

JEWISH YOUNGSTOWN AREA JOURNAL

VOLUME 23 - NUMBER 04

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Youngstown, OH
Permit #607



SUMMER EDITION 2026
TAMUZ-ELUL 5786

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JCC holds annual
golf outing
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INSIDE
ADS celebrates
Jerusalem Day
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JCRC looking for
Holocaust Survivor
descendants for oral
history project
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Pictured from left are Andrew Solomon, golf outing chair; Rich Fitch; Kevin Faye; and Richie Fitch.

WE STAND



WITH ISRAEL

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

July 38:41 p.m.	July 318:22 p.m.
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July 178:34 p.m.	August 14.....8:05 p.m.
July 248:29 p.m.	August 21.....7:54 p.m.

MAILING LABEL



LISA'S LONG VIEW

Finding the Jewish energy

A Message From Lisa Long
Federation Chief Executive Officer

For a long time, the way Jewish communities thought about engagement was fairly simple...find the Jews and bring them into Jewish institutions. Bring them to synagogue. Bring them to Federation events. But the reality of Jewish life in North America today tells a more complicated story.

According to recent studies of North American Jews, only about 22 percent belong to a synagogue. And while Israel remains a powerful point of connection, only about 33 percent have ever visited Israel, and take out those that went as part of Birthright and that means only about 20 percent of North American Jews have visited Israel.

These numbers matter because they remind us of something important...A large

portion of Jews today are not primarily expressing their Jewish identity through traditional institutions. And yet, their Jewish identity is very much alive.

If you talk to Jews in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, you will notice they are “doing Jewish” differently...they’re gathering with Jewish friends, they are following Jewish voices online, they are talking about Israel, antisemitism, culture, and identity in group chats and social media. Jewish connection hasn’t disappeared. It has simply moved into different spaces.

Which leads to a different way of thinking about engagement. Maybe we don’t need to spend all our time asking, “Where are the Jews?” Maybe the better question is “Where

is the Jewish energy?”

Jewish identity today often lives in relationships first, institutions second. So the work in front of us may not be simply bringing people into Jewish buildings. It may be recognizing and nurturing the Jewish energy that already exists in people’s lives. Like the moment someone says, “My grandparents were Jewish,” the moment someone asks about a holiday, the moment two Jewish parents realize their kids are the only Jewish kids on the team and suddenly feel an instant bond.

And here’s the other important part. Once we find that Jewish energy, we cannot demand that people “do Jewish” exactly the way we do. For some people, Jewish life centers around synagogue...for others, it’s Shabbat dinners with friends. For some, it’s Israel advocacy...for others, it’s Jewish culture, humor or raising Jewish children. Jewish identity has always been a tapestry. Today, it’s simply being woven in new ways. If we insist that there is only one doorway into Jewish life, we risk missing the many people already standing nearby.

There is a moment in the Torah when Abraham sits outside his tent, looking for travelers to welcome. Tradition teaches that Abraham’s tent was open on all four sides,

so that guests approaching from any direction could find their way in. That image has stayed with the Jewish people for thousands of years.

Maybe that’s the model we need right now. Instead of asking, “Why aren’t people coming through the front door?” maybe we should ask, “Have we opened the other three sides of the tent?”

So, I ask you, who in your life is Jewish, but you’ve never done something Jewish with them? Maybe it’s a coworker. Maybe it’s a neighbor. Maybe it’s someone you see at your child’s activities. What would happen if you invited them for Shabbat dinner, or to light Hanukkah candles or simply to talk about what being Jewish means to each of you.

Jewish community grows through institutions but it begins through relationships.

This is where organizations like our Federation have an important role to play. Not just as buildings or programs, but as connectors and catalysts. Our job is not only to host events, it is to identify, nurture, and amplify Jewish energy wherever it already exists.

Sometimes that means supporting synagogues and schools, sometimes it means

Jewish Energy continued on page 23



NANCY'S NOTES

Small miracles

By Nancy Burnett

Small miracles occur when least expected.

My daughter’s family lives at the end of a cul-de-sac in the middle of Rocky River, Ohio. A narrow path with stepping stones and bordered by a row of tall, overhanging forsythia providing privacy, and a fence, runs along the side of their garage to the back yard.

Early on a Friday morning, my daughter and grandson opened their garage door to begin carrying chairs and party supplies along the path to the backyard to begin set-

ting up for the big about-to-be nine-year old’s birthday party when they were confronted with a deer giving birth to her fawn. They backed up immediately to a safe distance and to provide privacy as she gave birth and then began cleaning up her new infant.

They watched in awe. The mother continued her after birth ritual, then got up and sauntered off through a neighbor’s yard leav-

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(Photo by Ben Bruckman.)

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

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The Jewish Journal is a publication of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and has received major grants from the Schermer Trust, the Maurice and Florence Lipscher Charitable Trust, and ZOA.

July 27 is the deadline for articles and ads for the Rosh Hashanah Issue. Submissions may be edited for length and/or clarity. The Jewish Journal does not assume the responsibility for the Kashruth of any product or service advertised on its pages.

The Jewish Journal is now accepting opinion columns. Send submissions to journal@jewishyoungstown.org as a Word document. Include name and contact information. Acceptance is at the discretion of the editor and may be edited for clarity.

Grand reopening of SoVA showcases adaptability upgrades

A grand reopening of the Paul and Yetta Gluck School of Visual Arts at the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown was held in June.

Staff realized in recent years the studio space wasn’t inclusive for all, though it was meant to provide art classes for everyone.

“When Paul [Gluck] heard we wanted to upgrade to make it a space for all ages and abilities, he asked, ‘What do you need?’” said Barb Wilson, JCC director of cultural arts & Jewish engagement.

In 2020, the Glucks wanted to do something meaningful for the community. After discussions with Federation leadership, they provided the funding and SoVA was born. They also provided the funding for

the accessibility upgrades.

The upgrades include adaptable art supplies and tools and new tables and chairs to better accommodate people with physical disabilities. A low table is available for wheelchair users, some stools have backs for those who need support, and the space can be reconfigured to handle a variety of needs.

“Art is for everyone, and now our studio is better equipped than ever to welcome and inspire artists of all ages and abilities,” said Wilson.

The grand reopening included a ribbon cutting by the Glucks, refreshments, and a tour. Participants were able to make and take some art and meet the SoVA team.



Paul and Yetta Gluck (pictured from left) cut the ribbon at the grand reopening of the Paul and Yetta Gluck School of Visual Arts. The studio space was upgraded to be more inclusive.

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Stay Connected

For updates on shul events, schedules, classes, and programs, please visit coiyoungstown.org.

Our Mission

Children of Israel is dedicated to sustaining traditional Jewish life and meaningful connection within the Youngstown Jewish community. If you would like to support this mission, please consider making a donation by scanning our QR code.



Youngstown Yahrzeit Initiative (Y.Y.I.)

Children of Israel is proud to have launched the Youngstown Yahrzeit Initiative, a community effort to help provide in-person weekday *yahrzeit minyanim* in Youngstown. At present, to the best of our knowledge, Children of Israel's Sunday morning minyan is the only in-person weekday *minyan* available. We recognize the significant community need—particularly for those wishing to recite Kaddish in the traditional manner they were accus-

tomed to prior to COVID-19—and are working to develop a sustainable solution.

This initiative is being organized for the benefit of entire Youngstown Jewish community. All are welcome to participate, with no additional commitments and regardless of synagogue affiliation.

Those interested in participating and/or helping others say Kaddish are invited to email coiyoungstown@gmail.com for more information.

America 250 – Judaism 3,338

By Yankel Golden
President & Rabbi
Children of Israel Congregation

As we sit between the recent celebration of Shavuot and the upcoming 250th anniversary of American independence on the Fourth of July, I find myself reflecting on the beautiful parallels between these two holidays.

We describe Shavuot as the time we commemorate receiving the Torah. But it is much more than that. Shavuot is truly the birthday of the Jewish people.

How do we know this? First we must ask: What makes someone a Jew? Our sacred teachings tell us that the soul of every Jew — past, present, and future — stood at Mount Sinai and accepted the Torah. Before that moment, there were no Jews. We were the Children of Israel, an extended family on a journey. At Mount

Sinai, all the Children of Israel willingly took upon themselves the Torah and the yoke of Heaven. In that moment, they were transformed into the Jewish people—not a nation in the conventional sense, but a “society of priests” entrusted with a mission to serve among the nations of the world.

A clear proof of this is that our patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, along with all their descendants until Mount Sinai, were not obligated in the commandments — because the *mitzvos* only came into being when the Torah was given.

From that day and that revelation forward, no matter where a Jew may live — whether in America, Israel, Argentina, France, or anywhere else — and no matter our background, language, or culture, the one thing that truly unites all Jews is the Torah. It is our shared covenant, our guiding light, and our home.

In many ways, the same idea applies to America. Although Americans speak English, enjoy BBQs, and watch Sunday football, that isn't what truly makes us

American. For most of us, our ancestors came from foreign lands, spoke other languages, and struggled to build a life here. What made the founders American, what made our ancestors American — and what makes us American — is our shared commitment to this country and the ideals it stands for. What unites us is our shared belief in liberty, equality, religious freedom, and the principle that every American is created in the image of G-d with the right to pursue a life of opportunity and meaning, as enshrined in our Constitution.

It is undoubtedly true that this country is a gift from the Almighty. Although

“The one thing that truly unites all Jews is the Torah. It is our shared covenant, our guiding light, and our home.”

many nations have tried to copy parts of our country's experiment, no other nation has fully embraced the idea that is “America.” We grew from a small group of 13 colonies into the greatest superpower the world

has ever known. Just as the Children of Israel stood against the most powerful nation of their time, our founders courageously stood against the mightiest empire of their era because they believed in these sacred ideas and in service to the highest Authority.

Today, as Jewish Americans, we are blessed to live in a time and place that offers virtually unlimited opportunities — socially, professionally, and religiously — unmatched by any other time or land in our long history. Something for which we should all be immensely grateful.

As we mark 3,338 years since Moses received the Torah on Mount Sinai, and as America celebrates her 250th birthday, my prayer is simple:

May we, as Jews, continue to hold fast to the eternal Torah that has sustained us through every generation. And may the United States of America continue to strive toward the noble vision of her founders — a land of freedom, justice, and opportunity for all.

To both our ancient and our young nation — Happy Birthday!

Happy 250th birthday, America



Rabbi Seth Sternstein
Temple El Emeth

The 250th birthday of the United States is only weeks away. Let's (very) briefly consider the positive role Jews have played in the development of this country.

The first Jews reached the shores of America in 1654. This group of 23 Jewish men, women, and children originally lived in Recife, Brazil, which was then under Dutch control. When Portugal reconquered the territory, these few families fled on a ship named the St. Catrina (often referred to as the "Jewish Mayflower"), eventually docking in Dutch-controlled New Amsterdam. Peter Stuyvesant, the director-general of the colony, greeted them with hostility; he actually tried to ban them from settling! However, wealthy Jewish shareholders in the Dutch West India Company back in Amsterdam supported the refugees. With that support, the refugees petitioned for their rights.

Early advocates like Asser Levy and Jacob Barsimson fought for the community's right to remain, serve in the militia, and eventually acquire land and build a community. This group laid the foundation for the first Jewish congregation in the country, Congregation Shearith Israel, established in 1654.

During the Revolutionary War, Jews contributed heavily to the colonial victory.

Haym Salomon, known as the "Financier of the Revolution," was born in Poland. He moved to and from several countries in Europe to escape persecution and finally fled, yet managed to learn several languages and international financing along the way. Upon reaching America in 1775, he helped fund the Continental Army and personally advanced funds to key leaders like James Madison. He died penniless, having given his entire fortune to the cause of American liberty.

Mordecai Sheftall became the highest-ranking Jewish officer in the Continental forces; he served as the Commissary General for the Southern Department, utilizing his own wealth to supply the troops.

Colonel Isaac Franks fought in the Battle of Long Island, was captured as a prisoner of war, escaped, and later served on General George Washington's personal staff.

Many Jews contributed to the growth of this country throughout the 1800s:

Levi Strauss arrived in San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Born in Bavaria, he founded his world-famous clothing brand after partnering with tailor Jacob Davis to patent the first riveted denim jeans.

Julius Rosenwald was born in Springfield, Ill. His parents were immigrants who established a small clothing business in town. At the age of 16, his parents sent him to New York to learn the clothing manufacturing business. He founded and grew a small company of his own, which became the industry giant Sears, Roebuck. Concerned about the plight of recently freed slaves, he funded the construction of almost 5,000 schools to give educational opportunities to Black Americans.

Henry Lehman founded a small dry-goods store in Alabama in 1844, which eventually grew into the global powerhouse investment bank Lehman Brothers.

Lillian Wald was a nurse, humanitarian, and staunch advocate for human rights. She founded the Henry Street Settlement in New York in 1893, pioneering the field of public health nursing in the U.S.

In the 1900s, Jews continued to push America forward. In law and civil rights Louis Brandeis, known as the "People's Attorney," became the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice in 1916.

Stan Lee was born Stanley Martin Lieber. He rose to prominence at Marvel Comics, creating a massive universe of superheroes like Spider-Man and the X-Men.

The world-renowned physicist, Dr. Al-

Happy 250 continued on page 24

Sisterhood honors Lisa Mirman



El Emeth Sisterhood held their annual donor luncheon in May. They honored Lisa Mirman for her years of dedication and service. Shown with Mirman is her daughter Alyson, granddaughter Ivey Rose, and husband Randy

TEMPLE EL EMETH EVENTS

Our annual Outdoor Musical Service, hosted by Sam and Terry Roth, will take place July 10. Musicians Steven Greenman and Walt Mahovlich will be on hand to enhance our service, and dinner will follow. Please call the Synagogue to RSVP by July 2. Security will be at the entrance to check in guests.

The El Emeth Congregational Annual Meeting will be held July 14 at 7 p.m. Committee reports will be presented, and installation of officers will take place. Please RSVP to Temple by July 10.

Mayor Derrick McDowell will be joining us for dinner and a program at 6 p.m. July 29. (This program was rescheduled from June 24.) Paid reservations are required by July 24.

Temple El Emeth will host an Erev Shabbat Service July 31 at Levy Gardens. The service will begin at 4 p.m. and will be led by Rabbi Seth Sternstein. Reservations can be called in to the Temple office by July 29.

A special Security Session for the Congregation on "Active Threat Response" will take place at 7 p.m. Aug. 5. Rob Elston, head of Security at the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, and Sgt. Jonathan Silverman will lead the program, and all members are encouraged to attend. Please RSVP to the Synagogue if you plan to attend.

Our annual Indoor Outdoor Picnic will be held at 6 p.m. Aug. 9. This year's picnic will offer seating indoors as well as outdoors on our patio and will feature a new menu. Danny Shapira will be on hand to provide music. Reservations are required by August 4.

Please call the Synagogue for detailed information on these programs.

Erev Shabbat services take place each week at 5:45 p.m. Shabbat morning services begin at 10:00 a.m. each week. Guests wishing to attend are asked to please call the TEE office in advance to register. Guests' names will be placed on a list for security officers.

Summer is a great time for learning (part 1)



**Rabbi
Jessica Locketz, RJE**
Ohev Beth Sholom

Believe it or not, summer-time is upon us. Less hectic days and schedules, vacations, time by the pool or away at summer camp...all those things are on the horizon. These are called the 'lazy days of summer' with good reason; during the summer months, there is a tendency to shy away from anything that resembles learning. We too often see the summer as a time to "take a break" or to "let our minds rest." And yet, in "Pirke Avot" we find "... do not say, 'When I am free, I will study,' for perhaps you will not become free ..." In other words, don't wait until that perfect time to study. It may never come. Don't wait until the fall to learn; study now, while we can, because there may not be a better time than the present – during this summer.

That doesn't mean that we have to sign up for university classes or spend hours pouring over reference books at the library. It does mean, however, that we should find a few moments each day to enrich ourselves and our lives as well by learning something new.

And it's not as difficult as one might think. The opportunities are endless. Here are some suggestions:

Discuss the weekly Torah portion. Join us online for Torah study on Thursdays at 10 a.m. Additionally, check out reformjudaism.org/learning/torah-study to find resources that can help students of all ages (tots to adults!) learn about the weekly Torah reading. There you will find commentaries to explore as well as discussion topics to engage the whole family in discussion. It's amazing just how much the ancient lessons are still relevant today.

Study the Psalms. Join us on Tuesdays at noon in June and July to take a look at how these ancient words still have meaning for us today. Can't come in person? Join us online.

Catch up on your Jewish reading. There are just so many great books to read! And many of them have Jewish themes. Need suggestions? Just ask! I am happy to share what I am reading.

Venture into the world of podcasts. Check out reformjudaism.org/learning/podcasts to find a new story to listen to each week. Listen to "Stories We Tell" and tap into Judaism's rich tradition of storytelling and enjoy this collection of great ones. Or sign up for Union of Reform Judaism President Rick Jacobs' "On the Other Hand: 10 Minutes of Torah" and hear his weekly Torah insights on how Judaism continues to have a contemporary influence on our lives.

Remember that summer is a great time for learning. Try some of the options listed above or wait for next month's ideas (stay tuned for part 2!) The possibilities are endless. So... How are we going to continue our learning this summer?



SHABBAT SERVICES

at Heritage Manor



Saturday, July 4 at 10am

Join OBS for Saturday morning Shabbat at Heritage Manor with Levy Gardens and Heritage Manor residents. Note that there will **NOT** be a service at OBS on July 4.

Heritage Manor | 517 Gypsy Lane | Youngstown, OH 44504



Independence

SHABBAT

FRIDAY, JULY 3, 2026 | 6PM

FESTIVE PICNIC MEAL | 4PM - 545PM

Join OBS for an Independence Shabbat focused on a non-partisan "get out the vote" campaign and safe guarding our democracy. A celebratory 4th of July style picnic will take place before the service from 4pm to 545pm.

.....



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OBS 2026 Confirmation Class



From L to R: Eli Hagler, Cameron Silverman, Rabbi Berman, Addison Silverman, & Madeline Long

Last Day of OBS Religious School
Challah Making

JEWISH JOURNAL

YOUNGSTOWN AREA - 1987

WISH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The next issue of the Jewish Journal will be the Rosh Hashanah issue. Take the opportunity to greet members of the community by submitting a greeting. Greetings and payment are due no later than July 27. Email eskolnick@jewishyoungstown.org for a greetings form. Forms are also available on the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation website: jewishyoungstown.org.

Looking back, moving forward

Reflections from our 2026 Annual Meeting



**Rabbi
Courtney Berman**



**Sarah Wilschek,
Executive Director**

As we gathered for our 2026 Annual Meeting, we found ourselves doing what every community does at moments like this — pausing to reflect on this past year, to share our gratitude, and to ask what comes next.

It is fitting that the meeting fell during the week we begin reading B'midbar. The *parsha* opens with the Israelites in the wilderness, organizing themselves before journeying forward together. That feeling is familiar at Ohev Beth Sholom. So much has changed at OBS in the last year — and yet, when we look around, what stands out is not the new flooring or the renovated bathrooms or even our beautiful sanctuary. What stands out is each of you. The relationships. The conversations. The volunteers who said yes. The families who keep showing up. The quiet acts of care that hold this congregation together.

Last year, we celebrated what we built. This year, we are asking who we are becoming — and we are doing it together.

A Year of Sacred Community

From Shabbat every week to the holidays that anchor our calendar, OBS has remained a vibrant community, continually growing. Friday nights and Saturday mornings now reflect the multi-generational congregation we have become — children waiting and training for their *b'nai mitzvah*, families with young kids running between the playroom and the kitchen, longtime members, and brand-new faces. As one new member recently said when she walked in and saw her grandfather's name on the Sharon veterans plaque: this is home.

We celebrated themed Shabbatot built with love and care — Shabbat Shira, MLK Shabbat, Women's Herstory Shabbat, Sim-

chat Shabbat each month, and our upcoming Pride Shabbat the first weekend of June. Sammy Winick and Mandy Medvin expanded our social justice work into both RAC Ohio and RAC Pennsylvania, recognizing that nearly half of our congregants live across the state line.

Sisterhood and Brotherhood have been the steady pulse of so much of what we do — *mitzvah* meals, the *oneg* and *kiddish* each Shabbat, *latke* making, *hamantaschen* baking, Passover candy, the soup sale, program support, and financially underwriting the new dishwasher, freezer, and our new Saturday morning prayer books. Thank you to every volunteer who poured themselves into this year.

This year, our congregational membership continued to grow. But the headline is not the number — it is the depth. Our membership chairs, Mary and Rich, did not just welcome new members; they invited congregants to their own table. Beverly Nathan continues to make daily birthday calls even after she and Alan moved to their new community. This is OBS.

Spotlight: A New Era in Technology

This year, we made two major investments in technology that will change how you experience OBS.

Our Digital Archive in the Schwebel Lobby, donated in memory of Amy Post by her family, is now home to our photos and historical information. Confirmation and consecration photos from our legacy congregations have been digitized and uploaded, our *yahrzeits* are searchable on a touchscreen, and we have built a space where you can share your own memories and your own why, the stories of why you are here and how you are connected to our congregation. Please come share yours.

We are the first congregation in the country to launch Benevolate, a modern, cleaner, more user-friendly platform, which will be replacing ShulCloud. Included in this transition is our new website, which is now live! You will be able to register for events directly, view and pay open balances (in full or in installments), save a credit card, update your own profile and ritual information, and even add your own household connections

— so families can be linked to one another. The leadership of Benevolate spent two days here at OBS, working with our security team on the law enforcement module, mapping our cemeteries, and building a custom module just for our Super Bowl fundraiser, getting to know our team and hearing their concerns about the new system, and so much more. During this visit, we invited executive directors from around the region to visit our congregation and see our renovations while also learning about Benevolate. Leaders from Cleveland, Erie, and Pittsburgh attended. Congregants will have received a link to their personal accounts before the end of the month.

Spotlight: Lifelong Learning, Pre-K Through Grade 12

This was a transformative year for education at OBS. In November, we welcomed Rabbi Jesse Locketz as our rabbi educator, and the positive impact has had a ripple effect felt throughout the congregation — in religious school, parent feedback, adult

learning, and ritual. Rabbi Berman also completed her executive master's in Jewish education this spring, an accomplishment that is already deepening her work as our spiritual and educational leader. Mazel tov to them both.

Religious school had 36 students this year — a beautifully Jewish number — spread across pre-K through teens. Highlights included hanging out in the sukkah, the chocolate Seder, Havdalah at the planetarium in partnership with PJ Library, a birthday party for Israel, and ending the year baking challah together. Next year, we are restructuring the classes for better developmental fit, launching a Madrichim teen leadership track, refining our spiral curriculum so students do not repeat the same material year over year, and creating targeted High Holy Day programming for our youngest learners.

Adult learning has taken on its own weekly rhythm. Online Torah Study meets

Looking back continued on page 24

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ADS celebrates Jerusalem Day

Adult Day Services at Heritage Manor recently celebrated Jerusalem day with Liron Daniel, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation Israel engagement/program coordinator.

Participants learned about the history and significance of Jerusalem Day, what is celebrated on this day, why it is important, and how its message continues to connect to lives today.

Jerusalem Day commemorates the reunification of Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty in 1967 following the Six Day War. The 1967 victory marked the first time in thousands of years that all of Jerusalem came under Jewish control. It also allowed Jews access to the holiest parts of the city, especially the Western Wall, a remnant of the ancient Temple.

Participants took part in a meaningful tradition inspired by the Western Wall. Just as visitors place notes with prayers and wishes into the cracks of the Wall, participants wrote their own hopes and wishes on small notes and attached them to a model Western Wall that they created together.

They also watched someone sing “Jerusalem of Gold,” which captures the spirit and significance of Jerusalem.

The program concluded with an open discussion and Q&A session.

“Participants showed great interest, asking thoughtful questions about Jerusalem Day, Israel, and the current security situation,” said Daniel. “The conversation was engaging and meaningful, reflecting the group’s curiosity and desire to learn more.”



Adult Day Services at Heritage Manor participants wrote their own hopes and wishes on small notes and attached them to a model Western Wall that they created together.

Annaleise Fisher joins JFCS



Her identity as a counselor has been a driving force throughout her career and continues to shape her professional goals, says Annaleise Fisher, the newest counselor to join Jewish Family & Community Services.

Fisher’s primary responsibility at JFCS is to provide individual counseling services to people from all backgrounds, identities, and life experiences. Counseling is available for individuals experiencing concerns such as anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, relationship challenges, life transitions, and adjustment difficulties.

“My goal is to help clients gain insight, better understand and manage emotions, develop effective coping strategies, strengthen communication and boundary-setting skills, and prioritize self-care,” she said.

She plans to expand services through counseling groups, couples counseling, educational programs, and other supportive resources.

Fisher’s past experience includes providing counseling services in both community mental health and private practice settings. She has primarily worked with adults ages 18 and older but also has experience working with adolescents, couples, and groups.

“Throughout my career, I have supported individuals facing a wide range of concerns, including anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder,

life transitions, women’s issues, chronic health conditions, and challenges related to emerging adulthood,” she said. “I am also committed to providing affirming care for LGBTQ+ individuals.”

She has experience providing clinical supervision to counselors-in-training and newly licensed counselors. Since 2014, she has taught college, both undergraduate and graduate level courses, as well as continuing education courses.

Fisher earned a bachelor of science in psychology with a minor in biology from the University of Mount Union and a master of education in clinical mental health counseling from Kent State University. She also earned an education specialist degree in counseling, also from KSU. She is licensed as a counselor in Ohio and is a licensed professional clinical counselor with a supervisory designation.

She is a member of Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers, and currently serves as secretary of the Ohio Counseling Association.

“One of the things that excites me most about this role is the opportunity to serve my own community,” Fisher said. “Since earning my counseling license, I have worked in other areas of Ohio, so being able to provide services close to home is especially meaningful.”

She and her husband were born and raised in Youngstown.

“We met in middle school, started dating in high school, and have been together ever since,” she said. “This January, we welcomed our daughter into the world, and becoming parents has been one of the greatest joys of our lives.”

The family also includes their seven year old dog. And they feel fortunate to have their parents, siblings, niece, and nephews nearby, which allows them to stay closely connected.

When she’s not working, Fisher enjoys baking and reading.

“With a new baby at home, my hobbies have taken a bit of a backseat lately, but I still enjoy baking and reading thriller novels whenever I find the time,” she said.

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Skilled nursing celebrated



Staff wore pajamas to work as part of Skilled Nursing Care Week.

Heritage Manor Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation celebrated Skilled Nursing Care Week in May with a variety of activities for staff and residents.

They started the week wearing pajamas to work and with a happy hour. During the week they also wore patriotic attire, their favorite hat, their favorite Heritage Manor shirt, and their favorite sports team attire. They enjoyed lunch from Chick-Fil-A and ice cream from Handel's, played cornhole and other yard games, sang karaoke, and dunked staff in a dunk tank. The week ended with a carnival that included throwing a pie in the faces of Lisa Long, Youngstown

Area Jewish Federation CEO, and Shane Baldwin, Heritage Manor interim executive director.

"During Skilled Nursing Care Week, we honor our remarkable staff whose expertise, compassion, and commitment improve our residents' lives every day," said Baldwin. "I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our incredible team for all their hard work throughout the year. They are the reason Heritage Manor is rated a 5 star facility."

The annual national observance celebrates the essential role that skilled nursing care plays in providing safe and effective care for millions of individuals each year.

Heritage Manor and Levy Gardens recognized by US News & World Report

Heritage Manor Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation and Levy Gardens Assisted Living were recognized on U.S. News & World Report's just released 2026 Best Senior Living ratings, Heritage Manor for the second year in a row.

Both facilities are part of the continuum of care offered by Senior Living by Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.

These annual ratings are based entirely on satisfaction feedback from both residents and their families. The US News Best Senior Living ratings evaluate thousands of communities across the country. Communities are rated on resident and family feedback across safety, care quality, staff, community management, value, and overall satisfaction with services and amenities.

Heritage Manor Rehabilitation & Retirement Community is rated a five-star skilled nursing facility by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and this year received a deficiency free survey. As well as skilled nursing, Heritage Manor offers short-term care, including all types of physical, occupational, and speech therapy. It provides an adult day services program and is the only Veterans Administration approved provider of long-term care in Mahoning County.

Levy Gardens provides the independence of a private apartment and the comfort and security of assisted living. It features 18 one-bedroom and 6 two-bedroom residential apartments with complete kitchens.

Senior Living by Youngstown Area Jewish Federation provides care for older adults at various stages of life at Heritage Manor Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation, Levy Gardens Assisted Living, and Adult Day Services at Heritage Manor. To learn more, visit yajf.org/seniorliving.

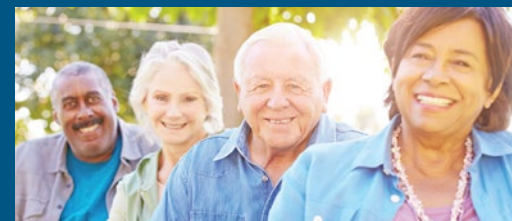
THE J-WELLNESS WEIGH SUPPORT GROUP AGES 18+



Feeling isolated on your wellness journey? You are not alone! It's weigh better to do it together, so join us on the second Tuesday of each month. Our goal is to support you in finding balance in all aspects of your life to create a healthier lifestyle. We will share stories, information, and tools while supporting our journeys. The group will be guided by certified health professionals.

July 14 | 4:30-5:15 p.m. | Free | Group X Room | Register online by July 13.

SENIOR LIVING by Youngstown Area Jewish Federation



Faith-based values fuel our compassion



yajf.org/seniorliving

HERITAGE MANOR SKILLED NURSING & REHABILITATION

Five Star Rated Facility
Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation
VA Approved
Exceptional Nurse Staffing

ADULT DAY SERVICES AT HERITAGE MANOR

Individualized Care
Supervised Activities
Structured Socialization
VA Approved

LEVY GARDENS ASSISTED LIVING

Assisted Living
All-Inclusive Rent
Expert Nursing Care
Home-Like Environment

JCC annual Suzi Solomon golf classic raises nearly \$100K

The Jewish Community Center held its annual Suzi Solomon Golf Classic June 8.

“What a fabulous day of golfing and time spent with so many of our friends supporting the J,” said Denise Wolf, executive director. “And 28 years of support from the Solo-

mon family...thank you!”

This year’s Golf Classic brought together 35 teams and more than 150 sponsors, all united in support of the JCC’s mission. The event raised nearly \$100,000 to help provide meals for homebound seniors through the

JMeals program, scholarships for families seeking to send their kids to Camp JCC and the Early Learning Center, learn to swim lessons for local students, and countless other programs and services that enrich lives across our community.

Diamond Clubhouse Sponsors were the Suzi Solomon Philanthropic Fund, The Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, Simon Roofing, and B&I Management.

The 2027 golf classic is scheduled for June 7.



Thirty five teams participated in the JCC’s annual golf classic.



A cocktail hour followed the outing. Pictured from left are Sam, Connor, and Kelly Tamarkin.



A basket raffle was part of the golf classic. Pictured are members of Liberty Steel’s team.



Money raised at the golf outing funds programs that benefit the community.



Youngtown BBYO members volunteered at the golf classic. Pictured from left are Tres Hively and Maddie Long.

BBYO kicks off summer season

Youngstown BBYO kicked off the summer season with a bonfire event at the end of May. They enjoyed making s'mores, snacks, playing basketball, and listening to music while spending time together. The chapter also took the opportunity to learn about the Jewish holiday of Lag BaOmer and its significance.

During the event, they celebrated and said

farewell to two of their senior and founding members: Cameron and Addison Silverman.

"Their leadership, dedication, and contributions have helped shape our chapter, and they will be greatly missed," said Courtney Campesi, advisor. "We wish them all the best as they begin this exciting new chapter and look forward to seeing all they accomplish in the future."



Youngstown BBYO held a bonfire event at the end of May. Pictured from left are (front row) Antonio McNutt, Maddie Long, Tres Hively, Blythe Hively, (back row) Sidney Braslawscce, Zach Bostocky, Addison Silverman, and Cameron Silverman.

JCC OF YOUNGSTOWN UPCOMING EVENTS



We are turning up the heat this summer at the JCC Logan Campus and the Main Campus! Scan the QR code for upcoming programs for all ages and stages.

J. NEWMAN LEVY SPEAKER SERIES



COMEDIAN TALIA REESE

Tuesday, July 21
5:30–7:30 p.m.

Register by July 17.

Talia Reese is a high-energy Orthodox Jewish comedian whose autobiographical style and sharp wit have earned national media appearances and performances at premier comedy clubs such as the Comic Strip in New York City.

THE KLEZMER ORCHESTRA: KLEZMER'S GREATEST HITS

Monday, August 3
5:30–7:30 p.m.
Register by July 30.



Put on your dancing shoes and enjoy an evening of lively Klezmer music with TKO. The ensemble features traditional and contemporary songs in Yiddish, English, Russian, and Hebrew.

All J. Newman Levy Speaker Series events are free and open to participants ages 18 and older and will take place in the JCC Multi-Purpose Room. A meal precedes each event. Registration is required online at jccyoungstown.org or by emailing Director of Cultural Arts & Jewish Engagement Barb Wilson at bwilson@jewishyoungstown.org.

**JCC OF
YOUNGSTOWN**

Churchill Commons

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taste better



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Kosher Wines

Manischewitz, Mother's, Streitz, Rokeach, Joyva Kosher Products

See our expanded Kosher section

4700 BELMONT AVENUE
(330) 759-9502

Federation Annual Meeting will be Aug. 19

The Annual Meeting of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation will be at 7 p.m. Aug. 19 at the Jewish Community Center's Logan Campus. A Zoom option is available upon request.

A reception, with heavy appetizers, cash bar, and live acoustic sounds by Stellare Strings will be at 6 p.m. The cost of the pre-party is \$10 per person.

Stellare Strings is a locally based string performance organization that is composed of the region's top string players and offers easy access to live string performances. Stellare Strings has performed in various settings such as weddings, corporate events, galas, recitals, and concerts in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Akron, and Youngstown. The

players of Stellare Strings offer a range of styled performances, ranging from classical, to rock, to jazz, and to folk. At the pre-party their music will feature songs by famous Jewish artists.

Annual Awards will be presented during the Annual Meeting.

The nominating committee of the Youngstown Area Jewish Community Board submitted the names of the proposed candidates the week of June 22 with the election of candidates to be held during the meeting.

Visit jewishyoungstown.org for more information.

RSVP by Aug. 14 to Nancy Sentelik at nsentelik@jewishyoungstown.org or 330.746.3250 ext. 108.

Endowment supports new Habitat for Humanity of the Mahoning Valley project

Courtney Campesi, Youngstown Area Jewish Federation financial resource development director, and Amy Hendricks, representing the Thomases Family Endowment of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, joined others at the groundbreaking of a

Warren Habitat for Humanity of the Mahoning Valley project.

"The Thomases Family Endowment is proud to support this project that will provide a local family with safe, affordable housing built by the community," said Campesi.



Pictured from left are Joe Metzger, HFHVM construction manager; Fr. Christopher J. Cicero, Pastor of St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish; Larry Brobst, HFHVM volunteer; David Redig, HFHVM executive director; Matt Martin, Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership executive director; Mae Medore, community impact coordinator at The Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley; Campesi; and Mayor Doug Franklin of the City of Warren.

YOUNGSTOWN AREA
JEWISH FEDERATION

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

ANNUAL MEETING
August 19 | 6:00 p.m.
Logan Campus

INAUGURAL EVENT
August 25 | 5:30 p.m.
Woodland Estate

AUGUST

19

ANNUAL MEETING

AUGUST

25

INAUGURAL EVENT

Students participate in YSU English Festival



Akiva Academy students participated in the annual YSU English Festival. Several earned awards.

Twenty students from Akiva Academy participated in the YSU English Festival, earning recognition for their outstanding reading and writing achievements.

Now in its 48th year, this annual event hosted by Youngstown State University brings together nearly 3,000 middle and high school students from across Ohio and Pennsylvania. In preparation, students read seven selected books and take part in a variety of activities, including writing contests, book discussions, and creative workshops.

Several of the Akiva students were honored for their work in essay writing and other festival competitions:

Rebecca Sakelaris - 1st Place Candace Gay Memorial Essay Contest
Daniel Batista - Honorable Mention Jeremy Salvner Memorial Music Award

Rebecca Sakelaris - 3rd place Journalism Writing Contest
Sophia Fonseca - 2nd Place Writing Games
Mya Young - 2nd Place Not So Trivial Pursuit
Jayden Sutton - 3rd Place Not So Trivial Pursuit
Dani Ferrell - 2nd Place Connections
Hayden Forestal - 3rd Place Connections
Roei Sigler - 3rd Place Connections

"These accomplishments reflect months of preparation, strong reading and writing skills, and a genuine love of literature," said Jodi West, English language arts teacher. "We are incredibly proud of all of our students for their dedication and the way they represented our school. Congratulations to everyone involved in this well-deserved recognition!"

Akiva graduates 17

Akiva Academy held its grade eight graduation ceremony May 28. Parents and friends came together to congratulate the 17 graduates. The graduating class included Tremaine Alexander, Sarah Baquero, Daniel Batista, Essien

Cisco, London Cowan, Josephine Diroll, Hayden Forestal, Zachary Hulings, Joshua Martin, Nila Miller, Brooklyn Rafferty, Rebecca Sakelaris, Karter Shuler, Roei Sigler, Zoie Stevens, Jayden Sutton, and Mya Young.



Seventeen eighth grade students graduated from Akiva Academy.



The Akiva grade eight graduation ceremony was May 28.

CWB educator spotlight: Madelyn Wansack

By Melissa Bateman

*Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
Director of Community Engagement*

Editor's note: This article is part of an ongoing series highlighting local educators who have participated in the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation's Classrooms Without Borders Poland Seminar. Through firsthand experiences at Holocaust sites and encounters with Survivors, these teachers bring powerful lessons of history, empathy, and civic responsibility back to classrooms throughout our community. To learn how you can support future educator participation, contact the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation at 330.746.3250.

For educator Madelyn Wansack, teaching history is about more than facts and textbooks. It is about preserving human stories, fostering empathy, and helping students understand their responsibility to others.

That commitment was strengthened in the summer of 2024 when Wansack joined a cohort of local educators sponsored by the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation and its donors to attend Classrooms Without Borders' CWB's Poland Seminar. The experience transformed not only her understanding of Holocaust history, but also the way she teaches it today.

A graduate of Kent State University, Wansack taught English language arts at Bristol Local Schools and is currently pursuing a Master's of Education in literacy and second language studies. In the fall,

she will begin teaching at an international school in Costa Rica.

Among the most powerful moments of the seminar were those shared with Holocaust Survivor Howard Chandler. At Treblinka, Chandler spoke about family members who perished there. Later, inside a barrack at Auschwitz-Birkenau, he shared his testimony for more than an hour.

"He stood there for over an hour, never taking a seat and never taking a sip of water as he told his story," Wansack recalled. "His strength from his past to the present day was inspiring."

That evening, she watched Chandler celebrate Shabbat with his family.

"It was a reminder of his resilience and how he had not succumbed to bitterness," she said.

Today, Chandler's story remains part of her classroom. "While my students did not meet him themselves, his story lives on in my classroom."

Wansack believes that no book or documentary can replicate the experience of standing at Auschwitz or Treblinka. "It is not until you stand on the ground and see these places that it begins to feel fully real," she said.

The seminar changed how she teaches the Holocaust. Rather than focusing primarily on statistics and historical facts, she now emphasizes personal stories and Survivor testimony. Through mobile exhibits

provided by the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, students learn about local Survivors such as Henry Kinast and William Vegh through personal accounts, interviews, and creative reflection projects.

Many students are surprised to discover that Holocaust Survivors settled in Youngstown.

"This proximity increases their engagement and deepens their understanding of the Holocaust as both a global and a local history," Wansack said.

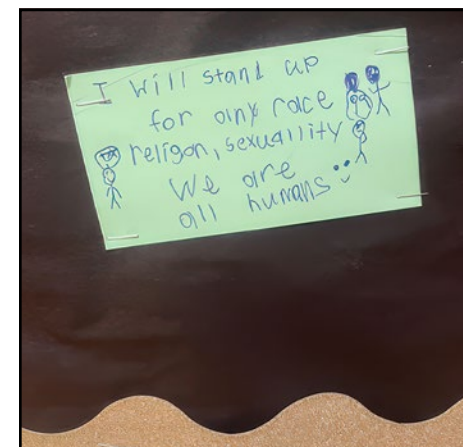
For Wansack, Holocaust education remains essential because the dangers that enabled it still exist. "Hate exists and is real," she said.

Her classroom lessons focus on empathy, civic responsibility, and becoming "upstanders" rather than bystanders. This year, her students even created Upstander Pledge Cards that were displayed throughout their school.

One lesson from Poland remains permanently displayed in her classroom. During a conversation at Treblinka, someone asked Howard Chandler what he wanted students to learn from his experiences. His answer was simple:

"Be nice human beings. Don't interfere with other people's rights. Don't be jealous. Improve others."

"I want students to understand that these words come from someone who experienced the worst of humanity and still chooses goodness," Wansack said.



Madelyn Wansack's students created Upstander Pledge Cards that were displayed throughout their school while learning about the Holocaust. (Photo provided by Madelyn Wansack.)

Years after the trip, its impact continues to shape her teaching and her life.

"It has not only influenced my teaching, but also the way I see the world and my responsibility within it," she reflected. "I am reminded of the people I met, the stories I heard, and the responsibility I now feel to honor and share them."

For Madelyn Wansack, the lessons of Poland did not end when the trip concluded. They live on every day—in her classroom, in her students, and in her commitment to ensuring that history's human stories are never forgotten.

Young adults sampled Israeli beverages at event

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation held an "Israeli Spirits Night" for young adults in May at the JCC's Logan Campus.

The event celebrated Israeli culture and community. Participants enjoyed tastings of Israeli alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, Israeli snacks, and music from a live DJ. Babysitting services were provided.

"The evening was filled with laughter, singing, dancing, and meaningful connections," said Liron Daniel, coordinator. "It was wonderful to see our community come together, meet new friends, strengthen existing relationships, and celebrate our shared connection to Israel and Jewish life."



Young adults enjoyed "Israeli Spirits Night" in May.

Preserving Holocaust legacy: A call to second- and third-generation descendants

By Melissa Bateman

*Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
Director of Community Engagement*

As we approach a time when there will soon be no living Holocaust Survivors among us, preserving their stories becomes an urgent responsibility. The memories, experiences, and legacies passed down within families are a vital part of Holocaust remembrance and education.

We are inviting children and grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors to participate in an oral history project that will document how Survivors' experiences

shaped their families and continue to influence future generations. Through recorded interviews, participants will help ensure that these personal stories, lessons, and family histories are preserved for remembrance and shared with generations to come.

If you are a second- or third-generation descendant of a Holocaust Survivor and would be interested in sharing your family's story, please contact me at mbateman@jewishyoungstown.org.

Together, we can honor the past, preserve memory, and ensure that these voices continue to be heard.

PARKINSON'S WELLNESS SUPPORT

The Last Friday of Every Month | 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | Group X Studio



Our Parkinson's support group is a gathering of individuals with common experiences who provide each other with encouragement, comfort, and advice. We offer a place to give and receive emotional and practical support from others in the same situation. We share information about diagnosis, treatments, research, and strategies; discuss feelings and challenges; compare symptoms; address issues unique to caregivers; and learn from local experts.

Parkinson's members also have access to Parkinson's Moves, Chair Tai Chi, and our J-AWAY program, which assists older adults and individuals with Parkinson's in the Youngstown area who need an exercise program.

For more information on these programs, please contact Wellness Manager Amy Haskett, at ahaskett@jewishyoungstown.org or 330.746.3250 ext. 310.

Estelle Silverman 95th birthday



Estelle Silverman celebrated her 95th birthday at Levy Gardens recently with family, friends, and the residents of Levy Gardens. Estelle was born in Philadelphia and moved to Youngstown in 1964 with her husband Charles, and their children, Har-

ry, Gary, Marc, and Melissa. Estelle is the grandmother of 15 and the great-grandmother of 11. She has made her home at Levy Gardens for the last five years. She's pictured with some of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Ohev Beth Sholom 2026 Confirmation Class



Mazel tov to the Ohev Beth Sholom 2026 Confirmation Class. They were confirmed May 15. Dinner, sponsored by the parents of the class, followed. Members of the class

are pictured with Rabbi Courtney Berman, center. From left, they are Eli Hagler, Cameron Silverman, Addison Silverman, and Madeline Long.

Addison Silverman is Girard graduate



Addison Silverman graduated from Girard High school Magna Cum Laude. She will be attending Walsh University in the fall and continue diving at the collegiate level. Her parents are Laura and Phillip Silverman. Grandparents are Elyse and Harry Silverman and Carole and Dr. Leonard Rubenstein and the late Stephen Gerson. Great Grandmother is Estelle Silverman.

Cameron Silverman is Girard graduate

Cameron Silverman graduated from Girard High School Cum Laude. She will be attending University of Mount Union in the fall and continuing to play tennis at the collegiate level. Her parents are Laura and Phillip Silverman. Grandparents are Elyse and Harry Silverman and Carole and Dr. Leonard Rubenstein and the late Stephen Gerson. Great Grandmother is Estelle Silverman.



Sarah Wilschek elected president



Mazel tov to Sarah Wilschek, who was recently elected Kent Hillel board president.

Karsyn Berk named to 24 under 35 list

Mazel tov to Karsyn Berk for being named a 25 Under 35 honoree by the Mahoning Valley Young Professionals. The awards recognize 25 Mahoning Valley residents under the age of 35 who are making an impact through leadership, innovation, and community involvement. Berk is the owner of Berk Beauty.



Henry Long graduates middle school



Henry Long, son of Lisa and Grady Long, graduated from Crestview Middle School on May 22. He received awards for his participation with the academic challenge; track, basketball, and football teams; and student council. He was awarded a physical fitness award and recognized for being part of the robotics team that won the top spot at the state robotics competition which allowed the team to compete in the world robotics championship this spring. Henry also received awards for receiving all A's all four years of middle school. Next year he will join his sister, Madeline, at Crestview High School.

David Skolnick earns awards

Mazel tov to local reporter David Skolnick. At their annual Hall of Fame and Awards dinner he will receive the Youngstown Press Club's First Amendment Award for his consistent advocacy for the freedom of the press and the public's right to know. He also earned first place in the Best Government/Political Reporting category in the 2026 Ohio Society of Professional Journalists contest. David covers politics and Youngstown city for The Vindicator/Tribune Chronicle.

Attorney Mark Huberman recognized by OSBA



May 20, 2026, Boardman Attorney Mark Huberman was among a special group of attorneys from around Ohio who were honored at a special luncheon at the Renaissance Columbus Downtown, hosted by the Ohio State Board Association, in recognition of their 50 years in the practice of law. Attorney Huberman shared a reserved lunch table with seven other graduates from his Ohio Northern Law School Class of 1976, including former Ohio Supreme Court Justice and House Speaker Robert Cupp. He also shared the day's honors with his good friend and colleague, Attorney Nils P. Johnson, Jr., of Canfield, who received similar 50-year recognition.



Stuart Mark Mulne

Stuart Mark Mulne, a man of intelligence, dedication and warmth, passed away late Saturday evening, May 2, 2026, at the Cleveland Clinic Main Campus.

He was born May 12, 1946, in Columbus, a son of David and Dorothy Kessler Mulne.

He lived a life marked by professional achievement, personal passion, and deep devotion to his family.

A graduate of Boardman High School, Stuart pursued higher education with earnest commitment, attending Case Western Reserve University before earning his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Youngstown State University, complemented by minors in English and



religion. His academic pursuits reflected a lifelong love of learning and intellectual inquiry.

Mr. Mulne dedicated many years to his career at Kessler Products, demonstrating diligence and expertise. Following retirement, he continued to share his knowledge and skills by freelancing in computers and computer repair, proving his adaptability and enthusiasm for technology.

Beyond his professional life, Stuart was an amateur ham radio operator, a hobby that connected him to a broader community.

He was a member of Congregation Ohev Beth Shalom. For 13 years, he contributed significantly to Ohev Tzedek plays, where

he was instrumental in set design, music, lighting, and electrical work, showcasing his multifaceted talents.

Stuart's passions extended beyond his professional and volunteer pursuits. He loved reading classical books, was an avid fan of Star Trek and enjoyed riding bikes. His fondness for bad jokes and television shows brought laughter and joy to those around him. Above all, Stuart's love for his family and their beloved pets was a cornerstone of his life, a source of great happiness and pride.

He leaves to cherish his memory, his beloved wife of over 50 years, the former Sherri J. Rusnak, whom he married Oct. 5, 1975; his daughter, Rebecca Mulne, who remains at home; and his brother-in-law, Edward Rusnak of Boca Raton, Fla. Their enduring love and presence stand as a testament to the meaningful relationships he cultivated throughout his lifetime.

He was preceded in death by his parents and sisters, Sheryl Ann Mulne and

Arlynn Mulne.

Mr. Mulne's generosity extended beyond his earthly life. Through Lifebanc, he gave the gift of life, helping others even after his passing and touching many lives in profound ways.

A graveside service was May 7, 2026, at Ohev Tzedek Cemetery, where family, friends and all who knew Stuart gathered to honor his memory and legacy.

Stuart Mark Mulne's life was one of rich contributions, quiet strength, and boundless care. His memory will be treasured by those who knew him and will continue to inspire through the lives he touched.

The family has requested that contributions be made to Congregation Ohev Beth Shalom, 1119 Elm St., Youngstown, OH 44505.

Arrangements by the McCauley Funeral Home, proudly serving the community for 124 years. Send thoughts and condolences to the funeral home website, mccauleyfuneral.com.

Carole Ann Goldich

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, Carole Goldich, who died on Wednesday, May 13, 2026. Her warmth, strength, and radiant spirit touched the lives of everyone fortunate enough to know her. Carole lived a life filled with compassion, resilience, creativity, and unwavering devotion to her family and community. Carole was born Dec. 14, 1934, a daughter of Carl and Angeline Sernel Close.

Carole began her career as a bridal consultant and model, where her natural elegance, beauty, and charm shone brightly. Her love for the arts led her to become deeply involved with the



Youngstown Playhouse and children's theater, where she inspired creativity, confidence, and joy in countless young performers. Throughout her life, Carole dedicated herself to charitable causes and always sought ways to uplift those around her with kindness, encouragement, and generosity.

Together with her husband, Stan, Carole raised four beloved children, Randy, Linda, Sheila, and Kimberly. She faced unimaginable heartbreak with the untimely loss of Randy, Sheila, and Kimberly, yet through every hardship, Carole remained a pillar of strength, grace, and unconditional love for her family. Her resilience and courage were

an inspiration to all who knew her.

Carole found immense joy in her role as a grandmother to Tony Rappaport and his wife, Jacquelyn, and especially treasured the love and laughter of her two great-grandchildren, Tristan and Tyler, who brought endless happiness to her life. She also shared a special bond with her daughter, Linda, and her devoted son-in-law, Dennis Rappaport, proudly supporting him throughout his boxing career and enthusiastically attending his matches. She is also survived by her loving sister, Marlene Murphy, and brother-in-law, Mickey Murphy; her cherished niece, Sabrina; nephew, Michael; and an extended family who loved her dearly. Carole was preceded in death by her beloved sister, Donna.

For the last 25 years of her life, Carole made her home in New York, where she built a beautiful new chapter filled with friendship, laughter, and love. Wherever she went, her vibrant personality, infectious spirit, and genuine compassion left

a lasting impression. She had a remarkable gift for making people feel valued, seen, and loved, and her positivity was truly a beacon of light. Carole leaves behind a legacy defined by love, kindness, resilience, and grace. Though our hearts are broken, we find comfort in the countless memories she created and the enduring impact she made on so many lives. She will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

Calling hours were at the Higgins-Reardon Funeral Home, followed by a funeral service, celebrating Carole's life, at Rodef Sholom at Tod Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to Congregation Ohev Beth Shalom, 1119 Elm St., Youngstown, Ohio 44505, in Carole's memory.



Joyce Weiner Knofsky

Joyce Weiner Knofsky passed away peacefully in her sleep on May 27, 2026 at the age of 96, leaving behind a family who adored her and a legacy of love that will endure for generations.

Born on April 1, 1930, and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Joyce lived a beautiful life centered around family, tradition, resilience, and joy. She settled in Warren, Ohio where she and her beloved husband of 62 and 1/2 years Howard raised five children and relocated to South Florida. She was preceded in death

by Howard, and their son, Brian Knofsky. She is lovingly survived by her children -

Jodie, Randi, Kim, Terri, Jim, and Rex, her cherished grandchildren, great grandchildren, extended family, and lifelong friends.

Joyce was the heart of her family: a devoted daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. She had a gift for bringing people together and filling every room with warmth, laughter, and expressions of love. Her kitchen was always full, her Chanukkah bush always decorated, her table always open, and her home always a gathering place for family and friends.

In her lifetime she worked closely with Howard and together they built a successful



scrap metal business and real estate portfolio. Joyce had a unique ability to organize everything and everyone she touched was the better for knowing her.

She radiated light and joy, and her vibrant spirit made people feel instantly comfortable and cared for. She loved deeply, laughed loudly, and never missed an opportunity to celebrate the people around her. Independent, strong willed, and spirited long before her time, Joyce lived life fully and unapologetically. The traditions she created and upheld, the meals she prepared, and the love she poured into her family will continue to live on through all who knew her.

A private graveside service will be held for friends and family. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be considered in her memory to the Morse Life Foundation (morselifoundation.org/donate/) and designate your support to their Hospice Program.

Marsha Joy Fader

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Marsha Joy Fader (nee Hollander), who left this world on May 17, 2026. Born in Youngstown, Ohio on Oct. 12, 1936, Marsha's journey took her to several vibrant cities before she found her final home in Sun City Center, Fla. Marsha was a beacon of light in every community she resided. Her infectious laughter, generosity of spirit, and compassionate heart left a deep imprint on all who had the privilege of crossing her path. Known for her supportive nature, Marsha was the kind of person who would always lend a listening ear, offer a comforting shoulder, or extend a helpful hand.

Marsha dedicated her life to nurturing young minds, retiring after an admirable 40-year tenure as a preschool educator at the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown. Her strong advocacy for early childhood education led her along with her partner Sharon Blumenthal to start The Supply Room, an educational supply store specializing in materials for teachers, classrooms and students in Youngstown. Marsha's passion for education extended to her personal life, where she was always eager to learn and explore new interests. She spent her free time knitting, reading, collecting butterflies, and making the most of the beautiful water view behind her house. Her love for the arts was evident in her active involvement as a volunteer at the Starz Center for the Performing Arts, and her commitment to her community shone through her service with the Security Patrol in Sun City Center and her delivery of Meals on Wheels to the elderly.

Our beloved Marsha was a woman of faith, holding the position of past president in the Beth Israel Synagogue Sisterhood. Her faith was a guiding light in her life, and as it is written in the Talmud, "Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world." Marsha lived this truth, notably helping her father's brother and his

Carol Pianin Gottesman

Carol Pianin Gottesman, a shining soul of love and an open heart of glowing light, transitioned through death June 1, 2026, at 7:15 a.m. She was born March 30, 1942, to Harold Pianin and Esther Levy Pianin in Youngstown, Ohio.

Carol was a lifelong student of spiritual beliefs, whether they be from ancient wisdom traditions such as Judaism, or more contemporary ideas of new age philosophy. Along with her second husband, Cantor Ernest Moshe Gottesman, Carol studied the Kabbalistic writings of the Zohar. In other phases of her life Carol was easily found studying the works of Barbara Marx Hubbard or Ram Das, for example.

Carol graduated from Warren G. Harding High School, the University of Michigan with a B.S. in nursing, and Kent

State University with a MEd. Beyond the traditional educational institutions, Carol was also certified in numerous holistic health techniques such as Touch for Health and Pranic healing, working with energy systems in the body to heal various ailments.

Of the accomplishments in her life, Carol was incredibly satisfied to have been a professor at the Trumbull Memorial School of Nursing. In the early 1970s she was asked to create and teach the psychiatric program as part of a larger training curriculum and then subsequently taught the course for approximately the next 25 years.

Carol believed the essence of life, the soul that is really who we are, transcends death. She was known for saying, "Life is for lessons learned, and the evolution of the soul."



During her life, Carol had three meaningful relationships. The first was with Richard Ginzler, her first husband and father of her son. They were married on June 16, 1963 and divorced in the summer of 1971. She remarried again on January 23, 1983 to Cantor Ernest Moshe Gottesman. They remained married until his death on June 13, 1995. Finally, Carol spent the last 26 years of her life in a devoted friendship with Cynthia Tatalovich.

Carol is survived by a son, Dr. Joshua Aaron Ginzler (Jennifer Melsher), who followed her professional interests to become a psychologist, as well as three grandchildren; Leo, Reef, and Eliana. Carol is also survived by her brother Richard Pianin (Marlys) and her sister Ann DeHovitz (Ross).

Carol was preceded in death by her parents, Esther and Harold, as well as a third sibling, Mark Pianin.

Funeral services for Carol were June 7, 2026 at Lane Family Funeral Homes Roberts-Clark Chapel, Warren. Burial was in Beth Israel Cemetery in Warren. Family and friends may send their heartfelt condolences by visiting lanefuneralhomes.com.

Marsha Fader continued on page 24

Standing together for Israel in Washington, DC



By Pastor Juan Rivera
Lead Pastor,
Victory Church

It was an honor to attend Israel Advocacy Day, held May 4 to 6, in Washington, D.C., alongside rabbis, pastors, civic leaders, and advocates from across the nation who gathered with one clear purpose: to stand with Israel, confront antisemitism, and strengthen the relationship between the

Jewish and Christian communities.

As president of the Hispanic Israel Leadership Coalition, a subsidiary of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, I was especially grateful to be part of this important gathering and to see leaders from across the country engage in meaningful conversations on Capitol Hill. In a time when antisemitism is rising and moral clarity is urgently needed, it is not enough to care quietly. We must show up, speak clearly, and stand together.

One of the great blessings of this trip was being there with my dear friend and colleague Bonnie Deutsch Burdman of the Youngstown Area Jewish

Federation. Bonnie is a trusted leader, a bridge-builder, and someone I deeply respect. Our friendship represents the kind of relationship this moment requires: honest, committed, and rooted in a shared desire to see our communities stand together.

I am also grateful for the organizations that helped make Israel Advocacy Day possible, including Eagles' Wings, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, ACLI, and the Israel Allies Foundation. Their work helped bring together a powerful coalition of leaders committed to advocacy, education, and solidarity.

For me, this trip was more than a vis-

it to Washington. It was a reminder that the work of combating antisemitism must happen nationally, locally, and relationally. It must happen in congressional offices, in houses of worship, in community spaces, and through friendships that refuse to remain silent.

The Youngstown Jewish community has been a meaningful partner and friend to me, and I remain committed to standing with Israel, standing with the Jewish people, and strengthening the bonds of trust between our communities.

What happened in Washington must not stay in Washington. It must continue here at home.

Berk Enterprises partners with Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation

By Elise Skolnick

Giving back to the local community is not new to Berk Enterprises, Inc.—but they didn't have one specific philanthropic partner they worked with.

That all changed when Reilly Berk, owner and president, was attending a Women in Restaurant Leadership conference. There she heard the founder of Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation speak.

Known as the innovators of the iconic lemonade cup you see at fairs and other places, Berk saw partnering with ALSF as the perfect fit.

"We established a lemonade cup," Berk said. "You're all about lemonade. What could we do together?"

ALSF works to change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families, and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer. Childhood cancer is the number one cause of death by disease for children in the United States.

To start, Berk collaborated with ALSF to launch a special 16 ounce paper cup that shares the organization's colors and message. A portion of the proceeds from every case of cups sold is donated back to ALSF to help fund vital cancer research and support for children and families affected by the disease.

"We turned one of our signature lem-

onade cups into a blue and yellow print to match their colors," Berk said. "We donate a portion of the sales back to Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, so we try to get our customers to buy the Alex's branded cup to show their support. We also created a custom cup for them to sell on their website."

Berk Enterprises also participates in the ALSF's "Lemonade Days" — when individuals and organizations raise money for the organization by hosting lemonade stands. They held their first in 2025, raising \$13,000, exceeding their goal of \$5,000.

The goal for this year's June 12 event was \$10,000. They raised nearly \$15,000. Taking place at Berk's Warren headquarters, members of the community were able to purchase fair-style lemonade for a suggested donation of \$3. Also included were music, face painting, and Molnar's Concessions.

"So it's really just a great way to get the community together, enjoy the weather, be outside, and donate money to Alex's," Berk said.

She also noted Berk employees enjoy being involved with the lemonade stands.

"I think it just brings a sense of joy and fulfillment to me and the team and the company," Berk said. "And my father,



Berk Enterprises, Inc. held their second annual lemonade stand for Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. Pictured is Reilly Berk, owner and president, with members of the Berk team.

when he was more involved with the company, both my parents, they instilled in us at an early age the importance of giving back to the community. And, so for decades, we've done that monetarily, with food drives, you name it. But I think it's nice having one key organization that we

can all rally around and support."

Berk plans to hold lemonade stand events annually. They've also partnered with Youngstown Clothing Company to offer an Alex's branded T-shirt that says, "Serving Up Hope One Cup at a Time." A portion of sales benefit ALSF.

Reproduction of letter from Sid Jacobson, an American liberator during WWII

Editor's note: This letter is a typed reproduction of a letter from Sid Jacobson, an American liberator of WWII. Sid was related to the Froomkin family, a longtime local family. Recently, one of his letters home from the war front in Germany at the end of World War II was discovered. In that letter, he shares what he witnessed in those final days of the war. It's printed here with permission of his family.

April 30, 1945

Germany

Dearest Mom and Bernice,

I hope you two are fine. Everything with me is okay.

I am going to tell you a little story of what I, and the rest of the troop, saw yesterday. After you read it, you might pass it on to others so that they might know what kind of people we're fighting.

It will be hard to believe but I and many others have seen it in the real. Many of us took pictures of it. I myself took almost 75 different shots.

Yesterday morning about 9:00 we rode to the top of the hill which ran into a wood. While riding up we saw the German civilians carrying wooden box coffins. Two people in front and two people in the rear. Altogether there were 184 coffins and four civilians to a box. There were many girls, women, old women, and old men. Also there were many children. You could see them walking for a mile and a half to the top.

To get to the point, the American military government found out that there were refugees buried in large holes in the woods, so they had the German people of the town dig up the bodies and let me tell you, it was some sight. 184 dead refugees, Polish, Russian, Jewish and all the others. They were slaughtered there. Heads were bashed in. Arms were cut off, one man had a hole in his head as big as a grapefruit, and his brains were laying with about a foot away. There were children 15 years of age. The rest were from 30 to 40 years old. Some of these people died from being shot in the mouth, the side of the head, etcetera. They were laid in long rows.

As the German civilians reached the woods, they had to pick up these bodies and put them into the box and carry them to the German cemetery where they were laid out in front of all the people. Everybody carried these coffins, including the women. After they were all in the cemetery, a Catholic and Protestant chaplain made a prayer. A German voice told the German people there what the soldiers and some of them had done and been the cause of. After they finished, a Jewish fellow who had a brother lying in one of those holes made a speech. Several times he had to pause and cover his face to keep from bursting into tears. He told the German people how they had been tortured, and made to walk almost 100 miles and how they were killed when they dropped. He said that 80,000 left a Polish city and only 5000 reached Germany.

These bodies that were found here were nothing.

There are 10s of thousands more that have been burned, killed and put into gas chambers. One refugee told of 9000 Russian women being slaughtered. After he finished the talk, me and two other Jewish men said a prayer. If the Americans hadn't come when they did, the 120 that were left would have been killed also.

One more thing he mentioned. The Germans told them they would never be freed by the Americans because they would kill them all before the Americans got there.

Next, a young Russian girl said a few words which I didn't understand. After all the prayers were said the whole population of this German city started a single line and every single man woman and child had to pass the 184 coffins and look at the mutilated bodies.

Some of the women were crying but it looked to me that the majority of them were laughing deep down in their hearts.

After everyone had seen the bodies, the civilians put the tops on the boxes and were going to bury them in the German cemetery. I think the Germans didn't like the idea of burying these people in the cemetery. It's something they will remember when they see the graves

There are lots of things like this going on. I never believed it too much. I thought that the people who told the stories were exaggerating a bit. But I've seen it now. I know. I took a lot of pictures of everything. I got a picture of most of the dead bodies. One picture I missed was the one where a civilian shoveled up the brains of the dead bodies and set them in the coffin.

OK, I will send you the pictures as soon as I can get them developed. Mom, I can't explain how beat up those bodies were, but if you can picture a human for the worst kind. Of a beat up mess, you might get an idea how they looked. It was awful.

There was one young boy who found his father among the mess.

I guess that is about all I can write for now. So I close with all my love to you and Bernice.

Bless you both.

Love Sid.

PS Please excuse all the misspelled words and the shaky writing.
I'm writing on my knees.

The search for Yehudit: How a stack of letters resolved a decades-old mystery

By Patrice Worthy

Editor's note: Taylor Miller grew up in Trumbull County. This article was originally published by WHRO Public Media.

Last April, Orly Sela stood before an audience in Taipei, Taiwan, recounting the story of Yehudit Biksz, her grandmother, a Holocaust survivor.

Sela is a member of the Remembrance Ambassadors in First Person program; members tour the world to ensure the memories of survivors are not forgotten.

What she didn't know was that half-way around the world, Norfolk resident Taylor Miller had been searching for Biksz after discovering that Biksz had been a pen pal of her great-grandmother, Virginia Longberry-Shohayda, more than 80 years ago.

Then, weeks before Rosh Hashanah in September, Miller stumbled upon a YouTube video of Sela's talk on Facebook. She contacted Sela immediately. What transpired gave Sela, her family and Miller the missing pieces of a story they had spent years trying to write.

Biksz grew up in Békéscsaba, Hungary, in the southeastern part of the country. She was about 15 when Nazi leader Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany in 1933. By 1939, he announced the eradication of European Jewry in the event of another world war. By 1942, he began deporting Jews to Chelmno, an extermination camp in Poland.

Biksz was raised in a secular Jewish family and only attended synagogue during the High Holidays. Sela describes her as a patriotic Hungarian who had primarily non-Jewish friends. As a child, she was fascinated with space and studying biology; by the time she was a teenager, however, Hungary had followed Germany and passed anti-Jewish laws that kept Jewish students from certain jobs and schools. Biksz attended trade school to become a cobbler.

Around 1937, Biksz joined a pen pal program and started writing to a Virginia Longberry in Ohio.

Letter exchanges in the U.S. and Europe were becoming popular in the 1930s. German Jewish teenager Anne Frank be-

came pen pals with a girl in Danville, Iowa, in 1939. Anne's family later went into hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam; Anne kept a diary that was found after the war and became a bestseller. Anne died in 1945 in a concentration camp.

When Biksz wrote one of her first letters to Longberry, there was no talk of Nazis or death. In one, dated Feb. 24, 1937, she was excited about getting to

to turn with my request.

Certainly you have knowledge, that here what is the situation to The Jews (We are too Jews). For this reason, we want to emigrate in Kanada or in the U.S.A.

I ask you very much, that if you should can then you help us in this affair.

Biksz went on to tell Virginia that her parents are relatively young and would



know her new friend and using her growing skills in English:

Dear Virginia!

I am very glad for receiving your letter. And so, I will answer very quickly ... I attend in the High school of girls. We have to learn very much: Religion, Hungarian, English, German, Physics, Geographie, Mathematics.

She promised to send a photo of herself and her 8-year-old brother, Janos. She asked Longberry to do the same.

By 1938, Biksz was referring to Virginia as "Dearest Ginny" and sending small gifts. But the tone of her letters changed by early 1939; Biksz's letters went from a childhood innocence to a vulnerability about her family's circumstances.

Dear Virginia!

I received your kind letters and thank you very much.

I am obliged to you and your parents

do anything for sponsorship. In September 1939, Hitler invaded Poland, launching World War II. By November of the following year, Hungary joined Germany and the other Axis powers.

In 1940, Longberry received a letter from Biksz stating that the city had flooded and that many families were homeless. She then asked Longberry to write back soon.

That was the last letter Longberry received.

During the years, Longberry wondered if Biksz was OK.

She did not know that Biksz and her brother survived and moved to Israel, where she married another Holocaust survivor, and had Arie, Sela's father. Biksz settled in the farming community of Moshav Moledet and became a manicurist.

Longberry married in 1943 to Fred

Shohayda and had two sons. They lived in West Mecca, Ohio and she died in 2007.

Shortly before she died, however, she gave a stack of aged letters to her great-granddaughter, Miller. Miller didn't read them until she moved to Norfolk in 2013.

Once she started reading them, she became obsessed. She wrote in a Facebook post about her great-grandmother, the pen pal and asked the public for any information on the Biksz family. Nothing.

Last September, Facebook generated a memory of the post and Miller did another internet search with Biksz's name.

That's when she came across the video that Sela had posted as part of her tour. Miller immediately sent a message through Facebook. Sela was skeptical and then Miller sent her a photo of Biksz and a few letters.

The two women started filling in the gaps that the other had been looking for.

Biksz, her mother and brother had been sent to Auschwitz, a concentration and death camp in Poland, in June of 1944; her mother was sent immediately to the gas chambers. Her father was shipped to the Dachau concentration camp in Germany, where he died of starvation.

Biksz was later shipped to a labor camp in Germany and bartered food for thread from workers at a parachute factory. She improvised knitting needles from the factory she worked in and made an orange sweater. She kept the sweater until she died.

Sela held the sweater while giving her presentation in Taiwan.

"....It was on me during my voyage to Israel. It was on me during my pregnancy with my son, Arie, and it was on me during my final immigration to Israel," Sela said, reciting an account that she created from research and her grandmother's stories.

During a recent video interview, Sela

Yehudit continued on next page

Yehudit continued from previous page

said her grandmother lost her faith in God, which Arie believes is because of the Holocaust.

Like many survivors, Biksz didn't talk about the Holocaust. Sela learned what she did about her grandmother when Sela was going through her Bat Mitzvah, and she asked Biksz to share her history.

Sela was close to her grandmother, but it wasn't until she saw the letters from Miller that she knew she had a friend in America or that she could speak English.

Despite her trauma, Sela said, Biksz kept her spunk until she died.

"She liked fashion and wearing red lipstick," Sela said during the video interview, recalling her grandmother in her later years. "Even in Israel, you know it's hot here, she would dress up all the time and wear makeup to take out the trash."

Biksz, like her pen pal, died in 2007. She died during Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

Soon after Miller and Sela connected, Miller mailed the letters to a friend of Sela's in America who was about to travel to Israel. Sela had the letters and photo in less than two weeks.

On Oct. 29, the day before Biksz's yahrzeit, the anniversary of her death, Arie sat at the kitchen table in Israel and cried as he spoke during a video interview.

"I'm so disappointed that she asked for help and couldn't get it," he said, referring to the letter asking for sponsorship. "I think my mother was very brave to ask for help. She had chutzpah because they were strangers. She knew bad things were on the way, but she wasn't pessimistic."

Arie couldn't speak as he looked at the photo Miller sent — the only photo the family has of Biksz before the war.

He managed "yaffa" through his tears, which means pretty in Hebrew.

For Miller, concluding her search after all those years has been fulfilling. Sela now has new details about her grandmother to include in her talks. She hopes her grandmother's memory will be a blessing to those who hear her story.

"Every person, no matter their race or religion, should talk with their grandmother and learn about their roots."

Jewish Energy continued from page 2

investing in young adult gatherings, cultural programming or digital Jewish spaces and sometimes it simply means helping Jews find each other. Because when Jewish energy meets opportunity, community begins to grow.

The future of Jewish life in our Valley will not look exactly like the past but if we keep our tent open on all four sides that future can be vibrant, creative, and deeply connected.

Small Miracles continued from page 2

ing her tiny infant nestled into a nest of ivy along their fence just steps away from the pathway.

With eight loud birthday boy celebrants due to arrive later in the day, they made sure the path was blocked for the birthday boys, then quietly peeked to see the new arrival. Party supplies were re-routed to the other side of the house. Throughout the day we quietly peeked to see the new arrival hoping that mommy deer would return to the cries of her newborn, but knowing we could not touch or provide comfort to the baby. We watched as baby began to move and then to tentatively try to stand on wobbly legs only to collapse and curl up again in her nest.

(The party took place as planned away from the newborn.)

The mother returns at night to feed and care for the baby but is gone when we go out in the morning. She has moved the baby to the backyard along the house where a new nest cradles her beside the hum of the air conditioning unit.

As the deadline for submission of this article has approached, I can only assure you that after three days, baby seems to be thriving and even has ventured out into the yard a bit. Mama returns at night and soon will take her baby with her to a new location.

It has been beautiful to watch the miracle of nature unfold in the most unexpected time and place - and to know that soon mama and baby will join the other neighborhood deer who arrive nightly to treat my son-in-law's garden and my daughter's flower beds as their own personal smorgasbord.

We will forever remember this birthday party date with fondness and love for all of nature.

The beautiful picture was taken by Ben, the birthday boy, very shortly after the birth.



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Register by July 31 by emailing Barb Wilson at bwilson@jewishyoungstown.org.

Through generous subsidies from JFCS, Camp Kid Again is being offered at a substantially reduced cost, making this enriching experience more affordable.

Looking Back continued from page 8

twice monthly on Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. Tuesday adult learning runs from noon to 1:30 p.m. nearly every week of the year — we just wrapped a deep dive into Pirkei Avot. This summer, we move into learning about Psalms (June and July) and Elul preparation (August). This May we will host a Tikkun Leil Shavuot with Rabbi Jesse teaching on radical rest in a 24/7 society and Rabbi Berman sharing from her rabbinic thesis on manna in the wilderness. And keep an eye out for our new “Round the Town Coffee and Conversation” — casual, no agenda, just learning together over coffee.

We are also transitioning to Siddur Lev Shalem for Saturday morning and morning festival services. Our beloved Sim Shalom has served us well, but Lev Shalem offers more modern translations, beautiful poetic adaptations, and the transliteration so many of our congregants need to fully participate. Rabbi Berman is available to talk through this transition with anyone for whom it carries emotional weight — ritual is deeply personal, and your voice matters.

Spotlight: Strategic Visioning — Who Are We Becoming?

Sarah shared that she began in her role April 2019. Since that time, we have lived through COVID-19, a merger, a move, multiple clergy transitions, and a complete building transformation. The question now is not whether we can survive change — we have proven we can. Instead, the question is who we want to be on the other side of the changes.

Last November, under the leadership of Strategic Visioning Chair Richard Epstein, we launched a congregation-wide strategic visioning process. The board now meets every other month so that the alternating months can be devoted entirely to this work. We have organized our efforts around six pillars — ritual, education, membership, auxiliaries, governance, and finance — grouped into three larger themes: the Lived Experience, Community & Connection, and Structure & Sustainability.

We have completed our SWOT analysis, and have named what we do well and where we need to grow. Now we are turning our efforts into SMART goals — a small number of measurable commitments we can carry forward over the next several years. If you have

not yet participated, please come to the next visioning meeting. This is your congregation, and your voice belongs in this conversation. As Rabbi Berman reminded us, the Israelites in B'midbar had to organize themselves before they could journey forward together. That is exactly what we are doing.

Gratitude, Leadership, and L'dor Vador

We close with our deepest thanks to Jason Bostocky for two extraordinary years as president. Jason inherited a congregation at a pivotal moment and led us through a capital campaign, construction, and rededication with steadiness and grace. We will miss him in this seat — but as he reminded us in his farewell, he leaves the role, not the family.

We welcome Bob Rawl as our incoming president, along with our new executive committee: Josh Hill (vice president), Bill Trachman (treasurer), Jessica Lev (secretary), and at-large members Hannah Anderson, Sam Bernstein, and Richard Epstein. We also warmly welcome new trustees Mandy Medvin and Maggie Henderson, and thank Dick Shapiro for his years of devoted service as a trustee. Dick acted as a Rodef Shalom representative through our merger, a steady hand during the sanctuary renovation, and will now serve as a Brotherhood representative on our board.

Thank you to our incredible staff — in the office, in the classrooms, on the *bima*, in the kitchen, and across our entire security team. Thank you to every volunteer, every chairperson, every congregant who said yes this year. Our financial picture is strong: we are running ahead of budget on revenue and beating our deficit plan by nearly a quarter million dollars; thanks in part to grants we have been blessed to receive, our annual Super Bowl fundraiser, and to your continued generosity. The capital improvements are 3/4 complete and the campaign is 2/5 through its collection period. The work — bathrooms, the new quiet room sponsored by Alan and Beverly Nathan, the back stairwell, new bollards, and replaced doors throughout the building — continues.

L'dor vador. None of us is a permanent caretaker of this sacred institution. We hold it for a time, strengthen it, and pass it forward. What a privilege it is to do that work with each of you.

Happy 250 continued from page 5

bert Einstein, who reshaped modern science, spent the later years of his life in the United States and immigrated fully to the country in the 1930s. His name has become legendary when describing genius intellect.

Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, born in Poland, was a U.S. Navy Four-Star Admiral who directed the development of naval nuclear propulsion, earning the title “Father of the Nuclear Navy.”

Dr. Jonas Salk was hailed as a “miracle worker” when the polio vaccine’s success was first made public in April 1955. He chose to not patent the vaccine or seek any profit from it in order to maximize its global distribution.

The 21st century has brought a panoply of Jewish contributors.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a cultural and legal icon, served as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, championing women’s rights.

Justice Elena Kagan is a current associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, appointed in 2010.

Steven Spielberg is a legendary Academy Award-winning filmmaker, known for magnificent 21st-century movies like “Saving Private Ryan” and “Lincoln.”

Dr. Jennifer Doudna is a biochemist and Nobel laureate recognized for her groundbreaking work in CRISPR gene-editing technology.

Marsha Fader continued from page 19

family escape from Russia to the United States. Marsha is survived by her children Pamela (Eric) Greene, Jerome (Charlotte) Fader, and Barry Fader; and her brother Mervyn (Marlene) Hollander and brother-in-law Alfred (Harriet) Fader. Grandchildren: Lauren Fader, Caitlyn Sabo (Dan), and Nathaniel Fader (Jillian). Her Great Grandchildren: Jenna Fader, Aidan Fader, Kinsey Sabo, Westin Sabo, and Beau Sabo. Nieces: Deborah, Lora, and Robyn. Nephews: Steven, Eric, and Adam. Great Nieces Zarina, Elizabeth, and great nephews; Max and Zachery. She is preceded in death by her parents, Louis and Florence Hollander, her brother, Sheldon Lee Hollander, her sister-in-law, Delores Fader, her niece,

Judge Roy Altman, a U.S. district judge in Florida, is a rising star, using his copious skills to defend Israel and the Jewish people and to strengthen the values of justice and freedom characteristic of the American legal system. He continues in the path blazed by the incomparable attorney, Alan Dershowitz.

This list of Jews, who, over the last 250 years and more, have contributed mightily to the United States’ success is only the beginning. Thousands more names could be added. Certainly, we have produced a few scoundrels and criminals over the years, but the overwhelming majority of Jews have been loyal, productive citizens, adding polish and glory to this country.

At a time when anti-Jewish feeling is at an all-time high, we Jews must remember who we are and what we have contributed. We owe allegiance and thanks to America for being a benevolent host country to our people. And, America, in turn, should recognize the outstanding and numerous contributions that we Jews have given to her.

As long as this beneficial relationship endures, we Jews will continue to push America forward to greater accomplishments. May that be the case for the next 250 years, so that our long-into-the-future descendants will be delighted to wish America a Happy 500th.

Cynthia Fader, and her in-laws, Max and Rose Fader.

Marsha’s funeral service was held at Beth Israel, the Jewish Congregation of Sun City Center, on May 20, 2026. Additionally, a graveside service was held at the Gan Shalom Cemetery. We encourage all who knew and loved Marsha to share their memories and upload photos to her memorial page. Donations may be made in her memory to the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Please use the following email address when making your donation: epgrne@tampabay.rr.com. In this way, we can continue to celebrate Marsha’s life and keep her spirit alive in our hearts.