running a program to bring alumni back to Israel to volunteer in agriculture and donation centers while the country's workforce is being redirected to the war. Those joining in are part of a wave of

volunteers looking to fill in the gaps in the country's agriculture and other industries. Unlike its regular Israel trips, participants in this program are required to buy their own flights and travel insurance.

Though the organization normally bills itself as not political, Birthright also launched a social media campaign to encourage alumni to share positive posts about Israel to combat anti-Israel sentiment on social platforms in the wake of Oct. 7. Noa Bauer, a marketing executive for Birthright based in Israel, told JTA last month, "I think this is the time for Birthright to make sure that every alumni stands up for Israel."

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Hebrew Pocket Watch, Frozen in Time of Titanic Wreck, Headed for Auction

By Jackie Hajdenberg

(JTA) November 15, 2023 — A pocket watch, frozen in time when the Titanic went underwater, is set to sell at auction Saturday, with an expected sales price of nearly \$100,000.

That's nearly 30 times the value of the ticket that Sinai Kantor, a Russian Jew on his way to New York City, spent for his ticket on the "unsinkable" ship.

Numbers on the Swiss-made, silver-on-brass watch are written in Hebrew numerals and its hands are nearly all deteriorated, due to saltwater exposure — but dried water marks indicate that time stopped at 2:25 a.m., about five minutes after the Titanic sank. Its back features an embossed, solemn, muscular Moses holding the Ten Commandments on a background of date palms.

The silver pocket watch once belonged to Kantor, 34, a second-class passenger traveling with his wife Miriam, 24. The pair were recently married university graduates, on their way to New York where Kantor planned to sell furs while they studied dentistry and medicine, as part of a flood of Jewish immigration underway at the time.

"On the night of the disaster, like so many couples, they were forced to separate because of the 'women and children only' rule," Michael Findlay, former president of the Titanic International Society told the Washington Post. "Mr. Kantor had to remain behind."

Miriam alone was saved in lifeboat 12, according to information provided by the auction house. According to records collected by Titanic enthusiasts, she later became a U.S. citizen, taking the name Mary, and worked as a pharmacist in Brooklyn before being institutionalized at a psychiatric hospital where she spent the rest of her life before dying at 63 in 1950.

Kantor's body was recovered eight days after the accident. His pocket watch and some of his other possessions, including his Russian passport, a notebook, money, wallets, a telescope and a corkscrew were returned to his widow in May 1912 by the White Star Line, according to Henry Aldridge and Son, the auction house selling his possessions and other Titanic memorabilia.

His watch was previously sold at auction in 2018 for \$57,500.

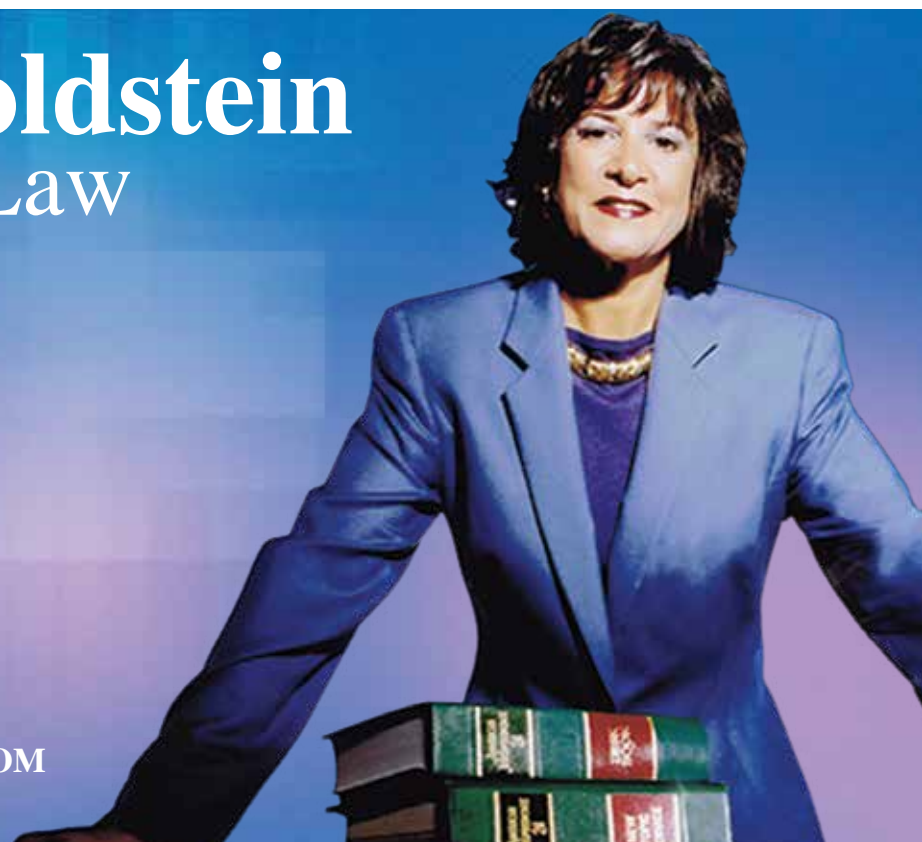
Of the timepieces that survived the shipwreck, most are stopped between 2:20 and 2:30, Findlay said. "It all depends when the individual went into the water," he said. "It's haunting."

Meg D. Goldstein Attorney-At-Law

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Education and Youth

Hebrew High Responds to the Conflict in Israel With a Night of Dialogue, Reflection and Learning

By Jennifer Sawyer

The brutal murders of over 1,400 Israelis and kidnapping of 239 more during an unprecedented attack by the terrorist organization, Hamas, has left the Jewish world reeling. October 7 will live in our collective memory as a day of shock and mourning.

As a teacher and parent, my primary instinct is to safeguard the well-being of the children under my care. However, the widespread dissemination of videos depicting the atrocities of war on social media has turned many of our teenagers into “eyewitnesses” to the horrors of conflict. What has become evident is the contrasting positions occupied by teens and adults.

For example, while adults have the option to leave a hostile work environment, teenagers attend schools filled with thousands of students daily — some friends, many acquaintances, most strangers, and, unfortunately, some who either hold or are easily influenced by those who hold antisemitic beliefs. Unlike adults, teenagers often lack the luxury of walking away. Adults have greater agency over our lives and choices about who we surround ourselves with.

Additionally, adults have more substantial financial resources to contribute to various Jewish causes and can influence U.S. policy towards Israel through voting. These factors provide adults with a sense of agency and empowerment in the face of helplessness.

Lastly, many of our teens are eagerly looking forward to their college experience in the fall, a time that should be filled with joy and anticipation. However, almost daily, we witness instances of antisemitism on college campuses across the nation, leaving our teenagers under more stress than ever before.

In response to these challenges, Hebrew High has collaborated with the Jewish Federation of



Rabbi Michael Wolk and Alan Johnathan teach students about the history of Israel and the history of the conflict between Israel and Gaza.

Greater Charlotte, Temple Beth El, and Temple Israel to create a safe space for teens to process the ongoing events. For instance, many teens are taking part in the Federation-sponsored Teen Ambassadors Israel Education Fellowship through the iCenter. On the Wednesday night following the brutal attacks, we made the decision not to conduct our usual classes. Instead, we dedicated time to engaging in open conversations, learning, and processing the events in the Middle East.

Students were given the flexibility to choose activities that resonated with them, and they could transition between activities as they saw fit. Each activity was led by a clergy member from either Temple Beth El or Temple Israel, along with a Hebrew High educator, creating a secure space for teens to share their experiences and ask questions. The activities included opportunities to learn about the history of the conflict, express feelings through writing and art, and participate in grade-specific reflections that allowed our teens to share, question, express their anger, and grieve. We also had Howard Olshansky from Jewish Family Services (JFS) available for teens who wished to speak privately with a counselor.



A group of 10-12th graders gathered together with Rabbi Beth Nichols and Jennifer Sawyer to reflect, share, question, and vent about the crisis in Israel and how they experience it in schools with their friends.

their community. As the evening came to a close, except for the group deeply engaged in discussing the history of the conflict, the rest of Hebrew High gathered to sing and offer prayers for peace in Israel, “Oseh Shalom,” “Ha-Tikvah,” and a prayer for peace in Israel: Ken y’hi ratzon.



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Education and Youth

Charlotte Teen Participates in United States Anne Frank Youth Conference



By Eliana Spector

What do a cowboy from Nebraska who loves Christian rock, a Jewish girl from Charlotte who fences, and a well-mannered speed walker from Baton Rouge have in common? The surprising answer is Anne Frank!

My name is Eliana Spector, and I am a rising junior at Providence Day School. Even at a young age, I have always been interested in my Judaism, from doing an Anne Frank project for my fourth-grade autobiography assignment to educating people about antisemitism and Jewish culture in schools. This passion led me to the Anne Frank Center, where, in 2022, I became a certified docent for their travel-

ing Anne Frank exhibit through their student-to-student docent program. The Anne Frank Center's exhibit at the University of South Carolina explores Anne Frank's life and times and invites us to reflect on their meaning today. The traveling exhibit is easy to set up and consists of 32 panels, allowing it to move from school to school and fit in any space.

The training to become a docent was held at the Levine Museum of The New South in Uptown Charlotte with ten other students from Charlotte and the greater Charlotte area. The two-day workshop is designed for students who serve as guides for the traveling exhibit. It helps students realize their potential. In addition to gaining a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, the specially designed activities prepare students for critical thinking, public speaking, and visual literacy. I helped curate and guide the exhibit at Providence Day School, and this program also opened many opportunities for me. These included sitting on Anti-Defama-



Eliana and fellow docents creating poems about the lives of Jews before the Holocaust at the KKBE synagogue in Charleston, SC.

tion League panels for school educator training, speaking to students in countywide schools, and being eligible for the Anne Frank Youth Conference. As a trained docent, I was chosen to participate in the inaugural United States Anne Frank Youth Conference at the University of South Carolina this summer. The conference brought together 24 students from around the country, ranging from high school to graduate level. The only known common thread was our involve-

ment in the student-to-student docent program for the USC Anne Frank Center. This brings us back to the cowboy, the Jewish girl, and the boy from the bayou.

All of us had different backgrounds and reasons for attending. One of my peers said, "I came to this program because I have a drive and desire to know those who are not like me, to gain perspectives that I do not have. The more I know about other people, the more I under-

stand what makes them who they are." The conference, which lasted a week, was split between Charleston and Columbia. In Charleston, we spent our time learning about the intersecting Jewish and African-American stories of the South. We visited the Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Synagogue (KKBE), McLeod Plantation, and the International African American Museum, and had dinner with the survivor community of Charleston. Then, halfway through the week, we moved to The Anne Frank Center at the University of South Carolina. Our time at USC was spent taking tours, listening to guest speakers, and learning from each other. We all agreed that the most powerful experience we wanted to bring back to our communities was our survivor dinners, which we all plan to replicate within the 2023-2024 school year. At the week's end, we walked away with new knowledge and an incredible experience. I think I speak for all of us when I say, "I want to do it all again, and we truly found a second family within each other!"

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Education and Youth

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Being a part of Shalom Park's beautiful campus gives our children access to gyms, libraries, gardens, and more. Our school community allows our children to develop a strong sense of self, participate actively in their own learning, to be taught by the best in the field and to make connections that can last a lifetime.

At CJP, tuition covers 92% of the basics of what they need, such as occupancy costs and teacher salaries. The Annual Fund and community grants, such as our allocation from the Jewish Fed-



eration of Greater Charlotte, account for the remaining amount.

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- Creation of the Discover Den, a unique STEM experience room
- Capital improvements across our campus- including security enhancements, garden upgrades, and upgrading playground equipment.

We need your help. Will you be a difference-maker in our CJP community?

Charlotte Jewish Preschool is not a daycare — it's a community school, and it requires philanthropic support from individuals like you to provide our children with high-quality care and education.

On behalf of the CJP Board of Directors, we value and appreciate your gift and your continued investment in our children's early educational Jewish journey. Please consider donating today.

Donations can be made via our website: <https://charlottejewishpreschool.org/annual-fund/> If you have any questions, please reach out to Erin.Goldstein@charlottejewishpreschool.org

*With much appreciation,
The CJP Board of Directors*



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Education and Youth

Shabbat Dinner for 4's Families at Jewish Preschool on Sardis

Our "Shabbton" or Friday night dinner with our 4's families is always a special event and one we look forward to each year. Bringing families together to celebrate Shabbat is a great way to end the week. We started off with jewelry making, a musical performance by the students, candle lighting, kiddush and a delicious dinner. When we lit

candles, we prayed for our friends and family and all the Jews in Israel. The centerpieces displayed different cities in Israel, and the parents participated in an Israel trivia game! A great time was had by all. All photos were taken prior to the onset of Shabbat.



Families come together to light candles for Shabbat



Siena and her family light Shabbat candles.



Cooper family lights Shabbat candles. The students decorated their own candlesticks in preparation for the Shabbaton.



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Education and Youth

CJDS Responds to the Needs of It's Students

The war in Israel is heavy in everyone's heart. It fills the news and the streaming apps on our phones. Many of us are consumed with the news. But what does it look like to the children, here in Charlotte, over 6000 miles away?

Charlotte Jewish Day school has 146 students in grades TK-7 including many Israeli families, families with relatives or friends in Israeli, and many whose families have traveled and visited Israel. Beginning in TK, our students begin their relationship with Israel and the development of Jewish pride through experiential opportunities and education. So how do we support our students now and empower them to support our extended family in Israel?

- CJDS was proud to partner with the Jewish Federation to have a children's program during the special Federation program on October 9. Over 65 children from the community came to talk about the conflict in age-appropriate terms.

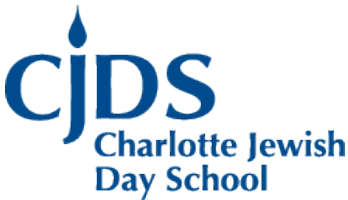
- Each morning, since the attack, we have all the students gather in the school lobby to give

Tzedakah, recite the Prayer for Israeli Soldiers and Tehillim as we teach the students that if they start their day off with something positive and the soldiers and Israel in mind, that they too will have a more positive day.

- CJDS has enrolled 8 new students from 5 different families who have relocated to Charlotte from their homes in Israel. Each family has a family connection or friend living in Charlotte and CJDS is providing a stable struc-

tured learning environment for the children in grade 1-7.

- CJDS builds a relationship between the students and Israel, creating knowledge self-confident Jewish children.



Hadley Muns giving Tzedakah in the morning assembly for Israel.



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Education and Youth

Peek Into Our Friends Together Experience

By Sue Schreiber

Friendship Circle is a Jewish organization dedicated to nurturing friendships between children and teens with special needs, our Special Friends, and typically-developing teens from the Greater Charlotte community, our Teen Friends. This month, we are highlighting our core program, "Friends Together," which pairs a Teen Friend with a Special Friend for weekly visits aimed at sharing interests, engaging in activities, and cultivating lasting and meaningful friendships.

"Friends Together" is a year-long commitment for both friends. To establish a meaningful connection, the pair dedicates themselves to being there for each other every week. They get to know each other's interests and abilities, taking turns participating in activities they both enjoy.

These meet-ups occur in the Inclusive Fun Zone, where a wide range of interests can be explored in areas like the Art and Creativity Center, Music and Movement Studio, Friendship Loft, Tree House, and more. We provide the space, and they bring their creativity and fun.

So far this year, we have 15 friendships, totaling 30 participants, meeting from Monday through Thursday afternoons in our Friendship Circle building, with the number increasing every week. On any given day, you can hear the sounds of conversation, laughter, and genuine friendship.

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



Max and Cole



Kieren and Isabel



Emily and Erin

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5215 Randolph Road, Charlotte, NC 28211

Education and Youth

So, You're This Year's Chanukah Parent ... Sharing Chanukah in the Classroom

By Lisa Garfinkle, JFGC Operations and Projects Manager

So you're the designated "Chanukah parent" at your child's school – Congratulations! Your child is one of the only, (or maybe the only) Jewish children in their class, and among the "winter" celebrations, "holiday" concerts, or even "Christmas" parties, the teacher asked you to come in and teach the class about Chanukah. This is a great opportunity to share your Hanukkah traditions with teachers and students who may not otherwise know about them. If the idea makes you nervous, however, take a deep breath, relax, and get ready to have some fun, because the Center for Jewish Education and PJ Library Charlotte have your back!

The Levine-Sklut Judaic Library at the Center for Jewish Education on Shalom Park has Chanukah Toolkits available to check out, containing everything you need to teach about Chanukah in a preschool or elementary classroom. Filled with dreidels,

gelt, a menorah, candles, Chanukah storybooks, and fun activities, these kits have everything a Chanukah parent needs for a fun time in the classroom. This year, they even include a classroom set of dreidels and gelt, so that each child can go home with a treat!

The PJ Library website is another great source of Chanukah information, book recommendations, and activities. It has a great blog post about sharing Hanukkah at school as well as "The Ultimate List of Books About Hanukkah," kid-friendly recipes, craft projects, and more. Visit pjlibrary.org/Hanukkah for a wealth of helpful resources.

And finally, here are a few tips from experienced Chanukah parents:

- Find out from the teacher how long your visit will be and how many children will be there – there's nothing worse than planning for a class of 20 and showing up to find the whole grade waiting for you!
- Get the teacher's approval for your plans, particularly if



they involve food or lighting candles.

- Latkes are always a hit, and you can get them pre-made from a local restaurant or caterer or buy them frozen at Trader Joe's and heat them up before you go to the school.
- Donut holes are an easier alternative to latkes.
- To play the dreidel game (also always a hit), divide the class into groups of four or five and bring dried beans or pony beads for the kids to play with.

A dreidel with the letters in Hebrew and English and a set of instructions for each group makes things much easier. And if there's somebody in each group who already knows how to play, you're golden.

- Make sure you've read through any book you plan to share several times before you read it to the class.
- Ask your child what they want their classmates to know and let them help you share the holiday, if they're comfortable

doing so.

- Especially in public schools, parents may be uncomfortable bringing the religious aspects of Chanukah into the classroom. If that's the case, show a menorah and talk about how you light it, but don't light the candles or say the blessings; choose a book without religious references — or skip over them; focus on religious freedom, light in the dark days of winter, food and games — rather than particular religious beliefs and practices.

- You may be invited to come in at a time that is before or after Chanukah, depending on where the holiday falls in relation to Christmas. That's fine, but don't let them think Chanukah is Jewish Christmas!

Check out the PJ Library website, reserve your Chanukah Toolkit at the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library (quantities are limited) and enjoy your time as the Chanukah parent!

CHANUKAH TOOLKITS FOR "CHANUKAH PARENTS"



Teaching about Chanukah at your child's school? Don't fear!

The Center for Jewish Education and PJ Library have you covered!

Free kits for sharing Chanukah are available for checkout at the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library.

Kits Include:

- Explanation of the holiday of Chanukah
- Appropriate story book
- Chanukah menorah and candles
- Dreidels and directions for playing
- Craft Ideas
- Chanukah worksheets/coloring pages (We can make copies for you in the Library.)
- Classroom set of dreidels and gelt to leave as a treat for students

Please call or email the Library to reserve your kit today—quantities are limited.

704.944.6783 • library@jewishcharlotte.org



Education and Youth

ZABS Place Celebrates Nine Years of Helping Adults With Disabilities Reach Their Dreams

By Charlie Gale

In November 2014, ZABS Place opened its doors in downtown Matthews. The goal of the nonprofit was simple: to provide job training and opportunities for young adults with disabilities in our community. ZABS was founded to address a critical need in Charlotte. With over 65,000 special needs adults in our community and an 80% unemployment rate, families were crying out for opportunities for these young people. As its 9th anniversary approaches, ZABS is taking this opportunity to look back at where they've been, where they are today, and what lies ahead.

When ZABS Place opened, it had only a few young adults

in its training program and only the beginnings of a curriculum. Since then, they have trained over three hundred young adults and have fine-tuned their training program to track each employee's progress toward their individualized goals. 90% of the trainees have graduated from the program, and ZABS has helped place them in other employment in the community. ZABS graduates work in various areas: at stores like Lowe's and Harris Teeter, at bakeries like the Great Harvest Bread Company, behind the scenes at doctors' offices, and even at the NASCAR Hall of Fame. Many of these young people started at ZABS Place with no skills or experience and only a wish to become adults



ZABS Talent Cole hard at work

and join the workforce. For every one of these graduates, a job that fits their interests is a dream come true.

When ZABS Place opened, it was only a thrift store, but it has since expanded to provide programming for its trainees. The ZABSpreneurs program helps young adults create their own microbusinesses, designing and marketing products to sell throughout the community. ZABS After Hourz provides after-work social opportunities for current and former trainees. Upcycling University offers a chance for young people to hone their artistic skills as they create objects from recycled material to use both in the store and elsewhere. And ZABS Place has continued to grow. Earlier this year, they opened a furniture store right next door, which gives them more space to showcase dining room tables, bedroom sets, bookcases, and other



Children donating their toys to ZABS Place as their Mitzvah for Israel

furniture that has been donated for sale.

Looking ahead, ZABS Place plans to double the annual number of trainees in its program and hire more job coaches to assist them in learning the skills they need to be successful in the working world. They hope to increase their online presence and provide more opportunities for trainees to work in this area. They will expand their ZABSpreneurs program to help more young people start their own businesses. They hope to find more partners in the wider community that will enable graduates to find their dream jobs.

ZABS Place has been successful in its mission. It regularly hears from graduates and their families, grateful for the opportunity they have received, grateful for the help with job placement and social opportunities. Without ZABS Place, many of these young people would be sitting at home, with little to do and few chances to participate in the larger life of the community. Now they have a chance to work, to learn new skills, and to show people that they are more than their disabilities.



ZABS Talent Molly loves cheering everyone up at ZABS Place with her smile and humor.



Rejoice in Hanukkah's light and love, for a brighter future!

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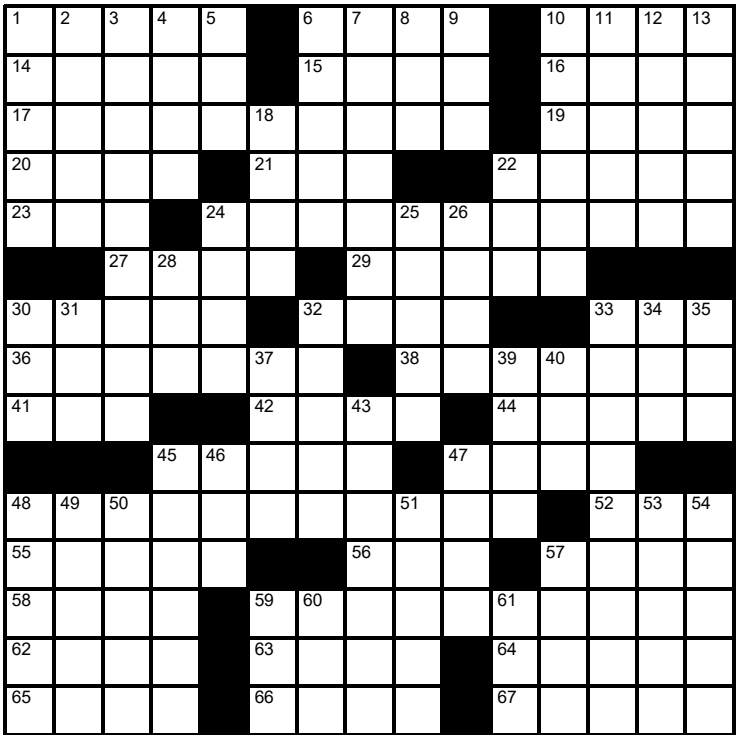
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ZABS Place was founded under the auspices of Chabad of Charlotte and inspired by the Friendship Circle.

ZABS Place is a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. To learn more, visit ZABSPlace.org.



Title: Genesis Twins

Across

- 1. Aussie stones
- 6. Blackens
- 10. Coup d' ____
- 14. Much loved fictional antisemite
- 15. Mother of Romulus and Remus
- 16. Site of Moses' last stand?
- 17. Twins in Genesis
- 19. Lop a crop
- 20. Moments, for short
- 21. Wife of Lennon
- 22. "Me, too!"
- 23. It's fire
- 24. Twins in Genesis
- 27. "Hud" Oscar-winner Patricia
- 29. Real first name of Storm of the X-Men
- 30. One from a galaxy far, far away
- 32. Ball of thread (whose name lent itself to a word meaning "hint")
- 33. Word to reference H.E.R.
- 36. Source for 24-Across being twins in Genesis

- 38. Notable relative of all the twins in this puzzle
- 41. "Absolutely!"
- 42. Cans have them
- 44. Chris best known for playing Rogers
- 45. Significant Zionist
- 47. Cause of goosebumps
- 48. Twins in Genesis
- 52. Nittany Lions sch.
- 55. Rust, for one
- 56. Switz. setting
- 57. Uriah of Fiction
- 58. Ahab or Amon, e.g.
- 59. They're needed to properly solve this puzzle
- 62. Or or what follower
- 63. Post baggage claim pickup, perhaps
- 64. "You see!"
- 65. Growing need?
- 66. Funny Josh's family
- 67. He died for making peace with Israel

Down

- 1. Quite fat
- 2. Preps for pics
- 3. Web users?
- 4. Some chief rabbis
- 5. Classic Stephen King nov-

- el, with "The"
- 6. Disney princess from New Orleans
- 7. Prohibition's prohibition
- 8. Summer Olympics city after London
- 9. Rest day: Abbr.
- 10. Physicist Fermi
- 11. They bite
- 12. Lessen, as a storm
- 13. He's known for "Tradition"
- 18. Biblical son of Samuel
- 22. Patriotic women's org.
- 24. Turner of old Hollywood
- 25. Amati and Bocelli
- 26. Second ballot line
- 28. "I do not see why I should ____ turn back": Frost
- 30. March of fiction
- 31. Engage in a coverup
- 32. Palminteri of "A Bronx Tale"
- 33. Honed
- 34. Long-lasting Chinese dynasty
- 35. Need for mincha and maariv?
- 37. Bit of hair
- 39. Kashrut parsha
- 40. Gardner of Tinseltown
- 43. Audibly censored
- 45. Played it safe
- 46. Sleep-____ (insomnia medication)
- 47. "M*A*S*H" co-star Jamie
- 48. Jabs with the finger
- 49. Technically Ramban was living in it when he lived in Israel
- 50. Wash mode
- 51. Regret feelers
- 53. 39-Down is one
- 54. Major loss
- 57. Laughing sound
- 59. "8," sometimes: Abbr.
- 60. Lofty degree
- 61. State and Main: Abbr.

(Answers on page 47)

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

Looking Back: Year 2006

Your Israel Campaign Dollars at Work

The Israel Emergency Campaign of the United Jewish Communities/Federations of North America was launched in response to the war against Israel this summer, and is providing support for the most vulnerable populations in Israel's north — the aged, the disabled, recent immigrants, terror victims, and others, whose lives were impacted during and after the war.

We are enormously proud that the IEC, via hundreds of communities across North America, raised more than \$320 million to date to help all Israelis affected in the north whether Jews, Arabs, or Druze.

Thanks to your gener-

osity, our Israel Emergency Campaign here in Charlotte has raised more than \$501,148. Every dollar collected to the IEC goes directly to help the citizens of Israel cope with the consequences of terror. Special thanks to David Epstein for his tireless efforts in spearheading the fundraising for Charlotte's Israel Emergency Campaign.

Working strategically with the Israeli government and non-profits in Israel to help those most in need, the IEC has allocated \$92 million to date, of which \$50 million has so far been spent on programs, principally through the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) and

the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). Through our overseas partners, our work has helped scores of local nonprofits help Israel recover from the conflict.

During the war, major needs included moving children from harm's way to summer camps outside the range of missiles, funding community center programs, upgrading bomb shelters with air conditioners, TVs and other improvements, and providing activity kits for children in shelters, as well as delivering meals and health-care aid to elderly people.

Several programs were specifically focused on Arab and Druze commu-

nities under fire as well as Jewish communities: \$9 million sent Arab and Druze children to summer camps outside the line of fire, provided children's activities and improvements for bomb shelters, supported community center programs and delivered aid to the elderly.

Now the IEC is focused on recovery and rebuilding in coordination with the Israeli government and our overseas partners. Our efforts are also intended to be as strategic as possible — helping provide longer-term solutions to emerging needs.

Through the IEC, we've provided funds to rebuild absorption centers damaged by missiles, offered

scholarships to university students unable to work and pay for their tuition because of military service, awarded emergency aid to small businesses facing bankruptcy due to the conflict, provided school supplies for the indigent, extended post-trauma counseling, helped food supply programs. With our efforts, Israel and the Jewish people remain a light unto the nations. On behalf of the Jewish Federation and the people of Israel, thank you again for your continued generosity and support.

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

Join Us!

Wednesdays 8-11 AM at the Levine Jewish Community Center
Thursday 9 AM-5 PM in the home of Lynn Edelstein, 3802 Columbine Dr.
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(Puzzle on page 45)

1	O	P	A	L	S		6	T	A	R	S		10	E	T	A	T		
14	B	O	R	A	T		15	I	L	I	A		16	N	E	B	O		
17	E	S	A	U	&	18	J	A	C	O	B		19	R	E	A	P		
20	S	E	C	S		21	O	N	O			22	D	I	T	T	O		
23	E	S	H		24	L	E	A	H	&	25	R	A	C	H	E	L		
		27	N	E	A	L		29	O	R	O	R	O						
30	A	L	I	E	N		32	C	L	E	W			33	S	H	E		
36	M	I	D	R	A	37	S	H		38	A	B	39	R	40	A	H	A	M
41	Y	E	S			42	T	A	B	S		44	E	V	A	N	S		
			45	H	E	R	Z	L		47	F	E	A	R					
48	P	E	R	E	Z	&	Z	E	51	R	A	H		52	P	53	S	54	U
55	O	X	I	D	E			56	E	U	R		57	H	E	E	P		
58	K	I	N	G		59	A	M	P	E	R	61	S	A	N	D	S		
62	E	L	S	E		63	U	B	E	R		64	T	H	E	R	E		
65	S	E	E	D		66	G	A	D	S		67	S	A	D	A	T		

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We Stand With Israel

Israel Emergency Campaign

Israel is facing a crisis on a scale never before seen — and in times of crisis, we stand together. Now more than ever, Israel needs you.

Jewish Federations of North America's Israel Emergency Fund has surpassed \$655 million, and is already allocating to the most pressing needs on the ground through 300 partner organizations and NGOs. Thanks to the generosity of so many in our community, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte has raised more than \$2.5 million toward the collective effort.

100% of your donation will go toward supporting victims of terror and addressing the unprecedented levels of trauma caused by the horrific attacks in Israel.



**Jewish
Federation**
of Greater Charlotte

Israel needs you.

Please give generously.

