The staff of The Jewish Journal wishes its readers a very happy and healthy Passover.

At the Jewish Community Center’s Purim Carnival: Above left, Tamar Sigler, Ivy Rawl, and Zoe McNeil. Above right, Hawlow & Jensen McKelvey.

See more Purim pictures on pages 15 and 19.

This year, fill Elijah’s cup — and your own — with high quality wine from one or more of Israel’s world-class wineries. See story, pages 36-37.
Israel's minister of public security, Gilad Erdan, commented on the teen's arrest.

“I congratulate the Israeli police on leading a complex international investigation, together with law enforcement agencies from around the world, which led to the arrest of the suspect,” Erdan said. “We hope that this investigation will help shed light on some of the recent threats against Jewish institutions, which have caused great concern both among Jewish communities and the Israeli government.”

Earlier this month, a St. Louis resident and former journalist, Juan Thompson, was arrested and charged for making at least eight bomb threats against Jewish community centers and the Anti-Defamation League.

Thompson, 31, made some of the threats in the name of a former romantic partner he had been cyberstalking and some in his own in an attempt to portray himself as being framed. He was charged with cyberstalking, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

Organizations targeted by recent bomb threats and other U.S. Jewish groups welcomed news of the arrest of a suspect — an Israeli with American citizenship who reportedly is Jewish.

Organizations targeted by recent bomb threats and other U.S. Jewish groups welcomed news of the arrest of a suspect — an Israeli with American citizenship who reportedly is Jewish.

ADL statement

The Anti-Defamation League, whose headquarters in New York and at least three satellite offices across the country received called-in threats, said in a statement issued Thursday — the day the 19-year-old suspect was arrested in Israel — that it was “relieved” that an arrest has been made in the majority of the bomb threats.

CEO Jonathan Greenblatt expressed gratitude to the FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and state and local law officials for making the investigation “the highest priority.”

“While the details of this crime remain unclear, the impact of this individual’s actions is crystal clear: These were acts of anti-Semitism,” he said in the statement. “These threats targeting Jewish institutions were calculated to sow fear and anxiety, and put the entire Jewish community on high alert.”

Greenblatt added that “anti-Semitism in the U.S. remains a very serious concern. No arrests have been made in three cemetery desecrations or a series of other anti-Semitic incidents involving swastika graffiti and hate fliers. JCCs and other institutions should not relax security measures or become less vigilant.”

The suspect, who lives in southern Israel, also is accused of a series of threats made in Europe, Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Israel, in the past six months. He reportedly used advanced technology and voice-altering equipment to call in the threats. He is believed to have mental stability issues, according to reports.

JCC Association statement

“We are troubled to learn that the individual suspected of making these threats against Jewish Community Centers, which play a central role in the Jewish community, as well as serve as inclusive and welcoming places for all — is reportedly Jewish,” Doron Krakow, the president of the JCC Association of North America, said in a statement.

More than 100 of the threats made since the beginning of the year have been to JCCs across the country and in Canada.

Krakow praised the “remarkable support” that the JCCs have received from “communities and community leaders across North America, including civic, political and faith community leaders.” He added that “JCCs have had the opportunity to review and assess our security protocols and procedures, and we are confident that JCCs are safer today than ever before.”

Anne Frank Center

The Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect, an independent U.S. national organization that fights prejudice, said in a statement that it had received several of what it called anti-Semitic messages on Thursday since the announcement of the arrest.

“(W)e will not tolerate using today’s arrests as a pretext for more anti-Semitism or other hate,” said Steven Goldstein, the center’s executive director. “To point to the religion of one depraved individual, and use that as a pretext for hate against an entire religion, is immoral and unacceptable, and those who engage in such arguments should be ashamed of their own prejudice.”

The Anti-Defamation League, whose headquarters in New York and at least three satellite offices across the country received called-in threats, said in a statement issued Thursday — the day the 19-year-old suspect was arrested in Israel — that it was “relieved” that an arrest has been made in the majority of the bomb threats.

JFNA statement

Jerry Silverman, president of The Jewish Federations of North America, said it was “heartbreaking” to read reports of a new arrest.

No difference between anti-Semitism of far right, anti-Israelism of radical left

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Jewish Agency for Israel Chairman Natan Sharansky, a former refusenik who was persecuted in his native Soviet Union, expressed his deep concern about the recent wave of anti-Semitic incidents and threats in the United States.

“If ever there was a line between the anti-Semitism of the far right and the anti-Israelism of the radical left, the demonization of Jews and the demonization of their state, it no longer exists,” Sharansky said in a statement released Wednesday. “These two ugly phenomena feed on one another and both run counter to the foundations of democratic societies in Europe and America.

“It is high time that all who hold democratic values dear put their political differences aside and band together to combat these expressions of hatred and violence.”

Sharansky expressed confidence that foundations of democratic societies in Europe and America. “It is high time that all who hold democratic values dear put their political differences aside and band together to combat these expressions of hatred and violence.”

Sharansky expressed confidence that U.S. authorities would work to find those responsible for the wave of bomb threats against Jewish community centers and schools since the start of 2017 and two recent cemetery desecrations and bring them to justice, “and prevent such incidents from reoccurring.”
Candle-Lighting Times

Shabbat
March 31 7:29 p.m.
April 7 7:36 p.m.
April 14 7:44 p.m.
April 21 7:51 p.m.
April 28 7:58 p.m.

Passover
Eve of First Day
Monday, April 10 7:39 p.m.
Eve of Second Day
Tuesday, April 11 8:41 p.m.
Eve of 7th Day
Sunday, April 16 7:46 p.m.
Eve of 8th Day
Monday, April 17 8:48 p.m.
Holiday ends
Tuesday, April 18 8:49 p.m.

About the Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine

JJMM Mission Statement

The Youngstown Jewish Journal Monthly Magazine, a publication of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, strives to —

- Provide a major tool of community communication for the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and its affiliated agencies;
- Present current local, national and world news of Jewish interest;
- Offer timely commentary, interpretation, analysis and authentic background on events of the day for the purpose of encouraging the concern and response vital to our responsibilities as Americans and Jews;
- Enrich the cultural interest of individuals and the community through articles, features, reviews and other material of both local and national Jewish content and interest;
- Provide a communication tool to enable all members of the Jewish community to express their viewpoints on issues of Jewish importance and interest;
- Demonstrate commitment to the progress and continuity of Jewish life in the U.S., especially our local area, Israel and around the world.

The JJMM does not assume the responsibility for the Kashruth of any product or service advertised on its pages.

April 15 is the deadline for articles and ads for the May 2017 issue.

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New alliance enhances Jewish voice

NEW YORK — To build stronger ties with state legislators and Jewish community relations councils, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and the National Association of Jewish Legislators have announced a new partnership to strengthen the American Jewish community’s voice in state capitols.

“It’s critical to foster stronger Jewish involvement at the state level as more decision making takes place in states and localities,” said David L. Bernstein JCPA’s president.

According to NAJL Executive Director Jeffrey M. Wice, “Our partnership will help us identify emerging and pending state policy issues and work with community leaders on legislative strategies including BDS related legislation, support for Israel and social service priorities.”

The two organizations hope to develop relationships to impact legislative areas at the state level where action is necessary. Recently hard won battles in Washington, D.C. may be passed down to states.

Jewish state legislators often are prime leaders on issues facing communities in the states, leading the fight for hate crime legislation, workplace freedom laws, religious freedom statutes, access to health and human services program funding, and protection for newly arrived Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union and other countries. These are all areas where the Jewish community innovates, leads and has expertise that can be shared to support these efforts.

As Jewish legislators are often ambassadors for Jewish causes and Israel related concerns in state capitols, the JCPA network can help improve the ability of Jewish elected officials to respond to key issues as they arise and require attention.

As a first step, NAJL has relocated its office to the New York City headquarters of JCPA where NAJL will be able to work with JCPA staff regularly and coordinate its efforts with Jewish Community Relations Councils and Federations nationwide.

Motorcyclists for the Maccabiah

(JTA) — Ahead of the 20th Maccabiah Games in Israel, 20 Zionist motorcyclists from Europe will ride from London to Jerusalem to express solidarity with the Jewish state.

The inaugural Ride for Solidarity initiative is scheduled to depart from the British capital on June 13 and reach Israel in time for the opening of the Maccabiah, which is often labeled the “Jewish Olympics,” on July 4, according to trip organizers.

In Israel, the riders plan to travel from the Golan Heights in its very north to Eilat in the south while carrying the Maccabiah torch, delivering it in time for the opening ceremony in Jerusalem as per an agreement with the event organizers at Maccabi World Union, Jozsef Horvath, a Hungarian member of Maccabi and a co-organizer of the bike ride, told JTA.

The itinerary includes stops in France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, according to Maximillian Marco Katz, a biking enthusiast from Bucharest and an activist against anti-Semitism in Romania who initiated the solidarity ride.

“Europe has become a target for Islamic terrorism just as Israel has been for decades already,” Katz said in a statement. “Our riders’ mission is to show, in light of this, greater support within Europe for Israel. This is our way of bringing the message from Europe.”

Katz also said the group comprises some non-Jewish members.

“We’re all Zionists,” he said.

In Frankfurt, Germany, the mayor will welcome the riders. They will also commemorate Holocaust victims at the former Dachau concentration camp, and hold a ceremony at Nuremberg, the city where Nazi war criminals were tried.

In Munich, the riders will hold another ceremony on the 25th anniversary of the murder there of 11 Israelis by Palestinian terrorists during the 1972 Olympic Games.
Through the Middah of Seder, your Seder can be “B’seder”

Rabbi Saul Oresky
Ohev Tzedek – Shaarei Torah

When Pesach is approaching, it is easy to make it the focal point of all our thought – preparing for Passover is, after all, both an external and internal activity.

As we clean our homes and plan each seder, we try to assure that everything is b’seder (Hebrew for OK; literally, “in order”), both in our homes and in our hearts.

Just as we do a cheshbon hanefesh, an accounting of the soul, before the Yamim Nora’im, the Days of Awe (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), so too do we take stock, both physically and emotionally/spiritually before Pesach, half a year later, and try to realign our priorities in sync with our values.

What, then, is the internal chametz (leavened, fermented material) that we need to clean out this year? Since chametz is that which is puffed-up, obvious targets of our pre-Pesach spiritual cleaning are our vanity, arrogance, and sense of entitlement.

Eating matzah, called in the haggadah “the bread of affliction,” reminds us to never afflic things others since we, too, were once slaves. The mitzvah of eating matzah also demands that we alleviate suffering wherever and whenever we can, especially by feeding the hungry.

Although matzah is a flat bread, just flour and water, totally without pretense, it is enriched with meaning. What it lacks in taste it makes up for in spiritual, ethical symbolism, leading us to a less self-involved and hence more emotionally open outlook.

Matzah is, of course, only one symbol of Pesach – all of the symbols on the Passover plate can aid us in our spiritual audit and in our pursuit of justice. The maror, bitter herbs, remind us to remember the bitterness of our suffering in slavery but more so the bitterness of all who are still slaves.

The beitzah, the not-quite circular egg, reminds us that time and life are cycles of seasons and milestones, and that we work to achieve equilibrium through them.

The mortar-like charoset, whose sweetness belies its reminder of harsh labor, tells us that sweetness might yet emerge from travail, so we must never lose hope.

The karpas, often a green vegetable and a simple symbol of spring, is dipped in saltwater and thus, like maror, asks us to recall those who remain in slavery, those still shedding salty tears with little hope of rescue.

And finally, the zeroah, the shank-bone or beef symbolizing the sacrificial Passover lamb, tells us powerfully that liberation cannot come without sacrifice – what must we give to ensure freedom for all?

In the study of mussar, the Jewish discipline of ethics aimed at learning to “carry the burden of the other” by striving to perfect our own middot (positive traits, characteristics), we find the middah of seder (that is, order). Seder teaches us that having everything in its place allows us to have greater order in our lives as a whole. This quest for order inevitably carries into our mental state, so it is my hope and prayer that as we prepare each seder this Pesach that our own internal middah of seder is strengthened as well.

Chag samayach – may it be a joyous Passover for everyone!

Ohev Tzedek
Ohev Tzedek – April 2017

PJ Library
Ohev Tzedek will be hosting the PJ Library Pesach event at 6 pm, Wednesday, April 5.

Kiddush to honor Shirley Kessler
The Kessler family will be sponsoring a special Kiddush luncheon following services on Saturday, April 8, in honor of Shirley Kessler’s 95th birthday. Please join us in this celebration. R.S.V.P. to Ohev Tzedek office by Tuesday, April 4.

OT Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 12, at 7 p.m.
Rabbi Oresky and Father Balasko will continue to lead their monthly OT Board Meetings.

Second Seder
The Second Seder at Ohev Tzedek Temple will be held on Tuesday, April 11, at 9:45 a.m. Rabbi Saul leads a Torah study session after each service.

Rosh Chodesh
The April meeting of the monthly women’s Rosh Chodesh group will be held at Phyllis Oresky’s house at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 27. R.S.V.P. to Phyllis or to the Ohev Tzedek office by Monday, April 24.

Services
Morning Minyan each Thursday at 7:30 a.m.
Shabbat services are held every Saturday at 9:45 a.m. Rabbi Saul leads a Torah study session after each service.

Shabbat services are held every Saturday at 9:45 a.m. Rabbi Saul leads a Torah study session after each service.
Federation restructuring corporate status to protect assets

By Deborah L. Grinstein, Esq.
Endowment Director
Youngstown Area Jewish Federation

At the Annual Meeting of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation on May 15, the voting membership* will be asked to vote on the change of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation from one charitable organization into a separate operating organization. The new structure will create a parent, Youngstown Area Jewish Community Board with control over two separate but connected organizations; one, the “Youngstown Area Jewish Federation,” the operating organization encompassing JCC, JCRC and Human Services agencies of Heritage Manor, Levy Gardens and Jewish Family Services; and the other, the “Youngstown Area Jewish Foundation” which will hold endowments, reserves and other assets to benefit the family of corporate entities.

The diagram shows that although separate legal entities, the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and Foundation are controlled by the parent “Youngstown Area Jewish Community Board.” This legal separation is of utmost importance to protect our endowments, reserves and assets in the Foundation from future potential claims. The Jewish community has endeavored to create a legacy that must be preserved and protected.

The Youngstown Area Jewish Community Board will be the large community board elected by the voting members. The boards of the “Foundation” and “Federation” as well as the Advisory Board of each agency will be appointed by the new “Youngstown Area Jewish Community Board”.

As the complexity of our business and economic development evolves, the Federation evolves for the long term benefit of the Jewish community.

While a corporate restructure is a major undertaking, the actual work of our agencies will continue unchanged. The Federation and its agencies will work to uphold its same mission and provide excellent social services, cultural programming and projects. Financial support through the Annual Campaign and Endowments will fund operations as it has for the past 85 years.

For more information about the corporate restructure or the Annual Meeting to be held on Monday, May 15, 2017, please contact the Federation office at 330-746-3250. An invitation will be mailed for the Annual Meeting. Reservations are required.

*The current Constitution of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation defines a “Voting Member” of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation as an individual of the Jewish faith who resides in the region covered by the Federation, who is 18 years of age or older, and who has contributed to the Combined Jewish Appeal of the Federation during the previous year’s Campaign.

Susan Kanterman Book Club welcomes new members

By Holly Small

When our beloved Susan Kanterman passed away suddenly on Valentine’s Day in 2011, the community was shocked. Susan had touched so many lives with her kindness and hospitality that her friends wondered what they could do to honor her memory.

We know that the rabbis teach that the study of Judaism is a meaningful way to elevate the soul of a departed. Thus, the Susan Kanterman Memorial Book Club was begun.

One book per month is selected by the group, and participants meet at various local restaurants to discuss it, eat, and socialize. Originally the group concentrated on biblical historical fiction, but recently the genre has expanded into more modern, Jewish, topics. Last year, for example, the group read The Lady in Gold and then saw the movie at the theatre.

Laurel Chevlen, the group’s very organized leader, contacts local libraries and e-mails members about the number of copies available, either in print, or electronically, for that month’s selection. In addition, Dr. Len Kanterman, Susan’s husband, purchases a copy for the JCC library that can be borrowed and read.

The Susan Kanterman Book Club welcomes any woman who would like to learn, discuss, (or not, some attend without having read the book of the month), laugh, eat and enjoy each other’s company — in other words, carry on the warmth and friendship extended and inspired by Susan.

Please e-mail Laurel if you would like to receive notification of upcoming gatherings. lchevlen@yahoo.com

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Heritage Manor earns 5-star rating

Heritage Manor has moved from a 4-star to a 5-star rated facility as designated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This system rates facilities according to three categories of review, which include the following:

- Quality measures for short-term and long-term stay residents,
- Staffing levels
- Surveys that are completed regularly by the state and federal governments.

The Nursing Home Compare website (at Medicare.gov) gives those interested an opportunity to review the ratings of nursing homes from a one-star to a five-star rating based on the categories above.

Since this rating system was adopted in 2008, Heritage Manor has always been either a four-star (above average) or a five-star (much above average) in designation.

The community needs to know that this achievement is very difficult to attain and maintain. While this is a moving target of reviews and resident assessments, kudos go to the Heritage staff for making sure that the standards of care and services that Heritage provide are the highest possible for the Home’s residents.

There is no perfect way to assess nursing homes, but looking at the website and touring the facilities will certainly help in deciding which one is best for a loved one.

Rabbi Richard A. Block to ask ‘Are we serious Jews?’ at Rodef Sholom

Rabbi Richard A. Block will address “Are we serious Jews? Reflections on Jewish Identity” on Friday, April 7 at 6 p.m. in the Rodef Sanctuary.

Rabbi Block has served as Senior Rabbi of Temple – Tifereth Israel in Cleveland, OH since 2001. Designated by Newsweek as “one of the top 25 pulpits rabbis in America,” Rabbi Block is a passionate, widely recognized advocate for Israel and the U.S.-Israel strategic alliance. His recent writings have appeared in Time, The Jewish Daily Forward, Tablet Magazine, Huffington Post, The Times of Israel, The Tower Magazine, JTA, The Jewish Week, Haaretz, and elsewhere, and are widely shared on social media. In 2007, HUC-HIR conferred upon him an honorary doctorate, and he was the Hebrew Free Loan Association of Cleveland’s 2012 “Man of The Year.”

He is immediate past president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the rabbinic leadership organization of Reform Judaism. As its president, Rabbi Block represented it on The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and chaired the Reform Leadership Council, comprised of the top lay and professional leaders of the CCAR, HUC-HIR and URJ. He was president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, and chaired PACT, an international partnership of Jewish Federations and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee that assisted more than 10,000 Ethiopian-Israeli children and their families.

As senior rabbi of Congregation Beth Am, Los Altos Hills, CA, Rabbi Block inspired a national partnership for educational innovation, integrated nearly a thousand families from the former Soviet Union in Jewish life, and Jewish Family and Children’s Services of San Francisco presented him its 1999 “FAMMY” Award, “in appreciation of extraordinary caring and dedicated community service.”

Rabbi Block was ordained at HUC-HIR in 1982, receiving awards for academic distinction, writing, and sermonic excellence. While leading Greenwich Reform Synagogue, Riverside, CT, he served as President of the Greenwich Fellowship of Clergy and founded Jewish Community Services of Greenwich. He received the Humanitarian Award of the Council of Churches and Synagogues of Lower Fairfield County for leadership “worthy of esteem and commendation” that “made a significant difference in his community and in our whole region.”

Rabbi Block graduated with honors from the Wharton School and from Yale Law School, where he was an editor of the Yale Law Journal. He was a law clerk to a federal judge and spent four years on active duty in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General’s Corps, including assignments as a Special Assistant US Attorney and a faculty member of the Naval Justice School. He and Susan G. Block, a community leader and volunteer, have been married since 1969. They have two sons, Joshua, President and CEO of The Israel Project, and Zachary, a business executive. They are also blessed with two wonderful daughters-in-law and five beloved grandchildren.

An abbreviated Shabbat service will precede the lecture. There is no cost, but an reservation is required to the Temple office by Tuesday, April 4.
Why should it interest us that this night is different from other nights?

Every year we sit around the Seder table with our family and ask the Four Questions. But what is the idea standing behind them? Why should we care if in all other nights we do not dip vegetables even once, but on this night, we dip twice? What is the message we need to understand from the Four Questions of Passover?

Passover is remembrance and attestation for exodus. Each year the people of Israel eat matzah bread and celebrate the holiday and thus preserve the memory of the miracle and the great salvation that we had back in the days. Year after year, everything has become a routine and a habit. It's very easy to miss the holiday content, to take it for granted. After so many years, before the holiday we spend time cleaning our houses and, buying new stuff for our homes and dear ones.

During the Seder itself, we are waiting for the great meal, the Haggadah we read without really understanding what it says, and for seven days eat Matzah because this is required. The question is what is the inner essence of all of this?

If we take a closer look, we can see clearly that in the Seder there are a lot of unconventional things. Stealing the Afikoman, washing hands twice, uncovering the Matzah and then cover it again, drinking one cup of wine and then pouring a new one, saying half Hallel and only after the meal saying the second half, eat and drink reclining, and there are lots of little details that break our everyday habits.

All these Passover traditions should make us feel that something is strange and different. We'll wake up and start asking questions about it. The essence of Passover is to ask difficult questions. The questions itself are an indication for our will to think seriously and not get caught up by our usual routine.

We can live our lives without stopping even once to think whether we are on the right path. We can celebrate Passover every year with all its traditions and yet not fully understand what we’re celebrating or why we’re celebrating the ways we do. A person who is used to something does it automatically, without thinking if it’s good, if it would promote him, if there are other ways.

He’ll do it anyway as if he were a machine. People usually do not think about their lives every morning: they wake up, drink their coffee, go to work, and continue the day.

For example, they don’t think about which way to go and how to carry out the act of walking. Their legs are taking them without them being noticed, all automatically. To get out of this situation, we have to ask questions which will put us into thinking mode. Because with no questions, there’s no answers that will make us see things differently.

Each person should ask her or himself, “What is the meaning of my life? What is important to me? What do I want to spend my time on? Do I think of myself as a good person? How can I improve myself and my surroundings?”

“What should I think about my Jewish identity? Where am I in the community? What can I contribute to my people? What can I take upon myself Jewishly? What defines me? What is important to me? What is the place of others in my life?” And so on.

The questions are to inspire us and motivate us to think bigger, to explore and understand, to make our existence better.

Those who asks these questions and are interested in getting some answers must eventually reach their inner truth.

(Continued on next page)
We only need to take a closer look at the ordinary things and think. And then, just as on Passover Seder night, to do things differently. To break the routine and habit. To make a little change. To remember why.

Seder night is trying to provoke us to change everything we are familiar with, to make us ask questions. Why is this night different from all other nights? What exactly was going on in the Exodus? What is our uniqueness as a people? What is the lesson we can learn from our history?

From these questions, we can draw conclusions that lead us further to discover more and more of our personal and collective inner truth.

The Four Questions we ask in the Seder brings us to a “thinking” state of mind. How is it that a whole people celebrate the festival in memory of its Exodus? When did it all start? After all, every year we celebrate the holiday as did our ancestors. We all know our history and know the history of the Jewish people. Hence, we need to know the main purpose of this night's traditions, so we can learn from it and take it to the next level.

So for that, we want to wish you all dear community — Happy Passover full of meaningful questions that will arise and some new goals to achieve.

Gon, Shai, and Nuria Erez

**Congregation Rodef Sholom Social Action Committee**

**Second Harvest Food Bank**

Help is needed for the Second Harvest Food Bank Harvest for Hunger food drive during April. This campaign helps replenish the Food Bank’s shelves for the spring and summer months. Look for the yellow barrels located at both the Handler Hall & Woodbine entrances. For monetary donations, make check payable to Second Harvest Food Bank.

**Family Shabbat**

**With musician Marc Rossi**

**Saturday, May 13, 10 a.m. Tamarkin Chapel**

Lunch will follow the Shabbat Service in Handler Hall

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**Carlebach, Nelson featured at 150th anniversary gala**

**Saturday, May 13**

**Dinner is at 6 p.m. in Strouss Hall**

**Concert is at 7:30 p.m. in Rodef Sholom’s sanctuary**

Neshama Carlebach, a leading superstar in contemporary Jewish music, is continuing the legacy established by her father, the late Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach. Like her father, Ms. Carlebach’s talent and charisma captivate and edear her to people of all ages, faiths and backgrounds. She has performed and taught in cities worldwide, has sung on the Broadway stage, has sold more than one million records, and was a six-time entrant in the 2011 Grammy Awards. Neshama was one of the creators of the Broadway play “Soul Doctor”, about the life and times of her famous father, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach. Her ninth recording, Soul Daugher, features performances by the original Broadway cast of the musical. Ms. Carlebach is currently touring with a new band and gospel choir and joyfully raising her two sons, Rafael and Mical.

A classically trained musician who is equally versed in rock, jazz and world music, Josh Nelson combines his broad range of influences into a breathtaking musical style that is accessible to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Whether appearing solo or with an elite ensemble of world class musicians,

Mr. Nelson’s presence and performance style is high energy and captivating. His music builds community, lifting up congregations and concert audiences alike through experiences that are at once energizing and deeply moving. Most recently, he starred as Shlomo Carlebach in the Off-Broadway revival of “Soul Doctor” at New York’s Actors Temple Theatre.

Invitations will be forthcoming for the optional dinner. There is no cost for the community concert.
10 modern plagues to consider at this year’s Passover table

By Rabbi Frank Muller
Congregation Rodef Sholom

We are currently in the Jewish time zone between Purim and Passover. These two holidays seem so completely different in nature.

Purim is a minor observance, while Passover is a major festival. The story of Purim is found in the Book of Esther, a much later source than the Passover story as told in the Book of Exodus. The former is celebrated in the temple with frivolity and fun, whereas the latter is observed in the home with a defined set of rituals, singing, and the warmth of family and friends gathered around a beautifully prepared table partaking in a fancy meal with traditional foods.

Despite vast differences in historical origin and modern-day observance, Passover and Purim are actually linked quite strongly by what they both celebrate—deliverance from our enemies and freedom from subservience, domination and persecution. Haman wanted to destroy the Jewish people because they wouldn’t bow down to him, and Pharaoh, who thought he was God, sought to keep the Israelites enslaved for all eternity. Further solidifying the connection between these two holidays is a series of special Sabbaths on the Jewish calendar which mark the countdown from Purim to Passover—Shabbat Zachor, Shabbat Parah, Shabbat Ha-Hodesh and Shabbat Hagadol.

These two holidays have been made especially poignant this year with two very alarming trends which have dovetailed to create a frightening scenario for the American Jewish community and other oppressed people in a number of Muslim countries. With over 100 bomb threats called into JCCs around the nation, in addition to desecrated gravestones at a number of Jewish cemeteries in major cities, the American Jewish community is under assault as it has not been in decades, perhaps ever. Who would have thought it possible just a few months ago that the evil Haman would be resurrected and personified in our own day under the guise of an anti-Semitic, extremist fringe, emboldened to act on its hateful ideology in an atmosphere where racism, bigotry and intolerance of all kinds have become normalized.

The other alarming trend lies in the recent efforts of the Trump administration to mandate a new draconian immigration law which would effectively close our borders to those living in half a dozen Muslim countries. Passover is not only about the liberation of our Israelite ancestors from slavery in Egypt three millennia ago. It is a universal saga which extends out to all who seek freedom from oppression and persecution in their own lands, seeking a better life in the land of opportunity which is the United States of America. From the victims of war-torn Syria to the daily hardships and travails facing refugees from Libya, the Sudan, Iran, Somalia and Yemen, our Haggadah intones, “Let all who are hungry come and eat.” This hunger represents not only a physical hunger for food, but for the want resulting from economic hardship, lack of opportunity and the desire for a liberation from the bondage that keeps people living in squalor and deprivation in their own countries. America used to be called the “Goldene Medinah,” the golden land of opportunity, by Jewish immigrants escaping Czarist Russia and other Eastern European countries between 1880 and 1920. It was during this time when two million of our co-religionists were allowed into our country to start new lives, welcomed by the Statue of Liberty and the promise of the poetic words of Emma Lazarus, emblazoned on the base of the structure—“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” What happened to that promise? One would hope that our nation has evolved from the days 75 years ago when too many Jewish refugees fleeing Hitler and the Nazi reign of terror in Germany and much of Europe were denied entrance onto our shores because of fear that they would become an economic burden to our country. I realize that the circumstances today are quite different, with the fear of terrorists infiltrating our borders to commit atrocities against innocent American civilians complicating the issue significantly.

There are no easy answers. But one thing I do know is that America has always been the land of freedom and opportunity—a safe haven for the downtrodden and the oppressed of the world. This has been the ethical underpinning and the moral credo of our nation since its founding. To lose the raison d’etre that has defined America for nearly 250 years would be a great tragedy indeed.

It is a core value of our Jewish tradition as well. In the Torah are we admonished, “When foreigners reside among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native born. You shall love him as yourself” (Leviticus 19:33:34).

Religiously justified terrorism is a serious problem that must be addressed. Religion can be abused and twisted to fuel hatred, violence and murder. This is true of all faiths—Islam, Christianity, and Judaism included. It is never acceptable when leaders use religion or any other potent ideology to incite violence or justify targeting innocent civilians. This is not a new problem, but one to which real answers are quite challenging to find in our own time.

Passover is the holiday where difficult questions are not only allowed but encouraged. The youngest child chants the Four Questions at the beginning of the Seder meal, but we as adults must discuss other, more challenging questions as the night progresses.

So what do you think are the top 10 modern-day plagues which are threatening American society today? I’ve come up with my own list. I’d be curious to know about your choices.

(Continued on next page)
Rabbi Muller (continued from previous page)

Let’s start with these 10 plaques which I feel are America’s most significant problems today. All are grist for the mill to discuss around our Seder tables to be like the four rabbis of B’nai B’rak who, the Haggadah informs us, stayed up all night discussing the many issues of their time.

So instead, select one or two from my list or a few of your own, and make the Seder a relevant learning experience for all who are hungry to discuss and debate. Make this year’s Passover a memorable one not just because of the food, but from the food for thought generated by the thoughtful minds joining you to celebrate The Festival of Freedom.

Darlene joins me in wishing all of you a very happy, healthy, enlightening and inspiring Pesach.

President’s message

By Arthur Greenbaum, M.D.
Congregation Rodef Sholom

On March 10, Elliot Legow led an innovative Shabbat service with congregation-directed prayer. The service was followed by an Oneg in Handler Hall, where there was an amusing performance of the Purim story by various children in the congregation, directed by Nancy Burnett.

It is interesting, as reported in this week’s Wall Street Journal, that what is in actuality a rough story of our near annihilation in ancient Persia, is celebrated for the victory of our freedom over the evil plans of King Xerxes’ prime minister, Haman, and candy-coated, I would add, for a more palatable presentation.

Sisterhood President, Sally Blau, announced that the work of renovating Strouss Hall was proceeding rapidly to be ready for the events in late April, including Hannah Kunkel’s Bat Mitzvah and the spectacular concluding events of our 150th Celebration.

Also many years ago in a place far away, as a small boy I attended Hebrew School at Temple Israel in Providence, Rhode Island. The circumstances were different then. Both of my parents worked, and I was obliged to get to Hebrew School on my own, either by foot or bicycle up the hill by the Brown University football field.

On Saturday mornings the children attended children-led services in a separate auditorium. Afterward we would head down the hill to watch the football game. The year was 1949, and the Hebrew School was directed by Mr. and Mrs. Klein, both zealous Zionists, and I developed a strong attachment to my Jewish identity and tradition.

We do well by including our children in the services, as children relate well to tradition, forming cherished memories and in that fashion a positive identification. The problem remains what to do about adult attendance. The societal culture and circumstances have changed, with an imposing question of what to do make involvement in Jewish culture and services more meaningful to adults.

L’Chayim!
Sephardi studies scholar sees preserving Ladino as an ‘act of resistance’ against Trump

By Josefin Dolsten

(JTA) — One-year-old Vidal doesn’t know the significance behind the lullaby his father sings him at bedtime. He knows it helps him fall asleep, but not that the Ladino song is part of an effort to teach him what served as the lingua franca of Sephardi Jews of the Ottoman Empire for over 500 years.

And he doesn’t know that when he says his first words, he will join a shrinking cadre of Ladino speakers, most of them elderly, who hold the keys to a culture that is on the brink of extinction.

“‘To lose a language is to lose a world, and we’re on the cusp of that,’” his father, Devin Naar, told JTA.

Naar, a professor of Sephardic studies at the University of Washington, is deeply passionate about preserving Ladino — which is also known as Judeo-Spanish, Judezmo or Judio — the language his grandfather’s family spoke in their native Greece. By teaching Vidal Ladino, Naar hopes to fulfill a longtime dream of transmitting its legacy to his son.

In recent months, there’s something else at stake too. The 33-year-old Seattle resident sees the linguistic roots of Ladino, which include Hebrew, Spanish, Turkish and Arabic, as providing a way to connect Jews with Latinos and Muslims. Preserving Ladino is “a specific political act of resistance in Trump’s America,” Naar said.

“It’s a language of linguistic fusion that is based in Spanish but really brings together a lot of other linguistic elements that I think give it a special resonance, especially in today’s world, because it serves as bridge language between different cultures — between Jewish culture, between Spanish culture and between the Muslim world,” Naar said.

President Donald Trump has signed executive orders to build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico and to ban immigrants from some Muslim majority countries.

“If Trump is interested in building a wall, Judezmo serves as a bridge, and I think that we need bridges such as this in our time,” Naar said.

Naar’s grandfather came to the United States with most of his family in 1924 from Salonica, Greece, in the midst of discriminatory measures being passed against Jews there. Family members left behind later perished in the Holocaust, along with 95 percent of the city’s Jews.

In the U.S., there were other difficulties. Naar’s grandfather heard anti-Semitic slurs and other insults from bigots who mistook him for South American or Middle Eastern.

Speaking Ladino serves as a method of “reclaiming that heritage and activating that heritage not only for personal and family reasons but for political reasons,” Naar said.

Ladino emerged following the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, when the community dispersed throughout the Ottoman Empire and came in contact with local languages as well as different Iberian dialects. At its height in the beginning of the 20th century, the language had about half a million speakers, Naar estimated.

Estimates of current Ladino speakers vary widely, from between 160,000-300,000 people with some familiarity with the language to around 50,000.

(Continued on page 16)
Rabbi Richard Jacobs will speak for Rodef’s 150th anniversary

Rabbi Richard Jacobs, the president of the Union for Reform Judaism, will address "The Future of Reform Judaism: A Vision and A Hope" at services on Friday, May 12, at 7:30 p.m. in Rodef Sholom Sanctuary.

The URJ leads the largest and most diverse Jewish movement in North America, with almost 900 congregations reaching nearly 1.5 million people. For nearly 150 years, the URJ has been at the forefront in promoting an open, progressive Judaism.

Under the dedicated and creative leadership of Rabbi Jacobs, the URJ is engaged in the ongoing implementation of the URJ’s strategic 2020 Vision, a bold and ambitious action plan for the future of Reform Judaism structured around three core priorities: Strengthening Congregations, Audacious Hospitality and Tikkun Olam.

A longtime and devoted creative change agent, Rabbi Jacobs spent 20 years as a dynamic, visionary spiritual leader at Westchester Reform Temple in Scarsdale, NY. During his tenure, he reshaped communal worship, transformed the congregation into a community of lifelong learners, and strengthened the synagogue’s commitment to vibrancy and inclusion. Under Rabbi Jacobs' leadership, WRT completed a new environmentally conscious sanctuary, one of only a handful of Jewish houses of worship in the nation to carry this designation.

Prior to his tenure at WRT, Rabbi Jacobs served the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue, where he founded and co-directed the first synagogue-based homeless shelter in New York City. He was ordained in 1982 by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, where he received numerous excellence awards. Deeply committed to the State of Israel, Rabbi Jacobs has studied for two decades at Jerusalem’s Shalom Hartman Institute, where he is now a senior rabbinic fellow.

Rabbi Jacobs is a product of the Reform Movement, and has held numerous leadership posts within the URJ, the CCAR, ARZA and WUPJ. He also has served on the boards of Jewish organizations in the community-at-large, including American Jewish World Service, UJA-Federation of New York, and, since its inception in 1996, Synagogue 2000 and its successor, Synagogue 3000.

Dedicated to global social justice issues, Rabbi Jacobs was part of a delegation that assessed disaster response following Haiti’s devastating earthquake in 2010. He also observed the plight of Darfur refugees as part of an international humanitarian mission to the Chad-Darfur border area in 2005, and in 2009, participated in an annual conference of Muslim and Christian leaders, held in Qatar, designed to build understanding between the West and the Muslim world.

Rabbi Jacobs and his wife Susan K. Freedman have three children: Aaron, David and Sarah.

There is no cost for the event, but a reservation is required.
Bipartisan bill in Congress targets those who boycott settlements with fines

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Led by Sens. Rob Portman, R-Ohio and Ben Cardin, D-Md., a bipartisan slate of U.S. lawmakers have introduced a bill that would extend fines on companies that comply with a U.N.-designated boycott of Israel to those complying with a broader boycott of Israel, which most of the Jewish community rejects.

Sen. Cardin has argued that the new legislation is not aimed at protecting settlements, but at keeping the Palestinians from forcing Israel’s hand in determining a final-status agreement absent talks.

“We cannot allow these attempts to bypass direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians to go unchecked,” he said in his statement.

His release emphasized that the bill includes language that “does not make any U.S. policy statement about Israeli settlements” and “is only about opposing politically-motivated commercial actions aimed at delegitimizing Israel and pressuring Israel into unilateral concessions outside the bounds of direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.”

The bill comes on the eve of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee annual conference. AIPAC has been assisting lawmakers in drafting pro-Israel bills that would attract support from both parties, a rarity in a Washington increasingly polarized by President Donald Trump’s administration. Its activists will lobby for the bills on the last day of the conference, which runs March 26-28.

On Thursday, a bipartisan raft of senators introduced a bill that would target Iran with sanctions on its missile testing and its backing for destabilization in the Middle East, but that avoids sanctions that have been relieved by the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. A similar bill was introduced the same day by Reps. Ed Royce, R-Calif., the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Steny Hoyer, D-Md., the minority whip. Hoyer and Royce are scheduled to speak at the conference.

Democrats back the Iran deal, which trades sanctions relief for a rollback of Iran’s nuclear program, while Republicans oppose it.

Sen. Portman also announced he is spearheading the creation of a letter urging Department of Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, Attorney General Jeff Sessions and FBI Director James Comey to investigate the recent threats and anti-Semitic crimes with increased fervor. “We are asking them to prioritize these investigations due to the increase in attacks,” he said.

Sen. Portman on a recent visit to the Jewish Community Center of Columbus.

U.N. Secretary General asserts Jewish ties to the Temple Mount

(JNS.org) United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reaffirmed his recognition of Judaism’s historic ties to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount last week, during a recent meeting with World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder in New York.

The WJC released a statement affirming the secretary-general reiterated comments similar to those he had previously made on Israeli radio, in which he said, “It is completely clear the Temple that the Romans destroyed in Jerusalem was a Jewish temple.”

During the meeting, Lauder said “The U.N. was built on the broken bones of the Jewish people after World War II...It is an institution dedicated to making sure that what happened in the Holocaust never happens again,” he said, adding, “So it is particularly outrageous that the U.N. has been hijacked by Israel’s enemies to delegitimize the Jewish state.”

Greetings & Best Wishes at this Holiday Season
Talk about close calls. Today is March 15, and I totally lost track of time and almost forgot about the April column. I don't know about you, but time has a way of getting away from me.

I know that come Passover, I am going to complain that I didn't start early enough again. I think I have talked about time before, but I seem to have a hard time keeping my days straight.

I think I will blame it all on my kids. It is so wonderful having Marshall and Candy here, but our wonderful celebrations are all getting out of hand. Candy's birthday in November was the first time we were ever able to celebrate together. It meant a lot to me and hopefully to her.

Now, we had another birthday in February, and two in March, and I guess I keep getting caught up in the dinners, presents, and making birthday cards and birthday banners. So you can see, it is all their fault. We are so busy making plans for birthdays that seem to last for at least two days, sometimes three. I haven't bought cards for years because I make my own and they aren't any great masterpiece, but I try to personalize all of them as much as possible.

Then I make banners, on the computer of course, and each one has to outdo the other when possible. I like to find old pictures to attach to the banners beside some cartoon characters that I think reflect that personality or at least the time of year.

Years ago I downloaded approximately 3,000 photo slides into the computer, and I must have about 20 photo

(continued on page 17)
Ladino (continued from page 12)

100,000 speakers. Most of the population today is elderly, but there is renewed interest in the language in some universities in the U.S. and Israel as well as among Sephardi Jews.

Teaching Vidal Ladino has its challenges — there is no complete English-Ladino dictionary and most speakers are older. Naar was recently reading Vidal a children's book about a dinosaur with "slippery flippers" and found himself at a loss for how to translate that expression into Ladino. He consulted a scholar in Israel and a local Ladino speaker to get it right.

"It's a learning process for me, both speaking to him and recognizing the limits of my vocabulary and trying to expand my vocabulary," Naar said.

But he isn't alone. Naar enlisted the help of a Seattle-based group of elderly Ladino speakers, who translated "Little Red Riding Hood" into the language as a gift to Vidal. And his wife, Andrea, speaks to their son in a mix of English, Spanish, and Ladino.

Rachel Amado Bortnick, the founder of an online community for Ladino speakers, told JTA that she had only heard of one other case in the last decade of a child being taught to speak Ladino.

“There’s no community that uses it daily — it’s very challenging, to put it mildly, to actually pass on the language in the way that a person like me grew up in,” said Bortnick, who learned Ladino as a child in her native Turkey.

Naar’s interest in the language goes back to his family history. He grew up hearing his grandfather and older relatives speak the language.

But by the time he started college in 2001, he had only learned a few words: greetings, curses, food-related words and liturgical passages. Questions from classmates about his last name, which did not sound like the Ashkenazi Jewish names they were familiar with, motivated him to dig deeper into his heritage.

He started studying Sephardi history and asked his grandfather to teach him Ladino.

A year later, Naar was able to read letters detailing the fate of family members who had perished in Auschwitz. The letters, written in Ladino by a family friend after World War II, had been tucked away in a closet, and some of Naar’s family members had been unaware of their existence and the details they provided of the deaths of family members.

"The older generation, they couldn't believe it. They hadn't heard somebody speak like that in years, so that was very powerful for me," Naar said.

Now he’s doing his part to pass the language on to the next generation — and with it, a set of values.

“One of my goals in trying to teach Vidal Ladino would be so that he has a sense of connection and awareness, not only of where he comes from, but also how the culture that he is connected to is connected to many other people, so that if he sees that immigrants in general or Spanish-speaking immigrants or Muslims in America are being maligned, I hope that he would be inspired to stand up.”
El Emeth in April

Board of Directors
Tuesday evening, April 4, 7:30 p.m.

The El Emeth Executive Committee meeting begins at 6:30 pm.

Jewish Christian Dialogue
Jewish Christian Dialogue will meet on Wednesday, April 5 for its monthly session. Refreshments are served at 12:30 p.m. with the program beginning at 1 p.m. Dr. Sudhakar Rao, M.D. will present the Hindu traditions pertaining to the theme, “Our Most Important Values and Connection to Sinai.” All are welcome to attend.

Second Seder
Reservations are being taken until April 3 for El Emeth’s 8th annual Second Seder to be held Tuesday evening, April 11 at the Temple. Minyan will take place at 5:45 p.m. with the Seder beginning at 6:15 p.m. Following the interactive Seder led by Rabbi Schonberg, a full-course kosher-for-Passover-catered holiday dinner will be served. Reservation forms can be found in the Temple Bulletin or in the office. More information can be obtained by calling the office at 330-759-1429.

Passover services
Passover services will be held the first two days, April 11 and 12 at 9:30 a.m. and the last two days, April 17 and 18 at 9:30 a.m. Yizkor will take place on April 18 at approximately 11 a.m.

A Passover Kiddush luncheon will be held following Shabbat morning services on Saturday, April 15. A soup and salad bar lunch will be served. Please call the office to respond if you plan to attend.

Sisterhood Shabbat
Sisterhood Shabbat will take place on Saturday morning, April 22 at 9:30 a.m. Sisterhood members will participate in the service and a Kiddush Luncheon will follow the services. Everyone is invited to attend. R.S.V.P. to the office by April 20.

Shmoozing with Shmulik
Shmoozing with Shmulik will meet on Monday morning, April 24 from 10:30 a.m. until noon for some fun in Yiddish. Coffee and pastry are served.

Rosh Chodesh
Women’s Rosh Chodesh will take place on Wednesday, April 26 at 11:30 am. All women are invited to come for brunch and a learning session on the new month of Iyar led by Carol Gottesman. Please RSVP to the office for brunch.

Sisterhood Donor
The annual Sisterhood Donor Luncheon will be held at the Synagogue on Thursday, April 27 at 11:30 a.m. A special afternoon is planned including a lovely luncheon beginning with hors d’ouerves and drinks. Bobbie Berkowitz will be honored for her many years of creating Leagram books for members and their families. Entertainment will be provided by singer Michelle Wade. Cost for the lunch is $12 plus a minimum $25 donation for Donor.

Services
Daily Minyans are at 5:45 p.m. every day including Saturdays. Friday morning Minyan is at 7 a.m. and Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

YWCA accepting entries for 35th annual women artists exhibition

YWCA accepting entries for 35th annual women artists exhibition

MaryLou Finesilver (continued from page 15)

albums that aren't on the computer. Therefore, I spend a lot of time researching and sometimes the banners and the cards can take hours to put together. But it is fun and in the end the name of the game is being together and having the opportunity to be able to have fun, laughs and enjoy our Simchas.

I am so fortunate to be able to have these kids around, well maybe “kids” is not the right description anymore. I know that their father would have loved all the hoopla. We are “gebensht mit kinder.” It's Yiddish, look it up.

Now that the birthdays are over, we can look forward to my favorite holiday, Passover. This is when I cook again, and time for cooking most of the old recipes. I am once again making my Mother’s matzo balls with a neshama (soul) or filling consisting of matzo meal, schmaltz and cinnamon.

They are also the kind you don't drop into the china bowls, they could break it. I know that Candy wants to make a matzo kugel with apples — a recipe, her mother made. Sounds good. Everyone joining us brings something.

Naomi Fine is making cookies, but also her famous cole slaw. David Camie is frying the turkey, always delish; Shelly will make a desert, I think and Hilar makes the best relish tray and usually fills in with whatever is needed. Great family and friends We look forward to everyone being squashed around our dining room table. Really good friends and family!! Happy Pesach everyone. A happy celebration for all and a time to give that extra prayer for peace.
Rodef Sholom Sisterhood annual donor brunch and fashion show

Congregation Rodef Sholom Sisterhood Annual Donor Brunch and Fashion Show featuring Fashions from Suzanne’s will take place on Sunday, April 23, at 10:30 a.m.

The charge is $18 for Sisterhood members and $25 for guests.

Along with a brunch and fashion show, there will be a sisterhood basket raffle.

To plan accordingly, Sisterhood asks that reservations be made by Tuesday, April 18. Call the temple office at 330.744.5001. Payment may be made at the door.

The Fried Leadership Conference: learning, connecting, singing and worshipping

The Annual Fried Leadership Conference was held in Charleston, SC, March 2-8, and I had the awesome opportunity to represent Congregation Rodef Sholom Sisterhood. The conference’s purpose is to hone leadership skills, further Jewish learning, and deepen connections with other Sisterhood leaders and Women of Reform Judaism. In the many workshops I attended, what I learned from experts and from other participants better prepared me to guide Sisterhood and serve as a more capable leader in our community.

Spring—Daylight Saving Time
All of this means Passover (Pesach) is fast approaching

Passover’s most important things to know about
“Our greatest contributions to the world summarized in five words: memory, optimism, faith, family and responsibility.” — Rabbi Benjamin Blech

Sofo Shel Davar
“When all is said and done, we are Women of Reform Judaism and that’s the bottom line. Together, Reform Jewish Women make magic. This is not about winning or losing. This is about fine tuning, adjusting course if necessary, and building from strength to even greater strength. This is our goal.”

With Love & Sisterhood,
Your Sisterhood President, Sally Blau
Bat Mitzvah of Hannah Beth Kunkel

On Saturday, April 29, Hannah Beth Kunkel will be called to the Torah in the Sanctuary of Congregation Rodef Sholom. Hannah is in the seventh grade at Greenville Junior High. She has been on the Honor Roll and Principal’s List with straight As. Hannah is a member of the Junior High Choir and will be participating in the upcoming track and field season for Greenville Junior High.

In addition to choir and track, Hannah enjoys a variety of hobbies including drawing, creating art, and baking. She has won the Outstanding Youth award twice at a local fair for baking: once a blueberry pie and once for a creative cake. She has also won the High Point Youth Trophy in the Fun Show in 2015.

Hannah enjoys spending time with her friends. Currently she is helping her best friend create an animated show called “Nova”. They have written a script and developed and drawn out characters and settings for the show.

Hannah’s parents are Tedd and Karen Kunkel. She has two siblings, Teddy and Karina.

Her parents have extended an invitation for a kiddush luncheon immediately following the service. They request no gifts, and ask that reservations be made to the Temple by Tuesday, April 25.

Sally Blau honored with endowment pin

The family of Sally M. Blau, president of Rodef Sholom’s Sisterhood, donated to the WRJ endowment, so that she could be awarded the pin of recognition by Blair C. Marks, WRJ national president.

The purchase of the pin goes toward the endowment. The interest from the endowment does the work of the Yes Fund.

Ms. Blau received the pin on March 6 at the dinner ending service at the leadership conference at the Marriott Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina.

More Purim fun

At Akiva’s Purim Celebration: (Top, from left) Naomi Sargent, Cameron Silverman, Violet Rawl. (Below, from left) Astronaut, Liam Stanton; Popcorn: Kaleb Harris (won 1st place); Sophie Heschmeyer.

More from the JCC Purim Carnival: (Above) Piper McNeil (Below) Brayden Stoklosa, Bird (Ouija), Nicholas Carano (holding the bird).
More value for members as JCC expands mission and facilities

A clock in the lobby of the Youngstown Jewish Community Center is counting down the time until the JCC Logan Campus — the former Logan Tennis and Swim Club — opens its doors and outdoor pool during Memorial Day Weekend.

The grand opening party may well be the most visible evidence of a new JCC initiative which will expand both the services and the approach of the center.

It’s called יָחַד Beyachad, a one-word explanation for the new directions the Youngstown Jewish Community Center is taken to meet the needs of its current members and the entire community.

JCC Director Michael Rawl says that Beyachad means “coming together.” So the Beyachad Youth and Family Initiative which he initiated stresses more of a focus on families.

He said, “We realized that while our programming served adults well, we needed to offer more to children and their families.”

As a result, the annual JCC membership for families has been reduced by $200, and joining the Center is only $55.

Because many older adults are responsible for the care of their grandchildren, the elders can now buy a grandchild membership as part of their own fees. Other types of memberships are also available.

Performing arts after-school programs have been added through the JCC schools of dance and music.

One of the racquetball courts at the JCC’s main campus on Gypsy Lane was repurposed and remodeled as a dance studio with ballet, tap, and jazz classes as well as ninja training.

Through the School of Music, students can learn guitar, violin, piano, and percussion.

Mr. Rawl said that the Center has also been renovating the whole infant toddler wing — classrooms one at a time, then the bathrooms and then the hallway. “We expect those projects to be finished before the summer.” In addition, a youth multi-purpose room is being created in the lower level.

“Another aspect of the Beyachad initiative involves reaching out to community groups that we can partner with,” said Mr. Rawl. Part of that plan, SwimSafe 500 funded by the Thomases Family Foundation and the United Way will be serving 650 children for six free swim lessons.

The Logan Campus swimming pool will also facilitate swimming lessons and the JCC Swim Team. The Liberty property includes changing rooms and showers, tennis, outdoor basketball, bocce, shuffleboard, a concession stand and a baby swimming pool, volleyball, tetherball, two picnic pavilions, and more. JCC Members can enjoy outdoor family fun nights with movies, s’mores, karaoke, card nights, and a host of other summertime events.

The Logan Swim Club began operating in the 1960s, Mr. Rawl said, but more recently, it was unable to invest in improvements and maintenance. Now, the pool can be repainted as well as upgrades to other parts of the facility.

Contact the Membership Office at 330 746-3250 x 153 for more information.
Egalitarian yeshiva wants to expand learning among Jews in the pews

NEW YORK (JTA) — In the upstairs sanctuary of a Manhattan synagogue, a group of rabbis is studying Jewish texts on pluralism and community. One floor below, 22 students are sitting in pairs poring over the book of Exodus.

The students spend all day, every weekday in the building, studying Jewish text and observing strict Jewish law in a gender-equal environment. The rabbis, by contrast, leave the building that afternoon and return to their communities across the country, which range from Reform synagogues that don't observe traditional Jewish law to Orthodox ones that eschew full gender equality.

The two groups illustrate the dual mission of Mechon Hadar, a Jewish study institute now celebrating its 10th anniversary. As opposed to other Jewish schools offering college degrees or rabbinic ordination, Hadar hopes instead to form an educated, egalitarian Jew binic ordination, Hadar hopes instead to form an educated, egalitarian Jew

In-depth exploration

“[It’s] a place in which you can be your full Jewish self without compromising on questions of values and gender that is in line with tradition and really continuing that,” Kaunfer said. “Being a place that other people can point to and say, ‘Oh yeah, the kind of Jewish life that I believe in exists, and here it is.’”

Core to that Jewish life are its groups of full-time students, who spend either a summer or academic year doing what was once almost exclusively the province of Orthodox men: learning over pages of Talmud, Bible and philosophy from morning to night. The students also teach part-time across the New York City area and engage in social service.

Independent

Hadar was founded in 2006 by Held and two other rabbis, Ethan Tucker and Elie Kaunfer. Although Kaunfer and Held were ordained at the Conservative movement’s Jewish Theological Seminary, and Tucker earned his doctorate from the pluralistic Israel-based yeshiva Pardes, a few liberal Orthodox schools and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

“[It’s] a place in which you can be your full Jewish self without compromising on questions of values and gender that is in line with tradition and really continuing that,” Kaunfer said. “Being a place that other people can point to and say, ‘Oh yeah, the kind of Jewish life that I believe in exists, and here it is.’”

Core to that Jewish life are its groups of full-time students, who spend either a summer or academic year doing what was once almost exclusively the province of Orthodox men: learning over pages of Talmud, Bible and philosophy from morning to night. The students also teach part-time across the New York City area and engage in social service.

In-depth exploration

“It’s fascinating and really important to our society today to have this in-depth exploration of all sides of issues, of opinions you ultimately end up rejecting or disagreeing with, hearing all voices,” said Johanna Press, one of this year’s fellows, who came to Hadar after becoming more Jewishly observant in college and then spending a year studying in Israel.

“The beit midrash is the best educational environment I’ve been in,” she added, using the Hebrew term for a study house. “It’s OK to be working. It’s about engaging in the process.”

Beyond the shorter seminars, Hadar has expanded its footprint with study programs in Israel, as well as engagement with other movements’ institutions. Its Community Beit Midrash, held every month, brings together teachers from Hadar, the pluralistic Israel-based yeshiva Pardes, a few liberal Orthodox schools and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

“I see ourselves in league with them in a very deep way,” Kaunfer said of the other schools taking part. “The Jewish world likes to categorize and distinguish, and I feel like we’re more in the world of looking at the points of unity between us.”

This weekend, Mechon Hadar will celebrate its first decade with a sold-out retreat at a hotel in Teaneck, New Jersey, that will include Shabbat prayer, study and a concert on Saturday night.

Looking forward, Hadar hopes to expand its study programs, as well as
Israel's rescue motorcycles can reach those needing medical help faster than it might take an ambulance to arrive and in less accessible locations.

When emergencies occur, rapid medical treatment increases chances of survival exponentially. Most American Jews know of Magen David Adom, Israel's principal rescue service.

But when an ambulance can't reach victims quickly enough, motorcycle medics can.

Using specially equipped motorcycle ambulances, United Hatzalah's network of more than 3,200 volunteer medics help save thousands of lives each year across Israel by providing medical treatment in an average response time of 3 minutes or less. The humanitarian services are free, universal and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

On a recent morning, a man in east Jerusalem decided to check in on his relatives after not being able to reach them by phone. He knocked on the front door but didn't get a response. There was a strange burning smell emanating from the doorway, but he didn't see any flames. The concerned relative immediately called emergency services for help.

He immediately saw the lethal threat — a wood-burning stove had been lit all night long and had consumed the oxygen inside the home and replaced it with smoke. All of the windows were closed, which caused everyone inside to inhale the poisonous gasses.

Roman Firas, a Muslim volunteer EMT from the neighborhood and a professional medical translator, was at home when the United Hatzalah dispatch center alerted him to the emergency nearby. He jumped on his ambucycle, raced to the address, and arrived in minutes.

Firas ran up to the front door, turned the knob, and found it unlocked. Knowing the family could be in danger, he opened the door, and a huge gust of smoke billowed out. Firas instinctively turned back for a breath of fresh air, then entered the residence.

Firas quickly opened the windows to facilitate fresh air flow. He then searched the bedrooms and located two parents and three children. The mother was losing consciousness rapidly while the father and children were all semi-conscious.
PHILADELPHIA, March 15 – The nonprofit organization Challah for Hunger today voiced serious concern over a ‘troubling’ new report that says as many as two-thirds of community college students do not have access to basic nutritional food, said Challah for Hunger CEO Carly Zimmerman. “Food insecurity and hunger on college campuses in general is a growing problem hiding in plain sight.”

Challah for Hunger’s Zimmerman was responding to a new report released March 15, “Hungry and Homeless in College: March 2017 Results From a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education,” by the Wisconsin Hope Lab and the Association of Community College Trustees, that found nearly two in three of 33,000 community college students at 70 campuses in 24 states either could not afford nutritious food or were forced to rely on socially unacceptable ways to secure healthy food (see the study here: http://wihopelab.com/publications/hungry-and-homeless-in-college-report.pdf).

Pointing to this study and a recent survey that 48 percent of students at all types of colleges reported experience food insecurity, Challah for Hunger today also urged the Government Accountability Office (GAO) – the investigative arm of Congress – to launch a comprehensive national study of food insecurity on college campuses, and offered its support for the undertaking.


“As an organization that works directly with college students to address hunger nationally and locally, we believe that no one should have to sacrifice food for an education,” the Challah for Hunger letter said to U.S. Comptroller General Gene Dodaro, the head of the GAO. “We stand ready to offer our insight into this issue gained from over a decade of experience working hand-in-hand with campus professionals and student advocates.”

Challah for Hunger has been working on campuses for over a decade to raise money to combat hunger by baking and selling challah, the braided bread traditionally eaten on the Jewish Sabbath (Shabbat). Challah for Hunger’s network extends to 80 campuses in 30 states.

In partnership with MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, Challah for Hunger recently began training student advocates on nearly 40 public and private colleges and universities to research food insecurity at their schools and to educate their peers about the issue.

About Challah for Hunger:
Challah for Hunger is a Philadelphia-based nonprofit organization that works directly with college students to address food insecurity on campuses. In over a decade, Challah for Hunger has provided nearly 1 million meals to students in need.

Intel to acquire Israeli tech firm Mobileye for $14.7 billion

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The U.S. chipmaker Intel will pay $14.7 billion to acquire the driverless technology firm Mobileye in what reportedly is the largest-ever purchase of an Israeli high-tech company.

In a joint announcement Monday, the companies said the combination “is expected to accelerate innovation for the automotive industry and position Intel as a leading technology provider in the fast-growing market for highly and fully autonomous vehicles.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel called Mobileye CEO Ziv Aviram to congratulate him, calling the deal in a tweet a source of “Israeli pride.”

“This deal proves that the vision we are leading is coming true. Israel is becoming an international technological powerhouse. Not only in regards to cyber, but in regards to vehicles as well,” Netanyahu said in a statement released by his office.

Aviram reportedly told Netanyahu that the company and its research would remain based in Israel.

Mobileye was founded in 1999 with a mission to help cut the number of injuries and fatalities caused by vehicles. It employs 600 people.

Mobileye and Intel already are collaborating with BMW on a project that will see the production of 40 self-driving test cars. They are scheduled to hit the road later this year.

The sale is expected to close in nine months, according to the companies. The boards of both companies have already approved the deal, which is subject to certain regulatory approvals and other closing conditions.
on a local level throughout North America. Through the program, we mail free, high quality Jewish children’s literature and music to families every month.

**PJ Library: Passover Celebration**
Date: Wednesday, April 5
Time: 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Location: Ohev Tzedek
5245 Glenwood Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44512

**CAMP JCC registration is open!!**

**June 5-August 11**

Grades 1-8
Camp JCC provides a safe, fun environment for campers to build lifelong friendships through unforgettable adventures and quality care. Camp families are able to design their summer experience through our flexible scheduling with options to register for five-day weeks, three-day weeks, a combination of three and five-day weeks, and specialty camp weeks. Visit jccyoungstown.org for more details on all the fun camps we are offering.

**Art Education and Exploration**
Our JCC art curator will be leading this three-day after-school program where we will help children begin to explore the world of art!

**Date:** April 25, 26, 27
**Time:** 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
**Location:** JCC

**$15/Member $20/Non Member**
Register online at jccyoungstown.org or with the JCC Bursar: 330-746-3250 Ext. 195

**PERFORMING ARTS**

**JCC School of Dance**
Erianne Raib-Ptichkin is a well-trained and experienced local dance teacher collaborating with the JCC as the artistic director of the School of Dance. This new program teaches children the technique, artistry and discipline of dance in a cheerful and positive learning environment. Children develop a variety of transferable listening and learning skills in a classroom setting, while being physically healthy and having fun! To learn more about our new dance program go to jccyoungstown.org.

**Summer Session dates:**
Summer Session I: May 1 - June 11
Summer Session II: July 14 - August 21
Open Houses & Registration
**Date:** Tuesday, April 11, Thursday, April 20, and Friday, April 28
**Time:** 5:00- 7:00 p.m.

**JCC School of Music**
Introducing the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown School of Music. This exciting program will featuring piano, violin, guitar, percussion, and voice lessons housed at the JCC. Visit jccyoungstown.org to learn more and to register for JCC School of Music lessons contact the JCC Bursar’s Office: 330-746-3250 ext. 195.

**Liz Rubino Studios**
For more information on the studio offerings contact Liz Rubino at 330-509-0891 or coaching@lizrubino.com

**Private Sessions**
Liz Rubino offers private sessions in voice, acting, drama therapy, junior voice, and junior acting. All sessions are 55 minutes long with the exception of junior lessons which are 30 minutes long.

**Triple Threat**
An elite training and national performance troupe for ages 10-21. Studio students study voice, drama and dance both privately and in a group atmosphere over two semesters with opportunities for local as well as nationwide performances in NYC, Walt Disney World and more.

**FITNESS**

For more information on fitness programs, contact Sheila Cornell at 330-746-3250 Ext. 182 or Scornell@jewishyoungstown.org

**Get fit fast with Personal Training at the JCC!**

**Personal Training Benefits**
• Personalized safe and effective fitness programs
• Achievement of goals in a short time period
• Improved muscle coordination, strength, endurance, and flexibility

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**Health and Wellness Program**

**Controlling Diabetes**
Angela Palumbo, RN, CDE and Linda Veith RN, CDE, will discuss the tools needed for controlling diabetes. This event is free and open to the public. A light lunch will be served.

**Date:** Friday, April 21
**Time:** 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
**Location:** JCC Multi-Purpose Room
**Reservation required to Sheila Cornell, 330.746.3250 Ext. 182, by Apr. 19**
GROUP EXERCISE

Silver Sneakers Classic
Have fun and move to the music through a variety of exercises designed to increase muscular strength, range of motion and activity for daily living skills. Hand-held weights, elastic tubing with handles and a ball are all offered for resistance. A chair is used for seated and/or standing support.

Date: Mon/Wed
Time: 9:00-9:55 a.m. & 10:00-10:55 a.m.

Noontime Blitz
This Pilates-based class will focus on core strength and stretching. Spend your lunch break building long, lean muscle while gaining flexibility and burning calories.

Date: Tues/Thurs
Time: 12:00-12:55 p.m.

SHLICHIM

Israel Independence Day Celebration (Yom Ha’atzmau)
Everyone is invited to celebrate the 69th anniversary of the State of Israel! We will enjoy excellent Israeli food like falafel, pita and hummus, entertainment for the whole family, and experience a bit of what it’s like to be Israeli. This will be a fun, family event for all the ages. This event is free and open to the public.

Date: Sunday, April 30, 2017
Time: 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.
Location: JCC Multi-Purpose Room
R.S.V.P. online at jccyoungstown.org

AQUATICS

For more information on Aquatics, contact Shawn Chrystal, 330-746-3250 ext. 112 or aquatics@jewishyoungstown.org.

Aquatic Classes

You & Me Baby
In this monthly class, parents assist their children in the water. Children will learn how to float and improve their water skills. Recommended ages: 6-36 months. Swim pants or swim diapers are required.

Date: Saturdays, 9:30-10:00 a.m.
$30/Member $40/Non Member

Learn-to-Swim ages 3 & up
Children will be placed into the appropriate level by the swim instructors.

Level 1: Children are taught basic swimming skills such as floating, blowing bubbles and the correct body positions for freestyle and backstroke.

Level 2: Children are taught the arm motions for freestyle and backstroke as well as the correct breathing patterns for both strokes.

Level 3: Children are taught the basics of breaststroke, butterfly, and diving as well as refining freestyle and backstroke techniques.

Level 4/5: Children will continue to refine the four swim strokes and diving.

Date: Saturdays, 8:50 – 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 – 10:35 a.m.
$30/Member $40/Non Member

Private Swim Lessons
Private swim lessons provide the greatest flexibility among lesson options. The one-on-one attention provided through these lessons creates a personalized setting for learning. Private lessons are great for swimmers of any age from the rookie swimmer trying to learn the basics to the seasoned swimmer looking to improve their skills. Private lessons are also great for adults who want to learn-to-swim or even triathletes looking to improve their skills.

1:1 student/teacher ratio
4 lessons @ 30 minutes
$72/Member $110/Non Member

P.A.L.S. – Persons with Autism who Love to Swim

The JCC offers free swim lessons especially geared towards persons on the autism spectrum. Our instructors have gone through special training and will be using advanced techniques to connect with and aid autistic children during lessons. Those wishing to enroll in the JCC P.A.L.S. program must apply to be on the waiting list by visiting our website at www.jccyoungstown.org and finding the PALS program under the aquatics tab.

A.M. Energizer

Grab an Aqua Jogger belt and get ready for a great workout. This class incorporates a series of exercises and routines in the deep end of the pool that have zero impact on the hips, knees, ankles, or back.

Date: Tues/Thurs
Time: 7:15-8:00 a.m.

Mobility Plus

This class is approved by the Arthritis Foundation. People who have arthritis, chronic orthopedic conditions or those who are returning to exercise after injury will benefit greatly from this class. The concentration is on stimulating joint movements, improving range of motion and increasing balance. No swimming ability required.

Date: Tues/Thurs
Time: 10:00-10:55 a.m.

Dive-In Movie: Pete’s Dragon

Date: Friday, April 21
Time: 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Rentals

The JCC is now booking Graduation Parties in our beautiful Multi-Purpose Room. We can accommodate up to 250 people. Dates are filling up fast! Contact Kelli McCormick to book your party today. 330-746-3250 ext. 284.

NEW Game Time-Birthday Bash

You and your party guests can play basketball, volleyball, kickball, soccer, wiffleball or whatever you like in our full size gymnasium; then enjoy time in our party room. Borrow our gym equipment or bring your own.

$125/Member $150/Non Member
$50/hr. for additional time in the gymnasium

Pricing includes one hour in our spacious gymnasium and one hour in our private party room.

Contact Kelli McCormick at 330-746-3250 Ext. 284 for more details.
Holocaust Survivor, 86, from Brooklyn returning to Auschwitz for first time with IDF soldiers

NEW YORK, March 27 – Forty Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) supporters from across the United States will embark on an unprecedented mission to Poland and Israel April 24-May 3 with Holocaust survivors – one of whom is returning to Auschwitz for the first time since her liberation – and Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers and officers.

Joining the delegation will be Auschwitz survivor Bronia Brandman, 86, who was born in Jaworzno, Poland, and watched two of her sisters being sent to the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Except for her older brother and cousin, who also reside in the United States, her entire family perished in the Holocaust. Brandman, who now lives in Brooklyn, will be returning to Poland – and the death camp – for the first time since it was liberated by the Red Army in 1945.

She has one daughter and two grandchildren who live in Israel, one of whom will accompany her in Poland while the other will continue the journey with her in Israel.

“I came to Auschwitz in 1943 as a child of 12. My parents and four siblings were consigned to the gas chambers. The daily bestiality and dehumanization was beyond words, and the world’s silence was deafening,” said Brandman. “I never wished to return to that place of our degradation and annihilation, but to return in the presence of our noblest, the bravest of the brave – our IDF soldiers, allows my spirit to soar with pride and hope.”

In Poland, Brandman will be reunited with her longtime friend, Giselle “Gita” Cycowicz, 89, who was born in the town of Khust, then part of Czechoslovakia, in the Carpathian Mountains and survived five months in Birkenau. The two met when Cycowicz settled in Brooklyn after the war. Cycowicz eventually made Aliyah to Israel, where all three of her children were already living.

Chaired by FIDF National Vice President Robert Cohen, who founded FIDF’s Washington, D.C., and the Mid-Atlantic chapters, the 10-day “From Holocaust to Independence” mission will span Jewish history, from its darkest moments to its most triumphant. Israeli soldiers and Holocaust survivors will accompany the FIDF supporters on a trip across Poland, attending a dinner with IDF Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Gadi Eisenkot in Krakow, once home to more than 60,000 Jews; tracing the community’s steps from the city’s ghetto to the Buczyna forest, where the Nazis executed more than 800 children; and the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camps.
United Hatzalah (continued from page 22)

The experienced EMT immediately provided the victims with high-flow oxygen. As they breathed in the oxygenated air, they slowly began to regain consciousness. After an additional twenty minutes, ambulances arrived and Firas helped transfer the now-stable patients onto stretchers ready for transport.

As the patients were whisked away to the hospital, Firas breathed a sigh of relief. He knew that the early response he had provided had likely saved some if not all of the family members’ lives. Had they waited the additional time it took for the ambulance to arrive, continuing to breathe in the toxic fumes, they may not have all survived.

United Hatzalah needs to equip its current volunteer corps with more ambucycles. Because seconds count, United Hatzalah established the “Ambucycle Unit” to expedite the arrival of medics to emergency incidents. The use of ambucycles for first response has proven to be a critical link in the emergency chain of survival, allowing rescue personnel immediate access to the scene or home of a patient. The response time of an ambucycle medic averages 90 seconds due to the ability to avoid traffic congestion, road closures, debris, and parking issues.

United Hatzalah medics are dispersed throughout Israel and serve in the areas where they work, study and live. As soon as United Hatzalah’s dispatch receives an emergency call, the LifeCompass System immediately identifies the volunteers closest to the incident. A volunteer could be working in an office building downtown and might receive a call to help a heart attack victim from the very same building.

United Hatzalah’s volunteers are medics, paramedics or doctors – secular and religious, male and female, Jewish and non-Jewish. All emergency calls are responded to and treated regardless of religion, ethnicity, and gender.

Contributions may be made to U.S. A. Friends of Hatzalah, 208 East 51st Street, Suite 303, 208 East 51st Street, Suite 303, New York, NY 10022. Tel: 646-833-7108. Charity No: 11-3533002, Via email to US@Israelrescue.org.

Arrest in bomb threats (continued from page 2)

ports that the prime suspect is Jewish. He praised law enforcement officials in the United States and Israel for their commitment of time and resources to the investigation — as well as the Secure Community Network, which coordinates security across Jewish organizations in North America — for making and keeping the connections between Jewish groups and law enforcement.

“As a community and a society, we must remain vigilant in our effort to counter anti-Semitism and other hate crimes as they appear,” Silverman said. “We are fortunate to know we have partners in law enforcement who will do whatever it takes to bring these perpetrators to justice.”

JCRC statement

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington said in a statement that the threats “have in fact united the Jewish community in its determination to provide services and live proud Jewish lives.”

The statement added: “We also recognize that this one arrest does not necessarily mean the end to the bomb threats, or that all the perpetrators are now in custody. We are confident that law enforcement will continue to seek perpetrators of other acts of anti-Semitism and racism, and must continue our own vigilance.”

Egalitarian yeshiva (continued from page 21)

support communities that share its philosophy. There are already some 100 independent minyanim that broadly accord with Hadar philosophically.

But Tucker, a Hadar co-founder, said the organization needs to work on leveraging its alumni and allies into sustainable, multigenerational communities.

“One of our great challenges and goals has to be how do we help foster a new generation of people, kids and communities that sort of grow up living out this vision,” Tucker said. “The next frontier, as I see it, is actually beginning to generate a community that way transcends our programs and our beit midrash.”

But Hadar’s leadership doesn’t feel that all of its alumni need to narrowly pursue its stance of religiously observant egalitarianism in order to advance its vision. One alumna, Zoe Jick, now runs an English-language, full-time study program at Bina, a secular yeshiva in Tel Aviv, partly with financial support from Mechon Hadar. While she does not observe traditional Jewish law, Jick says Hadar inspired her to encourage Jewish study.

“Hadar 100 percent convinced me that Torah was at the core of my identity,” she said. “I felt like all of a sudden I was provided not only context and content, but given language to the things I felt instinctual about but didn’t know where it was coming from.”
Syrian Kurds could be principal player in peace efforts

By Ariel Ben Solomon/JNS.org

What steps can the West take to defeat Islamic State? The U.S. and Israel should work to push the Syrian Kurds away from the Iran-Shia axis and Russia, and toward an alliance with the Americans and the Israelis, leading experts on Syria and the Kurds told JNS.org.

“The U.S. and Israel could win Raqqa as a loyal Western satellite if they are willing to guarantee its sovereignty and sign a defense agreement,” said Joshua Landis, a Syria expert and director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma, referring to the area consisting of several self-governing regions in northern Syria. Rojava is also commonly known as Western Kurdistan or Syrian Kurdistan.

“But they must be willing to escalate their defense of the Kurds against possible Turkish, Iranian, Syrian and Russian attacks,” he said.

Yet currently, the U.S. and Israel do not value the self-governing regions of Syria as a national interest, Landis argued.

“This was the same problem that the Syrian-Sunni rebels faced. The West doesn’t prioritize Syria over other regional concerns,” he explained, noting that Western nations instead prioritized keeping Turkey as an ally and pivoting to East Asia.

Andiis’s comments come as Chagai Tzuriel, the director general of Israel’s Intelligence Ministry, told Reuters in a report published March 21 that Russia and other world powers should work to curb Iran’s growing military presence in Syria.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military is likely to send up to 1,000 additional ground troops to Syria as part of a future offensive in the Islamic State-occupied city of Raqqa, The Washington Post reported earlier this month. Raqqa serves as the jihadist terror group’s Syrian headquarters. America’s new plan would call for cooperating with Kurdish and Arab forces in northern Syria.

Turkey wants to send its own troops into Raqqa, but is unlikely to do so given its unwillingness to cooperate with the People’s Protection Units (YPG)—a Kurdish militia that the Turks view as supportive of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), a terrorist organization that has a decades-old conflict with Turkey. Reuters reported that the YPG plans on expanding to more than 100,000 troops, from its current level of about 60,000.

At the same time, the U.S. needs to compete for the Kurds’ loyalty with Russia. As Reuters also reported this week, Russia is moving to train Kurdish fighters in northwestern Syria in what YPG spokesman Redur Xelil called “the first [agreement] of its kind.”

Dr. Sherko Abbas, president of the Kurdistan National Assembly of Syria (KNAS) umbrella organization, told JNS.org he shared his ideas about the region with Trump administration officials. Abbas’s plan centers on the possible implementation of safe zones in Syria and ways to defeat Islamic State by using the Kurds as key allies.

Abbas is pleased that so far, the Trump administration appears to support the concept of the safe zones, which would be aimed at stopping the flow of Syrian refugees to the West.

The Kurds, he said, are better partners than Syrian rebel groups whose fighters have defected to Islamist organizations.

“This is not good for the Kurds, other minorities, Israel, the U.S., Europe or other regional countries,” Abbas said. Trump administration officials have “told us that they like the Syrian Kurds,” but that “there were some problematic issues such as the Marxist ideology and links to [Syrian President Bashar] Assad, Iran and the PKK,” he said.

Abbas explained that previous U.S. administrations tried to get the Kurds to join the Islamist-dominated Sunni rebels in Syria. He asserted that KNAS is completely separate from the YPG and the Democratic Unity Party (PYD), the main political organization in Syrian Kurdistan. The PYD dominates the Syrian-Kurdish region “due to support from Assad’s regime, Iran, Russia and the U.S.,” Abbas said.

KNAS remains outside the PYD-YPG coalition because “we see a hope that we can delink them from Assad, Iran and the PKK, and become closer to the U.S. and Israel,” he added. Abbas described the PYD as being dominated by the Syrian government and its allies, but said that with American support, the Kurds could switch loyalties “provided that the U.S. pressures the PYD to delink from Assad.”

Abbas said his organization has been trying to recruit a delegation of Syrian Kurds to visit the West or even Israel for meetings in order to forge an alliance. Regarding Israeli support for Syrian Kurds, he said that Israel “is reluctant because of Iran-PYD connections and its efforts to remain on good terms with the Arabs and Turks.”

Yet Abbas argued that the U.S. and Israel should prioritize supporting the Kurds because they could help break up the Iran-Hezbollah land corridor that stretches from Iran to Lebanon and reaches Israel’s borders.

“The Kurds,” he said, “are the natural allies for America and Israel.”
Israel is one of only two countries in the world today that entered the 21st century with a net gain in its number of trees. But Israel was not blessed with natural forests; its forests are all hand-planted.

When the pioneers of the State arrived, they were greeted by barren land. To claim the land that had been purchased with the coins collected in JNF blue and white pushkes, the next order of business was to plant trees among the rocky hillsides and sandy soil.

Today, JNF and its partners must grapple with the challenge of balancing the phenomenal growth and development Israel has experienced in the last decade with the maintenance of an ecologically sound environment. JNF has been increasingly responsive to the rapidly evolving needs of the country: new water resources, including finding alternative techniques for utilizing waste water as well as brackish and flood water sources, soil conservation issues and river restoration.

JNF, historically committed to strengthening the ties between man and land, has led successful efforts to ensure the legislative protection of designated areas and forests.

Since it was established in 1901, JNF has planted more than 240 million trees all over the State of Israel, providing luscious belts of green covering more than 250,000 acres.

JNF national forest development work creates “green lungs” around congested towns and cities, and provides recreation and respite for all Israelis. While the forests of Israel belong to the people, JNF ensures their environmental soundness and is focusing on diversification, planting trees indigenous to the Middle East such as native oaks, carob, redbud, almond, pear, hawthorn, cypress and the exotic Atlantic cedar.

Restoration of deteriorating, non-productive agricultural lands and the transformation of land in the Negev for agricultural use are today’s primary challenges in maintaining Israel’s agricultural independence. Good farming depends on good land; good land depends on JNF.
4 new kids’ books for Passover, from stories to a seder guide

By Penny Schwartz

(JTA) — From the wizardry of Harry Potter that echoes with Passover’s themes to a cartoon frog who wise-cracks his way through the seder, this year’s new crop of Passover books for kids offers something for all ages and interests.

The selection of fresh reads, including two family-friendly Haggadahs, also includes an unusual Jewish immigrant tale set in rural Argentina and a heartwarming, intergenerational story about an aging grandfather and his devoted granddaughter.

Choose one — or several — to educate and engage the young readers in your family for this Passover, the eight-day festival of freedom that begins with the first seder on the evening of April 10.

The (unofficial) Hogwarts Haggadah
By Moshe Rosenberg; designed by Aviva Shur
All ages; $27.95

Fans of Harry Potter will be in Hogwarts heaven this Passover. Moshe Rosenberg’s Haggadah draws on the parallels between the wizardry of the best-selling “Harry Potter” books and the seder guide.

“From the concepts of slavery and freedom, to the focus on education, to the number four, Harry Potter and Passover share almost everything,” Rosenberg writes in the introduction.

This is the second Jewish Harry Potter-themed book by Rosenberg, a rabbi and Judaic studies educator in New York. (The first was “Morality for Muggles: Ethics in the Bible and the World of Harry Potter.”) Traditionalists, take note: Rosenberg assures readers that every word of traditional Haggadah text, in Hebrew and in English translation, is included. Interspersed throughout is commentary, via the lens of J.K. Rowl-

A Different Kind of Passover
Linda Leopold-Strauss, illustrated by Jeremy Tugeau
Kar-Ben; ages 4-9; $17.99, hardcover, $7.99 paperback

On the way to her grandparents’ house for the seder, a young girl named Jessica is busy practicing The Four Questions, in Hebrew, over and over. Jessica loves spending Passover with her grandparents, where everything is the same year after year — running up the stairs at their apartment, finding piles of blankets and pillows for the sleepover with her cousins, and enjoying the good smells emanating from the kitchen. But this year will be different because her grandfather just got home from the hospital and is too weak to come to the seder table. In this heartwarming intergenerational story, Jessica comes up with a plan for how Grandpa can still lead the seder, continuing the family tradition. Jeremy Tugeau’s large, expressive illustrations capture Jessica’s emotions of joy, disappointment and love she shares her with grandfather.

The Passover Cowboy
Barbara Diamond Goldin, illustrated by Gina Capaldi
Apples and Honey Press; ages 4-8; $17.95

From the acclaimed Jewish children’s book writer Barbara Diamond Goldin (“The Best Hanukkah Ever,” “Journeys With Elijah”) comes an unlikely Passover story set in the Argentine countryside in the late 1800s. Jacob is a young Jewish boy whose Russian family immigrated to Argentina, but he doesn’t quite fit in. He makes a new friend, Benito, who helps him learn to ride horseback. Jacob works up the courage to invite his non-Jewish pal to his family’s seder, but Benito says he has farm chores to do. But Benito ends up coming after all, at just the right moment: when Jacob opens the door to welcome Elijah, just as a flock of chickens arrive, too. Benito helps round up the chickens and joins the seder.

As the family welcomes its new friend, they learn from each other about the meaning of freedom — and Jacob’s mother and Benito also surprise him with a lasso and clothing he needs for an upcoming rodeo. Artist Gina Capaldi puts readers right in the action; kids will feel as if they are riding along on horseback with Jacob and Benito, and they’ll feel part of the family’s seder. An author’s note explains that in the 1880s, Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in Argentina. Goldin also poses a timely discussion question that asks families to imagine what it would be like to move to a new country.

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Bonnie Deutsch Burdman to be named B’nai B’rith Guardian of the Menorah

Bonnie Deutsch Burdman will be honored by B’nai B’rith as the 2017 “Guardian of the Menorah” at a Tribute Banquet at 6:30 pm on Sunday, June 4 at Temple El Emeth, 3970 Logan Avenue, Youngstown, OH.

The Guardian of the Menorah Tribute is presented to outstanding members of the community who have demonstrated, through service and commitment, their devotion to the causes of youth and the Jewish and general community.

Originally from New York City, Ms. Burdman graduated from Cornell University where she was both the managing editor and reporter for the independent Cornell Daily Sun. She received her law degree from American University in Washington D.C. and later served as an adjunct instructor and privately practiced labor and employment law.

After three years of private practice with Youngstown’s leading labor firm, Ms. Burdman became director of community relations and government affairs of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation. She works closely with national Jewish agencies on numerous social justice advocacy projects, serves as the primary Federation staff person in the promotion of a pro-Israel agenda, Holocaust commemoration, and anti-genocide education. She is a frequent speaker at various national and state Jewish professional conferences and events.

Mr. Burdman works extensively in the interfaith and intercultural communities of Youngstown and pursues numerous governmental initiatives in both Washington and Columbus, lobbying on behalf of foreign and domestic issues of concern to the local and national Jewish communities. Ms. Burdman is a member of a national strategic planning/policy advisory committee of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs.

Ms. Burdman currently serves on the boards of the Youngstown Business Incubator, the Western Reserve Public Media/Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, and the Mahoning Valley Power of the Arts organization, where she chairs the advocacy and hiring committees. She is a member of the executive committee of the board of Ballet Western Reserve.

Ms. Burdman is actively engaged with Youngstown State University, most recently serving on the search committee to hire a new history professor and director of the Center for Judaic and Holocaust studies. Previously she served on the search committee for a new dean of YSU’s College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

In January 2017, Ms. Burdman led a mission to Israel with YSU President Jim Tressel and leadership from the Youngstown Business Incubator to explore new partnerships for YSU and YBI in the area of additive manufacturing and 3D printing.

Previously, Ms. Burdman was a member of the board of directors and government affairs committee of the Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce, serving as the first female chairperson of the board and leader of the executive committee. Ms. Burdman is a past president and board member of the Burdman Group, now part of Compass Industries; a 1999 graduate and past member of the board of Leadership Mahoning Valley, and a past member of the leadership advisory committee of the local United Way.

Ms. Burdman was recognized by Youngstown State University for her outstanding leadership in community diversity initiatives. She is a member of Temple El Emeth and its sisterhood, the Jewish Community Center, and the Youngstown chapters of ZOA, B’nai B’rith, and Hadassah.

She served two terms as president of the board of directors of the Commission for Jewish Education and is a member of the program committee for the Center for Judaic and Holocaust Studies at YSU.

Ms. Burdman previously served as an advisor to the local chapter of B’nai B’rith Girls, and is a recipient of the Youngstown Zionist District’s prestige-

(continued on page 33)
Latin America’s largest synagogue welcomes first woman rabbi

RIO DE JANEIRO (JTA) — Latin America’s largest synagogue, the 2,000-family Congregacao Israelita Paulista in Brazil, has inaugurated its first female rabbi.

Some 200 people attended the welcome ceremony for Rabbi Fernanda Tomchinsky-Galanternik held last week at the 80-year-old Sao Paulo temple, also known by the acronym CIP. Ordained in December in Argentina, the Brazilian-born psychologist and mother of one also will coordinate the synagogue’s teaching department.

“CIP began to tread a path that is possible only within Judaism and particularly within such a pluralist community,” Tomchinsky-Galanternik said. “But it can only be done with the presence and the action of all. I look forward to working with everyone in many different ways.”

“Rabbi Fernanda,” as she has been commonly called, is the third female rabbi to serve at a Brazilian synagogue. Rio’s Reform temple ARI was the pioneer, hiring Rabbi Sandra Kochmann of Paraguay in 2003. Brazilian-born Luciana Pajecki Lederman has been the rabbi at the Conservative Comunidade Shalom in Sao Paulo since 2005.

“We believe that women can perform mitzvot and participate in an equal position in religious services,” CIP President Sergio Kulikovsky said to open the ceremony. “Nothing is mandatory, but women are allowed to participate in an egalitarian way.”

Indeed, the synagogue founded by German immigrants in 1936 and affiliated with both the Reform and Conservative movements took several years to assume an openly progressive attitude, although it was led for decades by emeritus Reform Rabbi Henry Sobel, an iconic voice for interreligious dialogue and human rights in Brazil.

“Fernanda is the symbol of a very special moment of the Latin American Rabbinical Seminary — she is the first Brazilian woman to be ordained a rabbi,” said Rabbi Ariel Stofenmacher, CEO and vice president of the Marshall T. Meyer seminary. “She joins CIP to continue the construction of the Brazilian Jewish identity.”

Founded in 1962, the institution is the New York Jewish Theological Seminary’s educational affiliate in Argentina and the academic, cultural and religious center of the Conservative Jewish movement in Latin America.

“In line with all Conservative and Reform synagogues around the world, CIP assumes a clear egalitarian position by receiving Rabbi Fernanda as a full member of the rabbinate,” said CIP Rabbi Michel Schlesinger.

Suzi Kooperman Youth Leadership Award

The Suzi Kooperman Youth Leadership Award is an annual award given to a deserving male or female high school senior who exhibits an interest of service in the Jewish Community, whose actions motivate other youth and who has displayed continuity in service to the community. Along with the award, the recipient will receive a savings bond.

Please note that all information must be received no later than Tuesday, April 11, 2017. The award will be presented at this year’s Youngstown Area Jewish Federation Annual Meeting on Monday, May 15.

If you are interested in receiving an application, please contact Emily Collins at (330)746-3250 ext. 152 or by email at ecollins@jewishyoungstown.org.

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JCRC announces annual Holocaust commemoration events

The Jewish Community Relations Council is announcing its annual Holocaust commemoration programs for this spring’s series of Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance) holiday observances. The annual Shoah Memorial Ceremony will be held on Sunday, April 23, at 4 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center, and the 24th Annual Community Holocaust Commemoration event is set for Tuesday, April 25, at noon in the Rotunda of the Mahoning County Courthouse, Youngstown.

Yom Hashoah is an internationally recognized day set aside for remembering all victims of the Holocaust and for reminding society of what can happen to civilized people when bigotry, hatred, and indifference reign. This year’s local theme, “The Power of Words in the Holocaust,” explores how in any campaign of genocide, words are among the most powerful weapons. The theme also addresses the fact that racial hatred has repeatedly resurfaced in the decades since the Holocaust, and sadly, is still prominent today.

The Holocaust began with words, not mass killings. The poison of anti-Semitism and racism, projected through the mass media and entire political, cultural, and education systems, led a continent into violence and genocide. Germans at the time were willing to overlook the Nazi’s anti-Semitism, because they were attracted to other aspects of the party’s message.

The Nazis knew this and thus relied on the emerging field of public opinion research to probe the needs, hopes, and fears of blue and white collar workers, the middle class, women, farmers, and youth. And, the Nazis further understood the power of mass communication to disseminate hatred and anti-Semitism. While the Nazis are now gone, propaganda lives on and is deadlier than ever. Extremist groups around the globe wield new technologies to incite hatred and perpetrate mass killings and genocides. Reflection on such lessons is a reminder to take action to prevent atrocities and vigorously seek justice for the victims of hatred and inhumanity.

The annual memorial ceremony at the JCC will include participation by, and special recognition of, children and grandchildren of Survivors who will read personal histories or written work tied to their families. Because there are few Survivors left in the community who are able to share their stories first hand, it is crucial that the second and third generations preserve their memories. As direct descendants of Survivors, these individuals share an obligation and profound commitment to honor their relatives, preserve their unique heritage and culture, and educate the community on Holocaust issues.

In addition, the program will feature the announcement of Nancy Friedman’s donation to the Jewish Federation of her late husband Dr. Saul Friedman’s extensive collection of papers, notes, research materials, and Survivor testimonies. A beloved scholar and member of the Jewish community who passed away four years ago, Dr. Friedman served as a professor of history at YSU from 1969 until his retirement in 2006. He was an internationally recognized Holocaust expert, who published numerous award winning books and documentary films.

A recipient of many honors and awards, Dr. Friedman’s career highlight came in 2000 when he received an endowment from the Clayman family to establish a Judaic Studies program at YSU, a program that is still thriving today. Through the generous sponsorship of the Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, as well as additional support from the Elder Family Philanthropic Fund and the Irv and Bea Ozer Memorial Endowment Fund, the Federation will hire a YSU graduate student intern to assist in the proper archiving and storage of the Friedman collection.

The memorial ceremony will also feature special music, student art project (continued on page 35)
On March 17, the University of Haifa and the Israel Antiquities Authority launched a replica of the ancient ship from Ma’agan Michael that sank 2500 years ago.

A replica of the vessel the Ma’agan Michael Ship II went back in the water: 2500 years after the ship sank off the coast at Ma’agan Michael, and 30 years after the shipwreck was discovered and removed from the water.

The official launching ceremony was organized by the University of Haifa and the Israel Antiquities Authority. The replica was built over the past two years, using exactly the same materials, working methods, and tools that were used 2500 years ago.

The ancient Ma’agan Michael ship has always been a star. It was discovered in 1985 by Ami Eshel, a member of Kibbutz Ma’agan Michael, some 70 meters from the kibbutz.

The ship was removed from the sea in 1988 in a project directed by Dr. Elisha Linder, one of the founders of the Department of Maritime Civilizations at the University of Haifa. Most of the ship had been covered in sand, helping to preserve it in a remarkable condition. The keel, numerous wooden plates, 14 crossbars, and the base of the mast were all preserved, offering researchers rare insights into the method used to construct the ship.

In addition, the preserved tools found in the ship included the carpenter’s toolbox, a discovery that sparked the dream of building a replica using the same methods and tools used by the original shipwrights. In a complex procedure undertaken at the University of Haifa, a special preservative was inserted into the wooden base of the ship, which received its own display room at the university’s Hecht Museum.

The late Prof. Yaacov Kahanov of the Department of Maritime Civilizations at the University of Haifa did not abandon the dream of building a replica of the ship. Prof. Kahanov was a young research student when the ship was taken out of the water.

Two years ago, he finally began the work of building a replica, together with Avner Hilman of the Israel Antiquities Authority, for whom the use of the ancient working methods formed part of a doctoral thesis. Together with a team of volunteers, they began the work, most of which took place at the Naval Academy in Akko.

However, the team working on the replica project soon encountered a problem. While they were familiar with the basic principle of the work – assembly using bolts and sockets – the other details were lost in the mists of time. They were unsure of the proper and most efficient way to bend the wooden beams in order to create the curved shape of the ship; the most suitable type of wood for the mast; and the precise temperature to which the copper nails should be heated. In many cases the team worked on a trial and error basis until they produced the desired result.

After two year’s work, the project was completed successfully and the replica was taken to Israel Shipyards and then to Kishon harbor. The ship was officially launched at the harbor according to all the proper ceremonies and will return to the waters where its elder sister sailed 2500 years ago. Prof. Yaacov Kahanov, the leading spirit behind the project, passed away just before the work was completed.

According Ilan Ben Zion, writing for the Times of Israel, “the archaeologists involved in the project seek to learn how ancient mariners sailed against the winds and currents with the technology existing at the time, a quandary that historians still don’t understand despite vast evidence that Mediterranean seafaring existed for centuries before the Ma’agan Michael ship sank.”

Their plan is to sail to Cyprus – once they have enough practice close to the Israeli shore.
Holocaust Educator

As I sit down to give you an update on the library and Holocaust resource center at the JCC, I'm reminded of the upcoming holiday season for both Christians and Jews.

Originally, Pesach was an occasion for public worship during one of the three major pilgrimages to the Holy Temple at Jerusalem, complete with a meal during which the meat of the sacrificial lamb was eaten along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

In time, the meal evolved into a more intimate occasion for families or groups of families and friends. The destruction of the Great Temple in 70 C.E. ended the eating of the sacrificial lamb. However, the tradition and symbolism of the Pesach meal endured. The Seder Haggadah or Order of Narration was transmitted from one generation to another by word of mouth. Gradually, the term Seder(order) came to be used for the ritual including the meal and Haggadah (narration or story) for the name for the text.

It wasn't until the 1300s that the Haggadah began to appear in written form. Now, our library doesn't have anything as far back as that, but we certainly have some very old and interesting Haggadahs in our collection. I have placed some in the showcase in the library because I would love people to see the variety our library houses.

Periodically, during Passover, I will put new ones in and remove other ones, so stop by several times. Just as some examples, there is a Family Haggadah, the New Model seder, a copy of the Amsterdam Haggadah of 1662, an Armed Forces Haggadah that the military were given in World War II, an Interfaith Women's Celebration of Passover Haggadah, numerous Hebrew Haggadahs, a Haggadah put out by Maxwell House coffee, the Tel Aviv Haggadah, the Bicentennial Haggadah and many more.

The Haggadah has special significance for Christians as well as Jews. Is it not our Biblical story of Moses leading his people out of Egypt? With the Christian season of Lent already in full force, Christians are reminded of Passover yearly through the celebration of Palm Sunday. Was not Jesus coming to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover? The Christian's mother religion is Judaism. Our history is intertwined in more ways than it is separated as evidenced by our common Torah and Biblical stories. Please stop by and check out the collection of Haggadahs we house and maybe check out a book on Passover.

JCRC Holocaust programs (continued from p. 33)

Presentations, additional Holocaust-inspired readings, historical perspective, and a candlelighting ceremony led by family members of Survivors.

Jesse McClain, the Jewish Federation’s Holocaust educational specialist, The Annual Community Holocaust Commemoration at the Courthouse will feature a presentation by on the transformation of the JCC library into the new “JCC Judaic and Holocaust Resource Center.”

Upon completion of newly planned renovations, the upgraded Resource Center will serve as an exhibit space as well as a multi-media resource for Holocaust and other Judaic holdings.

The community program will also feature the recognition of the winners of the JCRC’s annual student Holocaust writing contest, the presentation of a proclamation by Youngstown Mayor John McNally, as well as a memorial candlelighting ceremony to honor the six million who perished.

Both programs are free and open to the public. The Holocaust Commemoration and Education Task Force, a committee of the JCRC, is chaired by Rabbi Joseph Schonberger and Rochelle Miller, children of Holocaust Survivors, and comprises numerous Survivors, children of Holocaust Survivors, and other interested volunteers from the community. For additional information, contact Bonnie Deutsch Burdman at 330-770-8702.

Passover holds significance for Jews and Christians

by Jesse McClain

By Jesse McClain

Holocaust Educator

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April 2017

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Although the impetus for my recent trip to Israel was to participate with other Federation staff members and volunteer delegates to a Partnership2Gether planning meeting in the Akko area and then to meet family who lived in very observant communities, I decided to spend some time to learn about the Israeli wine industry.

Having studied viticulture and enology at the University of California at Davis (albeit 50 years ago) and with more than a passing interest in that fruit and beverage significant since biblical times, I wanted more than a “stop here, taste this” kind of wine tour. Having published stories about the Tulip Winery in the past and being in contact with the New York-based publication relations representative of Psagot, a winery located in the West Bank, I emailed both to arrange special visits to both facilities. To go beyond these two, I Web-researched wine-tasting in Israel and came across “Israel Wine Tours,” which is operated by Ilan and Barak Yitzhaki, the U.S.-educated sons of an Israeli diplomat. The high level of their tourist-site ratings and their knowledge of wine and winemakers around the world easily persuaded me to arrange two days of winery visits with them. Two other wineries I visited with them — Tzora and La Terra Promessa — will be profiled next month, along with a review of Yaffo-Tel Aviv, the outstanding chef-restaurant where Ilan Yitzhaki is the sommelier.

(In the interests of ethical journalism, I paid “full retail” for the time I spent learning about the wines of the Judean Hills — just one of Israel’s wine-growing regions.)

If you’ve only filled your Shabbas or holiday wine glasses with that overly sweet “Man-o-Man” brand, because, well, it’s tradition, isn’t it? Get ready for a surprise.

Or if you’ve felt an obligation — religious or otherwise — to buy Israeli wine for the holidays — no matter what it tasted like, have I got news for you!

Jews didn’t always drink sweet wines. (That tradition is a comparatively recent one.) When thousands of Jews emigrated from Eastern Europe to the United States. They needed wine.

But the local grapes (think Welch’s grape jam) were quite different from...
European vines, Sugar had to be added to New York grape juice — made from those local Concord grapes — after it had been fermented because, simply put, it was a very sour drink. So not only did the sugar make the wine drinkable but also marketable — as in “Sweet wines for a sweet New Year.” As a bonus, sugar also extended the wines’ shelf life.

The Jews of the lower East Side were not wealthy people. Opening a new bottle of wine every week was cost-prohibitive. But if the bottle could be put back in the cupboard until next Friday night, or even later, it was a real metzia. (If you don’t know, ask bubbe what the word means.)

And Israeli wines. Not so many years ago, they may not have been the highest ranking wines on the world stage, And even today, walk into your favorite wine store, and you’ll see the French wines, and the Italian, and the Californian, Chilean, Australian, New Zealander, South African — and other miscellaneous bottles. But the Israeli wines are scant in number — which is a shame.

Because in 2017, Israeli wines are considered among the best in the world, not just worthy of the four necessary cups at the Seder. Don’t just take my word for it. The cover story of the oenophile’s pre-eminent magazine Wine Spectator, dedicated its October 2016 issue to the wines of Israel.

Carmel Wines dominate the Israeli wine market, producing more than 15 million bottles annually. The company, founded in 1882 by Baron Edmond de

(continued on page 39)
Remembering —

By Jesse McClain
Holocaust Educator

This year, 2017, marks the 82nd anniversary of the Nuremberg Laws and the 72nd anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials. The Nuremberg Laws were just one of the beginning signals to the Holocaust. The laws excluded German Jews from Reich citizenship and prohibited them from marrying or having relations with persons of “German or related blood.” Ancillary ordinances to the laws disenfranchised Jews and deprived them of most political rights.

The Nuremberg Trials provided the legal basis for prosecuting the war criminals. In late 1943, during the tripartite dinner meeting at the Tehran Conference, the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, proposed executing 50,000–100,000 German staff officers. U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt joked that perhaps 49,000 would do.

Churchill, believing them to be serious, denounced the idea of “the cold blooded execution of soldiers who fought for their country” and that he would rather be “taken out in the courtyard and shot” himself than partake in any such action.

However, he also stated that war criminals must pay for their crimes and that, in accordance with the Moscow Document which he himself had written, they should be tried at the places where the crimes were committed. Churchill was vigorously opposed to executions “for political purposes.”

History’s clock is now ticking as the day will soon arrive when there are no survivors to speak at Yom Hashoah services or to bare their arms and show the numbers they received at Auschwitz-Birkeneau tattooed into their skin. The past several remembrance services have shown this loss. It is not a time to take a backseat to Holocaust deniers. This generation and the next generation have a special obligation to remember and educate. In a matter of six years, the world witnessed one third of the Jewish people destroyed. To see their memory erased and or denied is simply not acceptable.

Germany, Romania and France have laws against Holocaust denial. It is also illegal to display Fascist symbols in these three countries. In America, our First Amendment protects those denying the existence of the Holocaust. Since no one would promote the elimination of our First Amendment, education and keeping Holocaust deniers at bay must be promoted.

When one speaks of Poland to many of today’s students, where all six death camps were, they frequently automatically connect to Poland in Mahoning County and have little to no knowledge of the Poland of Europe.

The third example is where countries promote and reward those who promote the denial that the Holocaust ever existed. Iran has a Holocaust ‘cartoon contest’ yearly. A past winner was of a cash register that had the number 6,000,000 featured and a cash drawer labeled “shoah business.” The key to open the register was engraved with the words B’nai B’rith.

In the past, people such as Willis Carto have offered great sums of money to help him prove the gas chambers to kill people never existed. Now, you and I may think this is preposterous and know better, but each generation must be exposed to the truth all over again.

As we celebrate Yom Hashoah in 2017, which locally had a theme for students of “the power of words,” let us not forget those who perished because the world turned a deaf ear to their cries and a blind eye to their suffering. It’s good to remember the beginnings of hate, the Nuremberg Laws and the beginnings of justice, the Nuremberg Trials, but remembering the lives lost is most paramount.
Israel’s wines (continued from page 37)

Rothschild, owner of Château Lafite in Bordeaux, is now owned by a consortium of Jewish businessmen, including the Schottenstein family of Columbus.

In addition to Carmel and several other large wine companies, the more than 200 boutique wineries, despite their small output — perhaps as low as 5,000 bottles each year — are where wine-lovers are most likely to find true “adventures in wine-making.”

More information about the Israeli wines discussed here can be found at the following websites:
- www.agurwines.com
- http://www.nevowinery.co.il/about-us/?lang=en
- www.psagotwines.com
- www.tulip-winery.co.il
- www.zafririmwinery.com

To learn more about Israel Wine Tours, see the company website at www.israelwinetour.co.il or read the many favorable reviews on Trip Advisor.

With a terroir best suited to red wines, the small Zafririm Winery has nonetheless succeeded in producing a beautiful dry and elegant rosé, (left) using cabernet franc and cabernet sauvignon grapes.

Wine maker Lori Lender, one of the few women in an industry dominated by men, has created, in addition to the rosé, a unique red wine “Lavnin,” (center) a blend of syrah, petite sirah, and cabernet franc or cabernet sauvignon. Here, I learned that syrah and petite sirah are completely different varietals. The zinfandel (right) displayed the rich notes that characterizes the wine that was made famous in California.

More information about the Israeli wines discussed here can be found at the following websites:
- www.agurwines.com
- http://www.nevowinery.co.il/about-us/?lang=en
- www.psagotwines.com
- www.tulip-winery.co.il
- www.zafririmwinery.com

To learn more about Israel Wine Tours, see the company website at www.israelwinetour.co.il or read the many favorable reviews on Trip Advisor.
The last Passover countdown checklist you will ever need

By Andrew Silow-Carroll

(JTA) — The 30-day period between Purim and Passover is often fraught, especially for Jews — especially if, against all sound advice, they insist on hosting a Passover seder. To ease the challenging process of planning and preparing the festive meal, we offer this handy Passover countdown checklist:

30 days out: (the day after Purim): Begin going over your invite list for the seder. Parents, siblings and their kids, check. Widowed Aunt Fay? Of course. But Cousin Eric? A nice guy, but how did he vote?

27 days out: Think about clearing out cabinets to make way for Passover food.

24 days out: Continue thinking about clearing out cabinets to make way for Passover food.

23 days out: Throw out Passover food still crowding the cabinet from last year: the bottle of off-brand ketchup purchased between now and the holiday. Start planning pre-Passover meals based on the crap you have on hand:

20 days out: First Passover shopping trip: condiments, tea bags, tomato sauce, tuna fish, shelf liner, grape juice, off-brand ketchup, kosher le Pesach duck sauce, one carton gluten-free “panko” matzah crumbs, potato vodka. Total bill: $347.71.

18 days out: Begin planning menu: Search online for new Passover recipes. Brisket with horseradish gremolata? Skillet roast chicken with fennel, parsnips and scallions? Braised lamb shanks with dates, tangerines and baby onions? Check the number of steps and ingredients for each recipe, gasp, then agree to make the same three things you’ve been making for the past 19 years.

17 days out: Cousin Eric calls asking if he can bring a date — someone he met at a “political rally.” For a “very famous politician.” Uh-oh.

16 days out: Second Passover shopping trip: macaroons, Passover cake mix, soda, jars of gefilte fish, paper plates and disposable utensils, matzah meal, wine, almonds and walnuts, jarred horseradish, cottonseed oil, mayonnaise, potato vodka. Total bill: $740.

15 days out: Ten-free shmurah matzah for Aunt Fay. Grocery store to buy one pound of gluten-free shmurah matzah, per coupon. Reduce grocery bill by $20.97.

10 minutes later: Return to grocery store for your free five pounds of matzah, per coupon. Reduce grocery bill by $20.97.

10 minutes later: Return again to grocery store to buy one pound of gluten-free shmurah matzah for Aunt Fay. Increase grocery bill by $67.26.

14 days out: Ask spouse to bring up kosher dishes, seder plate and Haggadahs from the basement.

13 days out: Ask spouse to please bring up kosher dishes, seder plate and Haggadahs from the basement.

12 days out: Ask spouse to please bring up kosher dishes, seder plate and Haggadahs from the basement — goddamn.

10 days out: Finalize guest list. Finalize menu. Longingly peruse ads in Jewish newspaper for weeklong Passover cruises.

7 days out: Last shopping before Passover: beef, chicken, fish, produce, milk, cheese, parsley, shank bone, eggs, chocolate-covered matzah, potato vodka. Total bill: You don’t wanna know.

5 days out: Clean and kosher dishes, seder plate, and Hagga

5 days out: Inform family that Passover rules already apply in kitchen: no bread, pasta, beer or everyday tableware or cutlery. When they ask what they are supposed to eat, reply “improvise.”

3 days out: Ask spouse to bring up table leaf from the basement. Begin vacuuming and cleansing all surfaces with the care normally given to sterilizing microbiological laboratories. Longingly peruse ads in Travel + Leisure magazine showing non-Jewish couples on Caribbean vacations.

2 days out: Ask spouse to bring up table leaf from basement, goddamn. Set table.

1 day out: Cousin Eric calls. It’s off with his plus-one — he can’t date a “RINO” who thinks Rachel Maddow “sometimes makes some good points.”

Panic.

Seder day: Welcome parents, siblings, their kids, Aunt Fay and Cousin Eric. Ask your youngest to recite the Four Questions, which he does perfectly, which is less impressive than it might seem when you remember that he’s 23. Read Haggadah. Eat festive meal. Welcome Elijah. Ignore Cousin Eric.

1 day after: Vow never to do this again.

2 days after: Agree to do this again next year.
Many new choices for your Seder table and during Passover

By Patricia R. Kelvin
Editor, The Jewish Journal

I may have been the Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow for my high school, a fraternity house cook, and a caterer, with more than 65 years cooking experience — yes, really — but I have to admit to growing tired of all the various ways to cook matzo meal, potatoes and assorted other veggies during Pesach.

A year-and-a-half ago, at the Kosher Food Festival in New Jersey, I had the good fortune to taste some of Pereg’s kosher products.

So this year, when I received the company’s announcement of its new Passover line, I immediately asked for some samples. And I’m so glad I did.

Pereg now has a complete line of kosher gluten-free quinoa products, gluten-free flours and spices as well as all natural, non-GMO, vegan and Kosher-for-Passover products.

I loved the herbs and spices that promised to last at least until next Passover, and was especially intrigued by the “red sea salt,” atop my pyramid (above). The package suggests using it on chocolate and watermelon. To me, that’s a challenge.

Working late at night on The Journal usually means noshing on whatever is in the fridge or cupboard. But with my Pereg bounty, I was able to try something that was actually nutritious as well as tasty. I defrosted some chicken breast I had in the freezer, sautéed it in olive oil with a little onion. While that was cooking, I made up some of the quinoa and dehydrated mushrooms — one small saucepan. Twenty minutes later I was enjoying a real treat that was perfect for a solo diner. (See photo on right.)

For lunch, I made the quinoa with vegetables. As well as the pleasant taste and the ease of cooking, I especially appreciated a container that didn’t require super-human strength to open, with an easy to remove, plastic-film liner, and an aroma that said “eat me” even before it was cooked. The vegetables included sweet red pepper, carrots, and tiny currants.

As Pesach gets closer, I’m looking forward to baking a dessert with Pereg banana flour, that’s made from ripe bananas — not plantains. With nut-allergic family, members I’m interested to see how it works and what I can create.

Pereg also offers gluten-free Kosher-for-Passover quinoa flour, coconut flour, and almond flour.

Also on the Pereg shopping list are quinoa flakes, which are simply the whole quinoa seed flattened to make a flaky grain. Cook it up in 90 seconds to make hot cereal, or use it in recipes such as breakfast cookies, granola, granola bars, crisps and crumbles, and pancakes too. They are packed with nutrients and protein, and provide texture and flavor to your favorite recipes. Those I haven’t tried yet.

To order your products directly, log on to— https://www.pereg-gourmet.com/products/passover-bundle.
BERSHAD, Ukraine (JTA) — At first glance, this drab town 160 miles south of Kiev seems nearly identical to the settlements that dot the poverty-stricken district of Vinnitsa.

Shrouded in a seemingly permanent cloud of smoke from wood fires — still the standard means of heating here — Bershad, population 13,000, features two rickety bridges over the polluted (and presently frozen) Dokhna River, roads traversed by Soviet-era clunkers and an utter absence of street lights.

And like many far-flung Ukrainian towns, Bershad, too, has a small, aging Jewish population. The Jews persist here even though almost all of their relatives are living in the relative comfort of Israel or the United States.

But there is more to Bershad than meets the eye.

A closer look at its unique history and architecture reveals something incredible: Bershad is one of Europe’s last remaining shtetls. This town near the Moldovan border, with a Jewish population of 50, is a living testament to the Jewish community’s incredible survival story — one that has endured despite decades of communist repression, the Holocaust and the exodus of Russian-speaking Jews.

Nowhere is the uniqueness of this Jewish community more evident than the Bershad synagogue, which was built from clay 200 years ago.

Incredibly, Soviet authorities returned the white, two-story, tin-roofed building to the town’s Jewish community in 1946, shortly after the Red Army liberated present-day Ukraine from the grip of Nazi Germany and its allies. It was a highly unusual move in a secularist empire that under Joseph Stalin systematically nationalized property of faith communities and routinely persecuted Jews who insisted on practicing their religion.

Coming on the heels of the Nazi genocide, this Soviet policy was a death blow to Jewish life throughout Ukraine’s countryside — once the home of thousands of shtetls — and severely limited it in the large cities.

Yet “at a time where communist repression ended the existence of the few shtetls that by some miracle survived the Holocaust, the existence of a working synagogue in Bershad was the axis of communal life for this shtetl,” said Yefim Vygodner, 64. The town had a Jewish population of some 3,500 in the 1960s.

Vygodner is the leader of Bershad’s Jewish community — and its youngest member.

Over the decades, the relatively privileged status of Bershad Jews – Vygodner attributes it to a combination of luck, remoteness, resilience and friendly ties with non-Jewish neighbors — became most apparent on Passover and Yom Kippur, he said, because on those holidays Judaism came out of the home and into the synagogue.

In an interview this month, Vygodner told JTA how, when he was a boy, his mother would send him to a makeshift matzah bakery that opened each year in front of the synagogue. In the

Story continues on next page.

CHILDREN OF ISRAEL CONGREGATION

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May this Passover find you and your family happy and healthy.

Chag Kasher v’Sameyach
Little left for residents in a dwindling Jewish community

weeks before Passover, the smell of baking matzah wafted along the shtetl’s muddy streets, he recalled.

“The baker would scoop out of the oven wavy, handmade matzah and wrap [it] up in paper for each client individually,” Vygodner said. “I didn’t even know that matzah was also mass produced.”

Bronia Feldman, a jovial 79-year-old, recalled another scene from Jewish life in Bershad: Every Yom Kippur, her mother would take her to the square opposite the synagogue, where hundreds of Jews would gather to hear the shofar — the culmination of Judaism’s solemn Day of Atonement.

“Those with sensitive jobs, teachers and doctors, didn’t go into the synagogue because they didn’t want to get in trouble,” Vygodner said of the communist years. “They just hung around the synagogue.”


Vygodner and Feldman’s accounts are highly unusual for Jews their age who grew up in the former Soviet Union, where Judaism was practiced in secret, if at all.

The key to Bershad’s survival was its western location: In 1941, its region fell under the occupation of Romanian fascist troops, who were less methodical about murdering Jews than their German allies. They liquidated neighboring shtetls and turned Bershad, which in 1939 had a Jewish population of 5,000, into a central ghetto with 25,000 prisoners. Many perished, but 3,500 Bershad Jews survived.

One of them is Alexander Zornitskiy, 83, a retired veterinarian and an author, who hid with his mother and two sisters as German soldiers killed 2,800 people in their nearby shtetl of Ternovka. With help from non-Jewish locals, the family made it to Bershad, where they lived in crowded conditions and without enough food in one of the two-room wooden houses that made up the Jewish quarter.

“The Romanians were cruel, but they didn’t shoot us,” he summarized. “Every street here reminds me of the Holocaust. But it’s also where I survived.”

After the Holocaust, the consent — or at least silence — of Bershad’s non-Jews was crucial to maintaining the town’s Jewish spiritual life.

“This is where centuries of coexistence played a role,” Vygodner said.

Unlike their more intellectual coreligionists from big cities, he added, Bershad’s Jews were blue collar: metal workers, shoemakers, carpenters and fishermen, whose families for centuries had worked shoulder to shoulder with non-Jews.

The matzah bakery closed in the 1980s. By 1989, Bershad’s Jewish community comprised 1,000 members – half its size from a decade earlier.

Today, Bershad’s remaining Jews celebrate a communal seder at the synagogue organized by Chabad. They also come here year-round to receive food packages courtesy of the Christians for Israel charity group. Yakov Sklarsky, who owns the town’s only photo studio, functions as rabbi most of the year. His credentials are his ability to sing and read, if not understand, Hebrew.

The Torah scroll in the synagogue is not kosher. The shul itself, which Vygodner said functions more like a community center than a house of worship, rarely gets a minyan, the quorum of 10 men required for some prayer services in Orthodox Judaism. Its Star of David ceiling fresco remains, but its façade is peeling, revealing the clay and hay makeup of its walls. The women’s section has been transformed into a storage area.

Even so, it is one of the best-preserved buildings of the old shtetl, boasting a new tin roof and a fresh coat of white paint.

Most of the houses that surround the synagogue, which is at the heart of Bershad’s Jewish quarter, are uninhabitable, left to disintegrate by Jewish owners who immigrated to Israel, the United States or Kiev, but were unable to sell the land in one of Ukraine’s poorest areas. The yards are filled with junk and packs of stray dogs.

Many of the houses have a front porch that Vygodner says was an amenity favored by shtetl Jews. Some even have mezuzah markings on the peeling paint of their door frames.

But members of the Jewish community here, for their part, are not complaining. Feldman says she is happy to have a synagogue – an institution that few other towns of Bershad’s size can boast in Ukraine – and feels “lucky to have Yakov as our rabbi.”

Despite the local pride Feldman, the last remaining Bershad Jew whose mother tongue is Yiddish, is contemplating leaving.

“I have a sister in Ashdod, and I’m thinking of joining her,” she said of the Israeli city, adding that her main reason for staying is her daughter, Maya, who lives in Bershad.

As for Vygodner, his son left for Israel five years ago. But he and his wife, Tamara, won’t be joining him anytime soon.

“I don’t think Israel is holding its breath for me,” he said. “Besides, living here is an acquired taste and I’m set in my ways. I have my community here, my place.”
BERLIN (JTA) — For many Germans, Rabbi William “Willy” Wolff is the first Jewish religious leader they have ever met.

And he’s the perfect man for the job. Diminutive, with a disarming chuckle and twinkling eyes, Wolff, who turned 90 in February, effortlessly breaks down that uniquely German condition of “Berührungsangst” — literally “fear of contact” with others.

Wolff, who fled Nazi Germany as a young boy and returned in 2002 to work in the former East Germany, is the first rabbi many Germans today have encountered in part because of his interfaith outreach over the years as one-time head rabbi for the former East German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, serving three liberal Jewish communities.

“He is really a gifted ambassador for Judaism,” said Hans-Jürgen Abromeit, a Protestant bishop who has worked often with Wolff on interfaith programs and calls him “a fatherly friend.”

More recently, however, Wolff has reached a new level of prominence thanks to German director Britta Wauer. Her documentary, “Rabbi Wolff — A Gentleman Before God,” has been playing in theaters across the country. One of the top-grossing German documentaries in 2016, it will have its North American premiere in May.

Since the film’s release, the apparently tireless rabbi has been zigzagging around Germany with Wauer talking with dozens of audiences and signing copies of her accompanying book, “Rabbi Wolff and the Things of Life.”

“He’s not transmitting a narrow religion but humanity,” said a starstruck woman after a screening and discussion in the former East Berlin. “I like the calmness with which he approaches life.”

Wolff may indeed appear calm, but he’s also incredibly energetic — and he comfortably embodies multiple identities: an Englishman, a German, a Jew; a Holocaust survivor with a spirit of joie de vivre.

The Berlin native in an interview with JTA described his family — he had a twin brother, Joachim, and an older sister, Ruth — as strictly Orthodox and culturally German. His father attended an independent Orthodox synagogue that attracted Jews who were unhappy with the increased liberalization of the official community.

The family fled Nazi Germany for Holland in September 1933 after Wolff’s mother learned that the local tailor’s daughter, Magda, had married Hitler’s propaganda minister.

“My mother was afraid that because of the indirect connection with [Josef] Goebbels, we might be on an early list for deportation,” Wolff said.

In 1939, they left Amsterdam for England, where Wolff and his brother attended the Hendon County Grammar School. When the school’s deputy headmistress summoned students to discuss their career plans, Wolff said he wanted to be a rabbi or a journalist. He became both.

The headmistress, thinking Wolff was quite good at French, got him a one-year scholarship to the French Lycee in South Kensington. Wolff learned typing, shorthand and French there.

The skills would prove to be invaluable. With the war still raging, Wolff’s typing and language abilities — English, German, Dutch, French (he later added Russian) — landed him a job with the Reuters news agency on the outskirts of London in a radio listening station that picked up Russian and German broadcasts. He worked there from 1944 to 1947.

“There were no Allied correspondents [on the Axis side], so this was a way to get hints of official attitudes,” Wolff, who later attended the London School of Economics, told JTA.

In 1954 he started working at the Slough Observer, and eventually joined the staff of the Daily Mirror, moving from domestic issues to foreign policy.

Wolff’s decades of work as a journalist included trips abroad with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart. Returning from one such trip in the late 1960s, they stopped in Bonn to meet with German Foreign Minister Willy Brandt.

It was the first time Wolff had set foot on German soil since his family had fled the country.

“I was grateful, and even a little proud, to be living and working in Germany, a country where the events of the past had become unimaginable,” he told (continued on following page)
Rabbi Woolf (continued from previous page)

Wauer. “An overwhelming majority of Germans have accepted responsibility for the consequences of that past and that gave me a feeling of security.”

Meanwhile, toiling as a journalist, Wolff drifted from the Orthodoxy of his youth.

“I have enormous respect and deepest admiration for all biblical scholarship,” he said, “but the more I got involved with text, the more clear it became to me that every word could not have come from God because God contradicts himself” from one book to the next.

Plus, his parents split up. Wolff’s mother lived with a man without marrying him until after his father died.

“That, too, was unacceptable to some of my Orthodox friends,” he said.

In 1979, Rabbi Sidney Brichto, a leading figure in British liberal Jewish circles, asked Wolff to edit the movement’s newsletter. He realized then that he wanted to return to his early dream of becoming a rabbi.

“I found out about liberal Judaism” — known globally as Reform or Progressive — “which had not been respected by my father or by the Orthodox circles and when I found out about that I suddenly thought, well, maybe I could make a contribution there,” he told JTA.

Brichto ultimately recommended Wolff to the Progressive Leo Baeck College in London.

Wolff was ordained in 1984. He served at several London synagogues when he learned something unexpected: Germany needed rabbis.

For the first time since World War II, the country’s Jewish population was really growing due to the influx of former Soviet Jews after the unification of East and West in 1990. The postwar population of some 35,000 had grown to more than 240,000; synagogues were being built. The Union of Progressive Jews in Germany counts around 4,500 members.

In the spring of 2002, Wolff was tapped by a member of the Central Council of Jews in Germany and appointed head rabbi for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, serving liberal Jewish communities in Schwerin, Rostock and Wismar. Three years later he was elected deputy chair of the General Rabbinical Conference, a liberal body in Germany that works parallel to the Orthodox Rabbinical Conference there.

Commuting to his three communities in Germany and his home in Henley on Thames, England, Wolff led services and also represented Judaism in public – a role he hopes he “has done with dignity.”

“Whether or not I have succeeded is for others to say,” he said.

East Germany can be tricky terrain to navigate; for Jews and non-Jews, the scars of recent history are fresh.

“The two dictatorships – first the Nazis and then the communists – I think left quite deep and hidden wounds,” Wolff said.

Wolff’s contract as head rabbi in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern ended two years ago, but he continues to work as a volunteer. He has also found another, unexpected role: movie star.

He met Wauer, who is not Jewish, when she was working on her first film, “In Heaven, Underground,” about the historic Weissensee Jewish Cemetery in the former East Berlin.

Wauer “wanted a rabbi to say a few things about halacha [Jewish law], such as why we don’t have two coffins in the same grave, and no other rabbi in Berlin would play ball with her,” Wolff said.

The documentary was released to acclaim in 2011. Wolff, with an on-screen presence one reviewer described as “pure gold,” became a favorite among audiences, some of whom started asking Wauer to make a film about the rabbi himself.

The popular result profiles Wolff as he shuttles between England and Germany, conducts services, attends the Ascot races in a dapper top hat, and digs through the piles and piles of books and periodicals that crowd his Henley bungalow.

Not one to dwell darkly on the past, Wolff acknowledges one regret: “If there is anything I regret then it is the fact that I never married and never created a family,” he told Wauer. “I can hardly believe that I am as old as I am but have no children or grandchildren.”
In Memoriam

Frances Raven Sieman
Advocate for the developmentally disabled

Frances Raven Sieman passed away at Heritage Manor in Youngstown on Saturday, March 11, 2017. She was born in Youngstown on September 15, 1921, daughter of Lillian and Morris Raven. She was the eighth of nine children, six of whom survived to adulthood.

Frances worked as a lab technician in the office of Dr. Morris Rosenberg until her marriage to Alan Slutsky in 1947. She lived in New Castle, Pennsylvania, for 16 years, then in Canton, Ohio for 10 years. When she married David Sieman in 1973, she moved to Warren, Ohio.

She was very active as an advocate for developmentally disabled people in Pennsylvania and in Ohio. She encouraged the improvement of public school and workshop programs in Stark County and in Trumbull County. As a lobbyist for the interests of developmentally disabled people, she visited Columbus several times on their behalf. She received many awards for her work in this area.

Frances was a source of happiness and joy. She loved music, singing, and had a beautiful voice. Recordings of Yiddish and Russian songs performed by her and her brother are available for listening on the website steelvalleyvoices.ysu.edu/resources/collections/jewish-oral-histories/yiddish-songs.

She was a superb cook, self-taught, and prepared wonderful specialty dishes from homemade krepach, to noodle kugel, tzimmis, breaded veal chops, stuffed cabbage, chicken paprikash, lasagna, cheesecake, and more. Frances loved to entertain, and was known for her lavish parties and Jewish holiday observances.

She lived to make others happy and comfortable, and she succeeded. She loved people, and was loved by all who knew her.

Frances attended Beth Israel Temple in Warren, OH. She was an active member of Sisterhood and Hadasah. She volunteered at local Jewish institutions. In 1980, she had her Bat Mitzvah along with her dear friend Louise Schultz. She sang in the Rodef Sholom choir. Frances spoke Yiddish fluently, and was considered an expert. She was a Yiddish consultant for the Trumbull New Theater.

She is survived by her two sons Marc and David, also her younger brother Bert, sister-in-law Celia, her nephews Gary and Jerry Winter, and several other nieces and nephews, and was greatly beloved of them.

May their memories be only for a blessing.

J. Newman Levy


Newman was born in Youngstown on April 13, 1938, and was a Youngstown resident his whole life. He was the son of Philip and Bessie Newman Levy.

He graduated from The Rayen School in 1956, where he enjoyed playing basketball and baseball. He graduated from Indiana University in 1960, and was a member of AEPi fraternity and a manager of the football team.

He was a member of the U.S. Army Reserves and served a year of duty during the Berlin crisis.

He married the former Marcia Gurs of Youngstown in 1962, and they have two sons, Yale and Jeffrey.

He was a certified public accountant and worked in private practice for 50 years. He had a special relationship with all his clients.

He was an active board member and president of Heritage Manor, chairman of the Israel Bond Drive for 20 years, treasurer of the Youngstown Symphony, member of Rotary, and a board member of many organizations. He was also a member of the Rodef Sholom Temple and El Emeth Temple.

He was a wonderful husband, father and grandfather and will be missed very much.

He leaves his wife, Marcia of 54 years; his sons, Yale (Lauren) of Bexley and Jeffrey (Susan) of Solon; his grandchildren, Joshua, Matthew, David, Sydney, Isabelle, Dylan and Sloane; his brothers, Marvin (Sharon) of Pompano Beach, Fla., Joseph (Margaret) of Pompano Beach, and Blondie (Lisa) of Youngstown; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Funeral services were held on March 24 at Rodef Sholom Chapel in Tod Homestead Cemetery. Contributions may be made in memory of Newman Levy at Heritage Manor.

Arrangements handled by the Shriver-Allison-Courtley-Weller-King Funeral Home.

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May their memories be only for a blessing.
Morris Friedman

WARREN — Morris Friedman passed away late Friday afternoon on Feb. 17, 2017, at St. Elizabeth Health Center in Youngstown. He was 97.

Mr. Friedman was born on Oct. 20, 1919, in Vapenik, Czechoslovakia, the son of Abraham and Sarah Friedman. He was one of eight children, including four sisters and three brothers, all of whom are deceased.

When he was 15 years old, Morris fled the impending Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia and came to the United States in 1934. His parents and two younger brothers would later die in the Nazi concentration camps.

In the United States, Morris lived with relatives in the Bronx, N.Y., worked at his uncle's neighborhood grocery store and went to night school to learn English and to study and earn his American citizenship. He moved to Cleveland a year later, where he worked at a steel warehouse and fabricator owned by his uncles.

"Morrie" served his country in an Army tank division during World War II, volunteering to go overseas and into harm's way when he could've remained stateside, safe and sound.

Upon returning home, Morris married the love of his life, Phyllis Kaiser, on Aug. 19, 1945. It was a beautiful love affair that lasted for 71 years. After the war, Morris and Phyllis established a home in Warren, and he returned to the steel business.

Morris worked his way up the ladder, from message boy to metal worker to supervisor, then into the managerial ranks, rising to become company president of Allied Metals in Niles, and then, in 1968, founded his own company, United Steel Service, also known as Uniserv, in Brookfield. Under Morris's leadership, the company became one of the nation's largest steel-slitting plants.

Nobody knew the steel business like Morrie Friedman. He could look at a piece of steel from 100 yards away and tell exactly where it was made, what mill it came from, and the gauge. He was a tough but honest businessman, earning the respect and admiration of his employees as well as his peers in the American steel industry. He earned himself a national reputation, and was invited to play golf at Augusta National Country Club, home of the Masters, by the president of US Steel, the largest steel company in the country in its day. He also played golf with Arnold Palmer.

Morrie Friedman was the epitome of the American success story. He came to this country with little more than the shirt on his back and ended up living the American dream. His book Morrie: Only In America, co-written with his son, Steven, was published in 2014, and is currently available through Amazon.

Morrie never forgot where he came from and wanted to share his success by giving back to the community. He and Phyllis donated $2.5 million to establish an Engineering chair at Youngstown State University. He also established the Stroke Trauma unit at St. Elizabeth Health Center where, ironically, he ended up spending his final hours.

Morris Friedman gave money to an untold number of hospitals, organizations, causes and charities that he believed strongly in. He changed the lives of those who were fortunate enough to be recipients of his generosity. And he did all of it quietly and without fanfare, never wanting to call attention to himself. Morris Friedman was among the most humble people you would ever want to meet. He was a proud Jew, and an ardent supporter of the State of Israel, both spiritually and financially. He also was a big contributor to the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, as well as to the Jewish Federation in Boca Raton, Fl. Morris was a long-standing member and supporter of Rodef Sholom Synagogue in Youngstown.

He was the proud father of his son, Steven, who took over the company business at United Steel Service. He was a wonderful uncle to his many nieces and nephews.

After his beloved wife of 71 years passed away last September, Morrie not only lost the love of his life, but the better part of himself as well. He never recovered from the loss of Phyllis, and surely died of a broken heart.

Morrie Friedman will be missed by all the members of his family whom he loved dearly, his many friends who loved him, and all those whose lives he touched with his wisdom, compassion and generosity.

A private burial was held in Columbus at the New Tifereth Israel Cemetery, on Sunday, Feb. 19.

May this great pioneer, one of the last surviving members of the Greatest Generation, rest in peace.

Steven, the last remaining member of Morris's immediate family, would like to extend his heartfelt gratitude to Lisa Barass, who was his caregiver and took wonderful care of both his parents until their passing, Kim Scott, who assisted Lisa, Atty. Jay Skolnick of Brouse McDowell who not only was Morris's dearest friend, but has so faithfully guided the Friedman family for so many years, Rabbi Frank Muller whose spiritual and most appreciated involvement steadied the family, and finally Mr. Patrick O'Connor of O'Connor, Hoso & Loree LLC, whose invaluable friendship and financial guidance was so important. All of these people and others, too numerous to mention, should know that they were and still are so greatly appreciated.

Contributions in his memory may be made to Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation, 110 E. 42nd St., 16th Floor, New York, NY 10017, (800) 259-4636; Alzheimer's Foundation of America, 322 8th Ave., 7th Floor, New York City, NY 10001, (866) 232-8484; or American Diabetes Association, 2451 Crystal Drive, Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22202, (800) Diabetes, or (800) 342-2383.

Fay Kirkorsky

YOUNGSTOWN – Services were held on March 21, in El Emeth Coitsville Cemetery Chapel for Fay Kirkorsky, 104, who died Sunday, March 19, at Heritage Manor.

Fay was born Jan. 1, 1913, in Brooklyn, NY, a daughter of Max and Ida Baskin Cohen.

She was employed by B&M Beauty Supply.

Fay was a member of Temple El Emeth and its Sisterhood, Hadassah, B’nai Brith Women and volunteered at Youngstown Playhouse, Stambaugh and Powers Auditoriums and Heritage Manor.

Her husband, Isadore, whom she married in 1933, died in 1996.

She is survived by a son, Melvin; a daughter-in-law, Barbara; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren.

A son, David; two sisters, Lillian and Gussie; and a grandchild are deceased.

Contributions may be made to Heritage Manor.

Arrangements were handled by the Shriver-Allison-Courtley-Weller-King Funeral Home.
FLAVORS OF PASSOVER

Prices effective April 6 through April 19, 2017. Items available at participating locations while supplies last.

**PRODUCE**

- **All Purpose Russet Potatoes**
  - 99¢ lb.

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- **Organic Red Beets**
  - 2 99¢ ea.

- **Fresh Horseradish Root**
  - 2 99¢ lb.

- **Fresh Curly or Plain Parsley**
  - 99¢ ea.

- **Bunch Carrots**
  - 1 99¢ ea.

- **Empire Kosher Fresh Whole Frying Chicken**
  - 3 29¢ lb.

- **Empire Kosher Frozen Hen Turkeys**
  - 3 59¢ lb.

- **Nature’s Reserve Free Range Lamb Shanks**
  - 5 49¢ lb.

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- **Manischewitz Matzo Ball Soup**
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- **Manischewitz Passover Matzo Meal**
  - 2 $6 49¢ ea.

- **Kedem Concord Grape Juice**
  - 6 49¢ ea.

- **Manischewitz Concord Grape or Blackberry**
  - 4 99¢ ea.

- **Bartenura Moscato d’Asti or Pinot Grigio**
  - 13 99¢ ea.

**Savings:**

- Save up to $1.00 lb. with your use.
- Save up to $3.00 ea. with your purchase.
- Please visit our stores for additional selections of fine kosher wines.