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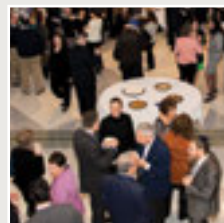
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STOVROFF
(4)



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December 2016

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Long before Hillary Clinton ever walked on a stage to give a speech, there was Ruth Kahn Stovroff (z"l). Ruth, who passed away this October at the age of 104, was the original "Wonder Woman." She was the first woman president of both the Buffalo Jewish Federation and the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies; she was smart, well-educated, funny, gracious and gifted with a personality that enabled her to have other people want to listen to her, want and follow her, and want to be associated in whatever project she was leading. She was a role model to every single Jewish and non-Jewish woman I know who was engaged in civic life in the second half of the twentieth century as well as the nearly two decades of the twenty first. You can read our small tribute to Ruth Kahn Stovroff's life in this month's issue on page 4, and remember the elegance combined with community action that is Ruth's legacy.

And this month as we prepare for our joyous celebration of Hanukkah, let's remember that the word "Hanukkah" means rededication. And so, as those Jews living in ancient Israel rededicated their lives to preserving Judaism and their Jewish ways of life—though there was struggle and failure before their success—in our current American political climate where it is so easy to become frustrated, disenfranchised and angry, let us all rededicate ourselves to trying to reach out to talk to and to listen to those we might otherwise ignore or shun. It's hard work, but easier than fighting Antiochus and the Greeks! There are so many modern-day Maccabees living right here in Buffalo, right here in our community, men and women with Ruth Kahn Stovroff's vision, gumption and grit. And we thank God for them!

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

On The Cover



Photo by K.C. Kratt.

This year, the Gesher School and Congregation Shir Shalom School joined forces to provide education for children from their congregations in one place. Some of those students and teachers are seen here lighting Hanukkah candles at Congregation Shir Shalom.

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Howard Rosenhoch

President, Jewish Federation of Greater Buffalo



My term as President of Buffalo Jewish Federation is drawing to a close at the end of this calendar year. At our Annual Meeting held on November 3, 2016 at the University at Buffalo Center for the Arts, I gave my second and last annual report. For those of you who were not able to be with us that evening, I am pleased to share my report with you.

Let me start out by congratulating Sheri Rodman and Jonathan Epstein on their well-deserved recognition as the Dr. Milton and Ruth Kahn and Dr. Meyer and Ann Riwchun Young Leadership Award recipients. Sheri, I look forward to the week after next, when you and I will be among nearly three dozen of us forming the largest ever Jewish Buffalo delegation at the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly in Washington DC.

At the same time, Jonathan, you, along with other leaders of Kadimah Academy, will be attending the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education's Governance and Fundraising Academy in North Carolina. Kadimah's participation in this terrific program, which is being underwritten in part through Buffalo Jewish Federation's Human Capital Fund, is bound to have significant impacts on the quality and success of Kadimah's leadership.

Buffalo Jewish Federation is obsessed with investing in our next generation of leadership. We're proud to see the likes of Sheri and Jonathan at the center of the continuous pipeline of talent that we are nourishing to build a vibrant and caring Jewish Buffalo.

My second and last year as your President has been one of progress and promise. We've made strides in leadership development, engaging previously uninvolved members of our community, deepening our relationship with Israel, and developing resources to power the programs, activities and human interactions that enable the community we envision.

Leadership Development - One of the

highlights of this year was the visit in March by Alan Morinis, head of The Mussar Institute, as Scholar in Residence. Mussar is a program of learning Jewish value traits by study and practice. During Alan's short time with us, nearly 150 people were exposed to the beauty of Mussar learning. Alan also kicked off our Lead with Jewish Values program, during which 20 leaders representing ten different agencies or synagogues studied and put into practice midot – or traits - such as Humility, Patience, Generosity, Honor, Gratitude and Loving Kindness. One of our newly elected board members, Cheryl Stein, was my classmate. Cheryl, I look forward to serving with you in the coming years as we help each other implement the important teachings we practiced. There is planning afoot to expand the scope of Mussar offerings in Jewish Buffalo, so stay tuned. I'd like to acknowledge George Gellman, whose generosity and vision is instrumental in bringing Mussar in Buffalo to fruition.

Engagement - As you all know, Rob Goldberg is well into his second year as CEO of Buffalo Jewish Federation. Rob's impact is out of all proportion to the short time he has been leading us. You heard our wonderful young Annual Meeting Chairs, Ivana Slifstein and Logan Woodard, refer to the many task forces and initiatives that have been started under Rob's leadership, and the numbers of people previously uninvolved in Federation or even Jewishly who have stepped up with enthusiasm and energy to power these projects. From our Leadership Think Tank, to our new and exciting Buffalo Jewish Service Corps, from our Branding Task Force which developed our new name – Buffalo Jewish Federation, and our new moniker, JewishBuffalo - to our Jewish Campus Life and Hillel Oversight Task Forces which combined community and campus talent to reimagine how Hillel can have a greater impact on college life in

Buffalo, we are moving forward.

Most recently, when my predecessor, Immediate Past President David Desmon, convened our nominating committee, David, along with Rob and Steve Weiss, our incoming President, urged us to invite several folks previously uninvolved in Federation to sit on the Nominating Committee. They nominated a slate of candidates for elected governor which includes several young, dynamic and energetic women who will diversify our board and, more importantly, bring new ideas to the forefront of our community. Thanks to all of you for voting in these capable folks. With them on board, our future is bright.

We've got even longer range engagement programs in the works, including The Jewish Cultural Festival in March 2018 that Hailey Epstein told us about this evening, and the JFNA General Assembly in Jerusalem in November 2018. With almost three dozen of us attending the GA in Washington DC this year, imagine Jewish Buffalo ascending to Jerusalem in 2018 in even greater numbers!! Mark your calendars.

Enhancing our connection to Israel – As Logan and Ivana mentioned, Buffalo has embarked on a collaboration with 13 like sized US communities, Budapest, Hungary and the Western Galilee Region of Israel, or as I've dubbed it, sister cities on steroids. The opportunities for us in Buffalo to connect with our brothers and sisters in the Western Galilee, in Budapest, and to share their connections with other US communities, are boundless. Whether you travel to Israel on an organized trip, as our two major reform congregations, TBZ and Shir Shalom, are doing with their local Presbyterian partner congregations next year, or on your own, we will be able to make connections for you in the Western Galilee no matter your interests. There are opportunities in medicine, the arts, education, development and any number of fields, as well as some of the most spectacular scenery and sites of historical interest.

Resource Development – I'd like to focus this last section of my substantive remarks on the campus, because we're featuring Jewish life on campus at this Annual Meeting, and our keynote speaker is Eric Fingerhut. As Hillel International President, Eric has his finger on the pulse of Jewish Campus life. Hillel of Buffalo particularly, and Jewish campus life in Buffalo generally, have had dedicated and hard working professionals and student interns who have, with significantly

limited resources, done a great job welcoming and engaging young Jews on campus. Too many, however, remain unconnected, in large part because despite good strategies and dedicated implementers, we've not had the resources necessary to power a staff of sufficient size and muscle to make the necessary inroads. Now, however, we can change all that. I am delighted to announce that four sets of donors, Marilyn Shuman, Gordon and Gretchen Gross, and Sol Messinger, along with the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, have made substantial multi-year commitments to Hillel of Buffalo which, in partnership with Hillel International, will give Buffalo the opportunity to develop campus programs that will not only be the envy of its counterparts, but will establish the model for other campuses like ours to develop their own programs. Thank you, Marilyn, Gordon and Gretchen, Sol, and Peter Fleischmann of Jewish Philanthropies, for your generosity and vision.

Before I relinquish the podium, please allow me a few moments of reflection. It has been an honor to serve as your Buffalo Jewish Federation President the past two years. There are several folks to thank for making my experience the most satisfying and energizing volunteer posting I have ever had.

Rob Goldberg, in you we have a goldmine. Seeing your work up close is, in a word, inspiring. Your vision is matched only by your energy. Thank you for all you've brought and continue to bring to Jewish Buffalo. Thanks especially for being the greatest professional partner a volunteer could ask for. Thanks mostly, however, for being a friend.

Rob's work and his success do not happen in a vacuum. We have wonderful professional and support staff at Federation. Ellen Goldstein, editor of our acclaimed Jewish Journal, Randi Morkisz who runs our terrific campaign, Debbie Pivarsi whose financial management is top notch, Miriam Abramovich and Mandy Weiss whose engagement efforts with Nickel City Jews and PJ Library are so impactful. That's just a small part of what these dedicated people do. Supported by Joan Kwiatkowski, Mary Jo Fragale, Lori Lewkowicz and Nadine Ryback, this is a team whose quality and quantity of product is unmatched. I've had the privilege to get to know and work with each of you, and it has been my honor to do so.

We are blessed in Buffalo with

Cont'd to pg. 5

Remembering Ruth Kahn Stovroff: A Woman of Valor

By Ellen Goldstein

Ruth Kahn Stovroff, the first woman president of the Buffalo Jewish Federation, recently passed away at age 104 in Buffalo, New York. She was indeed a Woman of Valor in every sense of the word. She was a heroine, a role model, a wife, mother, friend, community leader and benefactor. She was the person we all wanted to emulate.

A native of Denver, Ruth Kahn Stovroff, doyenne of the Buffalo Jewish Community, arrived in Buffalo in 1937 and built bridges to other communities and building legacies for the Jewish community ever since. From the 1940's when she joined the JCC's Camp Lakeland committee, to her assisting in reshaping the community's health and human service system, to her becoming the first woman president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Buffalo, then the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, she set the pace that every single young Jewish woman in a Buffalo leadership role was keen to emulate.

The Dr. Milton and Ruth H. Kahn Young Women's Leadership Award was established by Ruth and her first late husband in order to recognize young women in leadership roles at Buffalo's Jewish Federation, with 40+ young women earning the award since its inception.

Mrs. Stovroff's influence extended into the greater Western New York community and beyond. The Food Bank of Western New York was founded in Mrs. Stovroff's living room many years ago, and she continued to inspire such organizations as the Elizabeth Pierce Olmsted Center for the Visually Impaired—which honored her this Fall—Child and Family Services of Western New York, the National Conference for Community and Justice, and the national Florence Heller Research Institute of the Jewish Community Centers Assn. She was a founding member of the Western New York Woman's Fund, and the first president of the local Community Action Organization. Mrs. Stovroff she was inducted into the Western New York Women's Hall of Fame in 2005.

In 2012, the Jewish Federations of North America's national Lion of Judah Magazine profiled Ruth as she turned 100 years old in an issue which highlight exceptional women of all ages. This is part of what the story noted:

"As she reaches her century mark, Ruth Kahn Stovroff represents the absolute best of the Buffalo Jewish Community.



Ruth Kahn Stovroff z"l

She is incomparable, as her dear friend Gerda Weissman Klein would tell you. She has created solutions to community problems, found ways to encourage young people to achieve and helped to create community that will last well beyond her. She is indeed a Woman of Valor."

May her beautiful memory forever be a blessing to all of us.

Reflections on Ruth by:

Peter Fleischmann

At the Buffalo Jewish Federation Annual Meeting November 3rd, Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies Director Peter Fleischmann paid tribute to Ruth observing that "We have lost

one of the most respected and revered figures in the history of our community. Ruth Kahn Stovroff was an extraordinary leader who possessed a quiet dignity and strength that drew people to her. She has had an enormous impact not just in the Jewish community but throughout our city and region as well. She leaves a profound legacy that will endure for generations to come."



Gerda Klein

"For nearly 70 years Ruth has been a vital, important part of my life. When I arrived

in Buffalo as a young bride in 1946, Ruth was already deeply involved in community affairs. She was a role model to many young women like me who were seeking an opportunity to be involved in an important civic cause. I was drawn to her in hopes of learning how best to be engaged and make a meaningful contribution. At first she was, to me, a distant, admirable figure who I wanted to emulate. To my joy, she reached out to me almost immediately and enveloped me in that warm, healing grace which she exuded. Our friendship became akin to a family relationship. Since neither of us had sisters and she was 12 years my senior, it was natural for me to look up to her for guidance and advice; which was always sound.

My children called her "Aunt Ruth", but she really was more than an aunt to them. She also played Cupid for my daughter Vivian and Jim Ullman, the son of Ruth's dear friend Sonya Ullman. Thus, Ruth became almost a grandmother to their children. And her match-making skills extended to many, many other successful marriages.

Over the years our age difference no longer mattered as we shared thoughts as equals. But to me she was always cloaked in a certain nobility, even a majesty, that one could touch. I never saw Ruth really angry; just perhaps on rare occasions upset and thoughtful. Living in different cities for the last many years, and given the realities of our advancing age, we were compelled to rely on phone calls to replace the in-person get-togethers which

I cherished. For the past few years I would call Ruth nearly every morning. Over time, the conversations became shorter and shorter. Up until two weeks ago it was:

"How are you Ruth?"

"Fine, dear, and how are you?"

"Fine. I love you and miss you."

"I love you and miss you, too."

"We will talk tomorrow."

Only now I will not talk to her tomorrow. There is a void in my heart for the days that remain for me."

Lana Benatovich

"Ruth was the wind beneath my wings. She was an inspiration to not only me, but also so many women throughout the community. Her wisdom, warmth and love made a difference to others throughout her life, and her legacy of compassion will continue on long after her death. 25 years ago, Ruth came to me to ask me to lead MCCJ- now NFJC. It was because of her that I was able to make the transition into the position I hold today. I will always be thankful and grateful to her."

Amy Zeckhauser

"Ruth was the epitome of great leadership. She had a special way of getting people involved in her projects, whether it was the Food Bank, Federation, the CAO or the Olmsted Center. For the entire 68 years of our friendship, I was aware that our connection was a special thing. Among other things, we were part of a group of women friends and we called ourselves the "God Squad," because we often attended Saturday morning Shabbat services and Classical Reform services together at Temple Beth Zion. Right before she died, Ruth voted for Hillary Clinton for president by absentee ballot."

Musical Memorial Tribute Commemorating the 5th Yahrtzeit of Joan Ellis Shatkin, ob”m

On Sunday, December 4th, 2016, The TELL Fund (Torah Experience for Life-Long Learning, a fund with the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies) is presenting: “Klezmer, Classics & Jazz” - A Musical Memorial Tribute To Joan Ellis Shatkin. It will be held in the Rabbi Joseph L. Fink Auditorium at Temple Beth Zion, 805 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, from 12:00-3:00 p.m. Beginning with a tour of the Benjamin and Dr. Edgar R. Cofeld Judaic Museum, the highlight will be a piano recital beginning at 1:30 p.m.

The featured artist is Mikhoel Pais – pianist composer, teacher and arranger extraordinaire. He was the First Prize Winner of the Bradshaw and Buono Piano Competition in 2004. Mr. Pais will delight us with the his virtuosity, performing classics – composed by Mrs. Shatkin’s favorites (Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky and Gershwin) as well as his unique arrangements of traditional Jewish melodies and “oldies but goodies” and jazz favorites from the swing era.

Light refreshments will be served.



Men, women and children are welcome. An \$18.00 tax-deductible donation is suggested, and sponsorships for this and any other TELL Fund program are welcome. For more information, contact information is above.

The TELL Fund is in memory of Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Shatkin, ob”m. The Fund provides honorarium for Torah lectures, sponsorship of local Jewish workshops and talks, as well as Jewish educational and cultural programs and materials for dissemination. It is part of the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, a 501(c)3 organization.

Howard Rosenhoch President’s Column cont’d from pg 3

a committed and active volunteer community. The members of our Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors and Executive Committee exemplify that commitment and activism. None of you has hesitated to constructively voice your thoughts and suggestions, even when they have differed with my own. Keep doing so. Respectful conversations about differences make for the best results. Thanks to each of you on our Board and Exec for your unwavering support, and most importantly, for your commitment to Jewish Buffalo.

When I took on this role, Valerie, my wife whose wisdom is unmatched, urged me to make finding my successor a priority. In Steve Weiss, we have an incoming President whose skill as a leader is matched only by his passion for Jewish Buffalo. Steve, thanks for being such an integral part of the team that is reimagining Jewish Buffalo. As I close out my term over the next several weeks and you take the helm, I can’t wait to see

what’s in store for us. I’ll be there to help in any way I can.

Thanks, of course, to my family. Valerie, Alan and David, and the newest member of our family, Alan’s wife, Gabby Balderman, you have encouraged me every step of the way. Even more so, the passion each of you has shown in your own way for improving our community inspire me in everything I do.

Let me close by thanking each and every one of you, the members of our larger Buffalo Jewish Community. I can hardly count the number of times one or another of you has come up to me to tell me that you’ve read my column in the Jewish Journal, to thank me for serving Jewish Buffalo, or to give me a suggestion on how we can do something just a little bit better. Every time you do that, you demonstrate just how vibrant and caring a community we are. Thank you for putting your trust in me. It has been an honor to serve you.



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Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah!

*By Amy Avrunin Slater &
Norma Avrunin Stern*

Our children have been researching our Ukranian ancestry for some time and have uncovered our father's and paternal grandfather's family's life before and after they emigrated from the Ukraine. Our father came to the U.S. in 1904, and others of his fourteen siblings went to other countries.

Our uncle Abraham Avrunin emigrated to Israel where he helped establish one of the first kibbutzim. Later, his wife became a member of the Knesset. Abraham also became famous as a scholar, poet, composer, educator and author (we have a book he edited which still needs translation, if anyone in the community is capable/interested). He actually wrote the Hebrew lyrics of the song "Hanukkah, oh Hanukkah", which is sung by Jews the world over. For those lyrics, there is often an "anonymous" byline. That now stands corrected!

It also turns out that in Israel, some Avrunins adopted the more native sounding "Arnon." Many of them have served in the highest positions of government, the military and academia. We are unendingly proud of our family's many and notable contributions to the life and well-being of Israel and wanted to say so to the broader Buffalo community. And as Chanukah approaches, when you sing songs, remember that we wanted to give credit where credit is due.

Sisters Norma (94) and Amy (88) still live and celebrate Hanukkah in Buffalo.

What does Hanukkah mean to me?

By: Zachary Bloom



As a kid, this question was very easy for me to answer: it meant PRESENTS! Of course, as I have grown older (and the presents have gotten less exciting), my view of what Hanukkah represents has definitely changed. To me today, the celebration of Hanukkah is a celebration of the freedom to worship Judaism. We all know the story of how Antiochus tried forcefully to convert us to Greco-Roman Paganism. He obviously didn't succeed, because we are still here. The story of Hanukkah is just one of the many times that oppressive rulers and groups have forcefully tried to take away our religion. I find it so amazing that we as a people, although not unscathed, have been able to keep our covenant with G-d through thick and thin. When we celebrate Hanukkah, we defy our past oppressors by not only continuing to practice Jewish tradition; but by passing it on to our children and future generations. So, as we all get ready to spend time with family during Hanukkah, let's all remember to be thankful that we have the freedom to practice Judaism.

*Zachary Bloom is a senior at
Williamsville North High School.*

Is it Hanukkah? Is it Christmas?

By Judith Whitehead

Over the many years of celebrating Hanukkah, we have seen that the date of celebration depending on the Jewish calendar can vary greatly. We can remember lighting our first candle on the Hanukkah candelabra - menorah - as early as Thanksgiving time. Somehow one does not feel Hanukkah-spirited while Thanksgiving is being celebrated.

I can remember only a few times when the holiday coincided with Christmas, like this year. The fact that our holiday can move not only among days but months is mind boggling to non-Jews. It opens up a conversation that confuses and amazes many people.

Of course people still try to link the two holidays together, and how many times do we say "Hanukkah is not the Jewish Christmas!" To this day I still meet seemingly intelligent people that are amazed Jews do not have a Christmas tree. I try and make it a short and simple explanation but they still walk away with the "deer in the headlights" look. I try to explain that we are not "missing" anything and our celebration has a very different meaning than the Celebration of the Christ child, but to no avail. This part of life never seems to change. I used to resent it when people wished me a Merry Christmas, but after many years I just thank them and feel the spirit of the holiday season and the wish it came with.

Our family still does enjoy the Hanukkah season and although it is not as much fun as watching our children open their gifts, we still do all the traditional customs, lighting candles and making latkes with the family. Who can resist the aroma of frying potato pancakes in the

home that lingers for many days after the holiday is over! Our family will be together this holiday since Hanukkah is coming so late this year and my out of town son will come home for a visit.

And our Christmas tradition will still hold true—watching movies at the matinee and culminating our day with a nice oriental dinner. What better way to celebrate with family and friends and people we are sure to run into that share our tradition. Hope you all have a joyous holiday season and Happy New Year.

Judith Whitehead is a certified ophthalmic technician working in the ophthalmology field for last 35 years. She has been published in local newspapers and ophthalmology journals and lectures at ophthalmology seminars on various topics.



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Mazel Tov, Dr. Gale Burstein!



Erie County Commissioner of Health Gale Burstein was recently honored by Buffalo Business First as a “2016 Woman of Influence.” The award included a check for \$1,000 to a charity of her choice. “When Lake Shore Savings Bank approached me about donating to a charity of my choice, the Buffalo Jewish Federation immediately rushed into my thoughts,” said Dr. Burstein. “The Jewish Federation not only serves as a cultural home for our Jewish community, it also provides important services for our community at large, such as the refugee community,” she added. Federation Campaign Director Randi Morkisz (left) is seen in the photo receiving a check for \$1,000 from Nancy LaTulip (Center), VP of Lakeshore Saving Bank - Snyder Branch, along with Dr. Burstein (right). The check will go into the 2017 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo!

Shir Shalom & Gesher Schools Working Together

By Peter Simon

With just over 30 students, Temple Beth Tzedek’s religious school was struggling to stay afloat. At the same time, Congregation Shir Shalom’s enrollment was down to about 80 students—far below its enrollment figures from years ago—and the school needed a boost. Thus began an unusual and challenging educational collaboration between Beth Tzedek, a conservative congregation, and Shir Shalom, a Reform and Reconstructionist temple with much more liberal traditions and practices. Creative strategies, both large and small, were found to bridge that gap since the partnership began this school year.

Students attend Judaic studies classes together, but split up by temple for Hebrew languages classes, since Beth Tzedek starts Hebrew instruction at an earlier age and gives it greater emphasis. In addition, school days—held at Shir Shalom on Tuesdays and Sundays—are about 20 minutes longer for Beth Tzedek students so they have time for prayer sessions led by their clergy—Rabbi Perry Netter or Cantor Mark Spindler.

Dilemmas pop up on occasion, but are resolved equitably and cooperatively because the congregations have developed a strong sense of respect, trust and understanding, said Einav Symons, the

Beth Tzedek religious school leader. “It’s really about building community,” Mrs. Symons said. “Once you know what matters to the other temple, you can be respectful and responsive to them.”

The collaboration was originally expected to begin in the 2017-08 school year, when Beth Tzedek is scheduled to construct a new facility and space could be an issue. But, when planning proceeded more quickly than expected, the temples decided to start a year earlier. In broader terms, Shir Shalom Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein views the collaboration as the type of

measure needed to keep Buffalo’s dwindling Jewish community vibrant and strong. “Nothing could be more exciting than the collaboration between our Shir Shalom and Beth Tzedek religious schools,” Rabbi Lazarus-Klein said. “It means more kids, a more complete staff and a better overall educational experience for both sides. That doesn’t mean it’s easy. There are a lot of things we have to struggle through—different expectations from both sets of parents, time constraints and, of course, differing denominational ideology. But it is so worth it. This is one of the most exciting things that has happened since I arrived in Buffalo.”

Hope Bongiorno, Shir Shalom’s director of education, said the collaboration is giving students a broader, more expansive view of Judaism. “It just feels like a natural connection,” she said. “It feels like one school to me.”



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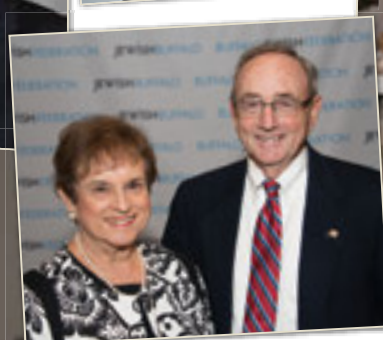
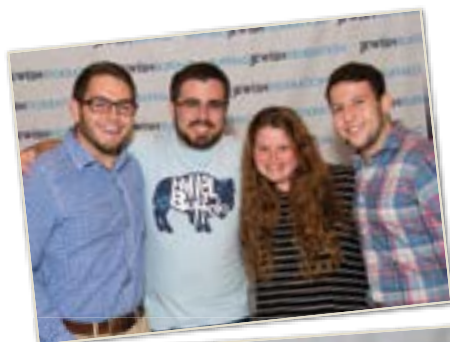
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Update on Plans for Weinberg's Future

By Kenneth Rogers
Chairman- Weinberg Campus

The Weinberg Campus board and executive team are continuing to talk with possible purchasers and are collecting the information we need to properly evaluate each opportunity. As I have mentioned before in *The Jewish Journal*, it is important that we make the right decision for the community and the residents we serve by ensuring that our facilities remain in the hands of a high quality provider. The process is on track, but will take time. We are moving as diligently as possible. Any decision to sell will require approvals from the New York State Health Department and the New York State Attorney General. In all that typically takes 12 to 18 months. We will continue to keep you informed of any updates.

Meanwhile, the team at Weinberg is concentrating on making significant internal improvements. Many of you may have noted that the Rosa Coplon Living Center (nursing home) jumped up to a 3-star rating from Medicare, and within that received high ratings for overall quality of care. Assisted living residences and other adult care facilities are also licensed and inspected every 12 to 18 months by the New York State Department of Health to ensure compliance with mandated rules and regulations. Dosberg Manor did very well on its full inspection completed in September—a testament to the dedication of our team.

We are starting to look forward to the next stage of our organizational life. The Board of Weinberg Campus will have significant decisions to make regarding our future mission. While we know that we will be working within the realm of services to older adults and our most frail, there are many possible roads that we can head down. Toward that end, we invited volunteer and professional leaders of Buffalo-area Jewish communal agencies that serve older adults, and the frail elderly in particular, to a meeting with our board in November as an opportunity to dialogue on potential futures and to provide input to our board for its ongoing deliberations.

Thank you for your confidence in the services of Weinberg Campus. We are proud of the progress we are making and our continuing impact on the community. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Bob Mayer, CEO of Weinberg campus at 639-3311 ext. 2468.

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Sharing Shabbat with New Americans

By Anna Sharpe
Volunteer and Resource
Development Coordinator,
Jewish Family Service

Nickel City Jews joined forces with Jewish Family Service for the second event in their dinner series, which focuses on building community, particularly among Jews and new Americans. On a Friday night in October, a group of people—refugees, immigrants, Jews, and non-Jewish Americans—gathered at my home with the intention of sharing a meal and forging new connections.

The evening started with the group sheltered from the rain in a homemade sukkah, where the Jewish attendees shared Shabbat and Sukkot prayers with the rest of the group. We passed around a lulav and etrog for everyone to experience as we shared background on the holidays we were celebrating. Moving indoors, the twenty-some guests filled their plates with brisket and potato kugel and squeezed into the living room. Conversations between folks who were strangers just an hour earlier flowed naturally.

Some of the refugee and immigrant guests agreed to share their experience with immigration, and the evening began to alternate between group conversations and smaller ones on the side. It was a wonderful opportunity for expression and education.

One guest explained that he didn't like the label "refugee" because of how others think of refugees: as uneducated, unwanted individuals. In reality, refugee is only a temporary status given to someone when they have no choice but to leave their homes in order to protect their families, and they are granted that status by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Many of those resettled here



Prayers are led by Anna Sharpe and Hannah Donner



People from around the world gather at the same table for a delicious meal



The group gathers inside the Sukkah for prayers and protection from the rain

are highly educated and left behind careers as doctors or lawyers. Anna Niyonzima, who is serving as an AmeriCorps volunteer at Jewish Family Service and first came to the United States as a refugee many years ago said, "‘Refugee’ is not who I am. It was a status that was given to me."

It is important for Buffalo natives to hear the stories and perspectives of these individuals who are enriching our city. Another recent immigrant guest pointed out that not all refugees are perfect either. They are just like any other group of people, each with varying strengths and weaknesses, which is why they should be treated the same as anybody else. It is our duty as Jews to welcome those who have been pushed from their homes as our ancestors once were.

If you are interested in attending or hosting a dinner like this, please reach out to me, Anna Sharpe, at asharpe@jfsbuffalo.org.



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Hanukkah Donuts

By Robin Kurss

Because Hanukkah celebrates the Miracle of the Oil....most of the holiday's most beloved foods are fried. Fret no more, now you can have delicious donuts for Hanukkah this year....baked, not fried!

Delicious Glazed Baked Donuts

makes 15 plus donut holes!

For the Dough:

3/4 c warm milk
1 package active dry yeast
1 Tbsp. butter, melted
1/3 c sugar
1 egg
2 1/2 c flour
pinch of nutmeg
pinch of cinnamon
1/2 tsp. salt



For the Glaze:

1/4 c milk
1 tsp. vanilla
2 c confectioners sugar

To make dough:

1. In bowl of mixer, place 1/4 c milk and yeast. Let stand 5 minutes. Add remaining milk, sugar and butter. Stir to combine. Add the egg, flour and spices. Mix to combine. Knead in bowl until the dough becomes smooth....add a little more flour if necessary.

2. Turn onto a floured board and knead 5 minutes. Place in oiled bowl, cover and let rise in warm place for 1 hour.

3. Roll out dough on floured board to 1/2" thick. Cut out the donuts with a 3" cutter and the hole with a 1" cutter...place these on a greased baking sheet 2" apart and cover lightly with a clean towel...let rise for 45 minutes.

4. Pre-heat oven to 375. Bake donuts for 7 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool.

5. Mix together the glaze and dip the cool donuts....enjoy. Serve with a jelly chaser if you feel the need for a true Jelly Donut!



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Rabbi Joshua Strosberg: Two Thousand Years of Gefilte Fish

A bizarre, humorous and authentically Jewish moment occurred at the Ahava Raba klezmer concert when Chazzan Yanky Lemmer introduced one of the songs. To paraphrase him: a Yid is sitting down to *shaloshudes*, the third Shabbos meal, the holiest time of the week. He clings to the last precious moments of Shabbos before he must reenter the work week. He slowly sings a melody full of brokenness and longing for the bitter exile to end. He reaches for another piece of gefilte fish...Two thousand years is too long." Then laughter from the audience. It took me a second to figure out what was funny about this, but then I understood. Two thousand of what is too long? Exile...or gefilte fish?

That was what I call a Rashi moment. A moment in which what seems like a simple sentence or idea is understood in a new way. Rashi, the 11th century Torah sage, was the master of uncovering fresh interpretations of old Biblical verses. For instance, in this week's parsha, a well known verse states about Abraham: "God took him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars..." The simple understanding is that God took Abraham outside of his tent for a glimpse of the night sky. But Rashi puts a twist on it: God took Abraham outside of his constricted consciousness that was bound by the idea that stars control our destiny. God showed him that he was outside of those stars and free to craft his own destiny.

Is that the original intent of the verse? Probably not, but no matter. Out of all the Rabbinic commentaries on Torah, it is only Rashi's that is mentioned by the Shulchan Aruch, the code of Jewish Law,



Rabbi Joshua Strosberg

as an obligation upon every Jew to study along with the weekly Torah portion. Why? What's so special about Rashi's commentary? Because Rashi involves the reader in the process of discovery. We see new colors and designs emerging from an old text right before our eyes. And as Chazzan Lemmer's gefilte fish story shows, Jews love to discover new meanings.

Nachmanides wrote his own commentary to the Torah, often disagreeing with Rashi's interpretation and yet he writes this in his introduction: "I will place as an illumination before me the lights of the pure menorah, the commentaries of our Rabbi Shlomo (Rashi)..." As Hanukkah approaches and we light the Menorah, let us shine new light on old texts. Don't just read the Bible. Read it with Rashi. Don't settle for gefilte fish when there is sea bass and filet of sole out there. Two thousand years is too long...

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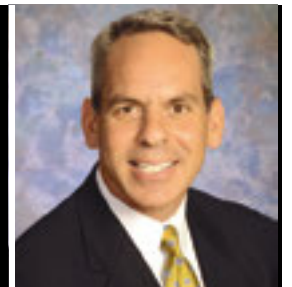
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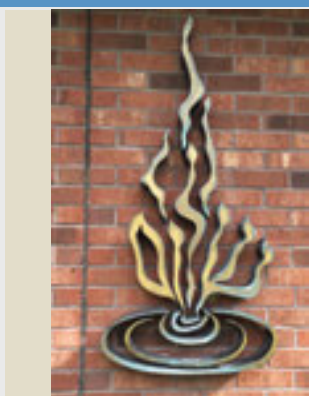
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- 2» Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is celebrating its Milestone Gala** - 180 years Friday, December 2nd -6:30 -10:30 pm at the Downtown Central Library. Wayne Wisbaum will be honored with the Grosvenor Award for dedication to library services. *For info or tickets, call 858-7197 or email germainem@buffalolib.org or go to www.buffalolib.org.*
- 3» Celebrate Hanukkah with PJ Library** Sunday, December 18 at the Park School. 4-5:30- a glow-in-the-dark dance party for kids and their families. \$6 per person. 5:30-7:00pm- a glow-in-the-dark after-party for kids ages 9-11. \$10 per person. *RSVP: [Facebook.com/pj-library](https://www.facebook.com/pj-library).*
- 4» Celebrate Hanukkah with Nickel City Jews** Saturday, December 17 from 8:00pm- 12:00 midnight. Lift Nightclub. 257 Franklin Street, Buffalo. Details and *RSVP: [Facebook.com/nickelcityjews](https://www.facebook.com/nickelcityjews).*
- 5» Give Gelt! Hanukkah is a time of giving.** Why not support the resurgence of Jewish Buffalo with a gift to the 2017 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo. *Go to www.jfedbflo.com and click on "donate" or call 716-204-2241 today!*

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Shir Shalom Going Green!

By Peter Simon

Driven by a moral imperative to save the planet, Congregation Shir Shalom is going green. A newly-formed committee plans to build awareness of the dangers of global warming by greatly increasing the synagogue's recycling efforts, using more efficient lighting and planting trees on the temple grounds.

"You start with the low-hanging fruit and proceed from there," said Joe Morris, chairman of the Green Committee. "We're in a very early stage." But intentions and enthusiasm run high. Ultimately, the committee hopes to slash energy

consumption by taking a close look at the efficiency of appliances, windows and doors, and to meet a major portion of the temple's power needs through the use of solar panels. "That would be the ultimate statement in green," said Morris, who is retired after 40 years as an aerospace engineer.

Shir Shalom Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein said the group not only has the potential to implement cost-savings, but vividly reflects the Jewish commitment to Tikkun Olam, or repairing the world. "We're living in a changing world, and it's very important that synagogues take the lead in



Joe Morris

Tikkun Olam," Rabbi Lazarus-Klein said. "It's part of our role. Honestly, Shir Shalom hasn't been doing enough in regard to the environment." But he said the enthusiasm of Morris and the committee members has focused fresh attention and energy on the issue.

Morris said the group will look at a variety of

possibilities for funding its efforts, including grants, joint efforts with other religious institutions and contributions from congregants. He hopes to avoid asking the temple board to commit operating funds.

The committee's establishment had an unusual twist. Morris—who has degrees in both engineering and physics—gave a well-received speech to the Shir Shalom Men's Group about recent advances in physics, and was asked to come back and talk about global warming.

As he researched his second talk, Morris became more and more concerned about the potentially catastrophic impact of global warming and, he said, our mishandling of the world God entrusted to us.

Members of the committee include Brian Schepart, Daniel Kester, Barry Heitner, Ronna Glickman and Jan Berg. Other congregants are welcome to join.

Are you looking for a way to make your Family's Hanukkah less about gifts and more about giving?

A Hanukkah Party and Charitable Giving Celebration
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28TH
6:00PM

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM
4660 Sheridan Drive
Williamsville, NY 14221

The Fifth Night event is a fun and simple way for children to participate in Tzedakah by giving one night of Hanukkah gifts to a child in need instead of getting a gift themselves.

This year, all donated gifts will be given to refugee children in need via Jewish Family Services (JFS). Have your child pick out a gift that he or she would want for him or herself. Then your child can bring the gift (unwrapped) to Shir Shalom on Wednesday, December 28th, and have the opportunity to present the gift to a representative of JFS and receive a certificate noting the great mitzvah of sharing the light of Hanukkah with someone in need.

We will all light our menorahs together, have kosher pizza and play the dreidel game. For families not able to attend Fifth Night, but still wanting to participate, gifts will be accepted throughout the two weeks before Hanukkah. Fifth Night is in partnership with Big Tent Judaism.

RSVP to the Temple Office at 716.633.8877.

Contact Shira Klaiman at shiraklaiman@gmail.com or 903.4725 with any questions.

THE FIFTH NIGHT
A Charitable Giving Celebration

BARNES AND NOBLE BOOKFAIR AND STORY TIME

With Congregation Shir Shalom and PJ Library

Sunday, December 18th 1:00pm

1565 Niagara Falls Boulevard
Amherst, NY 14228

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Enjoy singing Hanukkah songs!

Stop by and do some holiday shopping!

Free gift wrapping available from 1pm to 5pm

Please present the voucher prior to making your purchase and a percentage of the sale will go to CSS Religious School!

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CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM HOSTS HANUKKAH EXTRAVAGANZA!

Friday, December 16, 2016

6:00pm Happy Hour for adults and children with a Latke Bar

7:00pm Erev Shabbat Family Hanukkah Service

Featuring our house band and intergenerational choir led by Cantor Frank

Celebrate the holiday with family and friends!

Eat a variety of latkes!

Play the dreidel game with Hanukkah gelt!

Sing your favorite Hanukkah songs!

Please RSVP to the Temple Office!

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PALS and TBZ Chosen for Select Group of North American Congregations Investing in Full-time Early Education

Temple Beth Zion, through the Play And Learn School (PALS), is one of 12 Reform congregations in North America selected to participate in the newly formed Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Community of Practice dedicated to Full-time Early Education. This URJ Community of Practice is a congregational networking group for Reform congregations that are seeking to discover new ways to integrate early childhood Jewish education and full-time childcare for congregations throughout North America.



Sharing Sukkot with Rabbi Scheldt



Simchat Torah with Cantor Penny



A sunny day at PALS

By participating in this initiative, the PALS team will have the opportunity to meet with leaders from congregations with common interests to share ideas and experiment together with new strategies. The PALS team will also have access to the URJ's professional staff and expert consultants, some of the most renowned thought leaders in their fields.

Members of Temple Beth Zion's CoP team are: Ken Levin, Valerie Rosenhoch, Shira Goldberg, Melissa Milch, miriam treger honig, Amy Schaefer and Rabbi Adam Scheldt. The PALS team, along with the other 12 congregations in the URJ Full-time Early Education Community of Practice will work together formally for 24 months to push the boundaries of existing congregational efforts. Participating congregations will receive guidance from peers and advisors to experiment in their own communities, create congregational innovations, and garner skills that will benefit all areas of congregational life.

"Temple Beth Zion has had a long commitment to early childhood education and we are excited to be selected to participate in this initiative so that we may continue to lead the way in cultivating strong Jewish values and connections among the youngest members of our community. L'dor Vador. From generation to generation," said

Rabbi Adam Scheldt

This Community of Practice will include an in-person meeting for congregational staff and lay leadership involved in the initiative at the URJ Biennial on December 6-10, 2017 in Boston, MA. There also will be monthly virtual gatherings and e-learning opportunities. Finally, results of these strategic experiments will be shared with congregations outside the Community of Practice and with the Reform Movement at large.

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CBA Jewish Movie Group Hosts a Movie and Dinner December 25

Congregation Beth Abraham's Jewish Movie Group will once again be observing a Christmas tradition (Jewish style) by showing a film on Sunday December 25, followed by dinner/discussion at a local Chinese restaurant. We'll also light Hanukkah candles and sing a song or two.

The film, *My Lovely Sister*, from Israel, is a very poignant and beautifully realized story about two sisters and how their relationship is broken by challenging personal and cultural issues. What sets the film apart is the style of magical realism that weaves its way throughout. If you are a fan of this genre, you will enjoy its surreal, dreamlike quality. The film will especially resonate with you if you have sisters or daughters.

The film is in Hebrew with subtitles. It will be screened in the CBA social room, 1073 Elmwood Avenue (near Pano's) at 4:00 PM (no Bills game). As always, there



will be drinks, popcorn and other snacks. RSVPs for dinner will be appreciated in helping us make a reservation.

For contact information and further details on this event, as well other programs, please visit the CBA website, www.congregationbethabraham.net.

Young Talent at TBZ December 6

Hayden Fogle and Vin DeRosa will be representing Western New York at the next International Blues Challenge (IBC) held in Memphis Tennessee January 31-February 4, 2017. The International Blues Challenge represents an international search by the Blues Foundation and its Affiliated Organizations (mostly Blues Societies) from around the world. Each affiliate Blues Society holds a competition for which the winners in both the full band and Duo category are selected to participate at the challenge.



Hayden Fogle

Hayden Fogle and Vin DeRosa won the Duo category of the competition held by the Blues Society of Western New York. The IBC has evolved into the nation's biggest and most respected showcase for Blues musicians ready

to take their act to the national stage with over 250 bands competing in previous competitions.

To help with the cost of going to Memphis to compete at the IBC, Hayden and Vin are holding a fundraiser event concert in the TBZ Sanctuary on December 6th from 7pm until 8:30pm with a short meet and greet following their performance.

Hayden Fogle, a member of TBZ, is a 16 year old Blues guitarist who was given his first opportunity to perform with a band at the age of 12 alongside one of his biggest influences, the legendary Buddy Guy (Kennedy Center Honoree). Since then, Hayden has been invited to perform with several other nationally known musicians and his band has been recognized as one of the top 3 Blues bands in Western NY. This year, Hayden was the recipient of first place runner up in the Lee Ritenour's Six String Theory Music Competition in the Blues guitar category which is a biennial international competition that included entrants from over 40 countries.

Sukkot @ Marjim Manor

Congregants from Congregation Havurah in Amherst and Temple Beth El in Niagara Falls made their annual trek to Bittner Singer Orchards to celebrate Sukkot. After picking apples in the orchard, a service was held in the chapel at The Winery at Marjim Manor. The group then shared a meal.



Celebrating Sukkat with Friends



GOTTA GET TO GEORGE!

Join us, with Associate Director Karen Kollins, for an in-home **INFORMATION SESSION!**

DATE: Sunday, Dec 4, 2016
LOCATION: Buffalo, NY
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campgeorge@uij.org or call 414-438-2425 x229

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UIJW **CAMP GEORGE**

This gathering is being hosted at the home of Amy, Andy and Lewis Shaevel who are the local Camp George family ambassador and it is open to the community. **To RSVP and for more information, they can contact Kara at TBZ- 836-6565.**

TBZ Sisterhood Holds Annual Hanukkah Bazaar

Sundays, December 11 and 18
Broder Center, 700 Sweet Home Road

The Judaica Shop at Temple Beth Zion will be open additional hours with a large selection of Hanukkah gifts and decorations. The Annual Hanukkah Bazaar is also open to the community.

Call the Temple office at 716-836-6565 with questions regarding shop hours.



Hanukkah Service

Temple Beth Zion will hold its annual Hanukkah Service, Friday, December 30 at 7 p.m. in the Broder Center for Jewish Education, 700 Sweet Home Road in Amherst. The entire community is invited to come for the service and celebrate Shabbat and the Festival of Lights. Anyone who has a special menorah is encouraged to bring it and we will light our candles together.

The evening will also include special Hanukkah songs, spin the dreidel and delicious food as we share a special evening together as a community. On this Seventh Night of Hanukkah consider giving a gift instead of getting a gift. In the spirit of holiday giving, we will be collecting new toys and non-perishable food for local families in need.

For more information, check the Temple's website at www.tbz.org or call the office at 716-836-6565.

Special Shabbat Alive Service TBZ

Friday, December 2, at 7 p.m.
805 Delaware Avenue

Keep calm and Shir (sing) on! Our musicians and choristers will lead the music for this energetic and lively Shabbat Service. Members of the TBaZY, Temple Beth Zion's Youth Group, will also lead the December Service. Join us at 6:30 for Happy Half Hour.

Winter Kulanu Service Scheduled At Temple Beth Zion



Temple Beth Zion's Winter Kulanu Service will be held December 9 at 7 p.m., at Temple Beth Zion, 805 Delaware Avenue. All members of the community are invited to join our circle of light and warmth, and to take that light and warmth back into the winter night with them.

This year's service will feature a newly revised liturgy prepared by Mat'an Schwartz, and participation by Temple Beth Zion's youth. Rabbi Adam Scheldt will be the featured speaker. Members of Jewish Pride of Western New York will join us.

Kulanu ("all of us") is Temple Beth Zion's group committed to making our Congregation an embracing and supportive home for our LGBTQ members of all ages. We are proud to partner with Jewish Pride of WNY to help make our entire Community equally supportive and welcoming for all Jews. For more information, or to join with us, please contact Rabbi Adam Scheldt at 836-6565.


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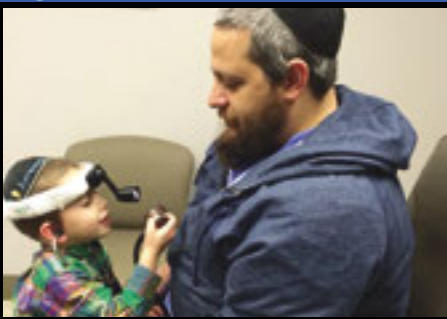
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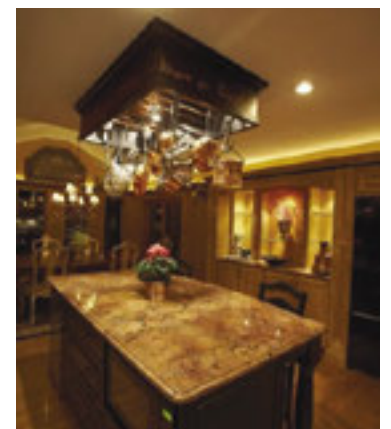


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December Events

2016

December 4

TELL Fund Concert @ TBZ Auditorium.

805 Delaware Ave.

Festivities begin at 12:00 \$18.

Call 716-308-4843.

December 6

Hayden Fogle Concert @ TBZ.

7:00-8:30 pm. \$10.

www.HaydenFogle.com

December 9

Temple Beth Zion

Special Kulanu Shabbat.

7:00 pm. 805 Delaware Avenue.

December 11, 18

Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood

Hanukkah Bazaar during religious school.

700 Sweet Home Road.

December 14

Special "Fiddler on the Roof" performance

by Our Lady of Hope Youth Choir.

@ JCC- 2640 North Forest Road

6:30 pm. FREE.

December 16

Congregation Shir Shalom Hanukkah

Extravaganza.

Latkes, drinks and Shabbat services.

6:00pm. **RSVP 633-8877.**

December 17

Nickel City Jews Hanukkah Party

8:00pm. LIFT Nightclub.

257 Franklin Street.

\$26.

facebook.com/NickelCityJews

December 18

Shir Shalom, PJ Library

& PJ Our Way

Book Fair and Story Time.

1:00 pm. Barnes & Noble.

1565 Niagara Falls Blvd.

facebook.com/PJLibraryBuffalo

December 24-31

Hanukkah is celebrated.

Light the first candle

December 24.

December 25

Movie & Dinner

at Congregation Beth Abraham.

4:00pm film followed by dinner.

www.congregationbethabraham.net

December 28

Fifth Night of Hanukkah Party.

Shir Shalom.

6:00pm.

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Rabbi Perry Netter explaining the significance of the Jewish Festivals to students in the Introduction to Judaism class.



Students in the Alef-Bet Beginning Hebrew Reading course listen intently as instructor, Michal Shmuel-Lewis points out Hebrew letters that make up new vocabulary.

For more information on these and other course offerings at the BJE, go to www.bjebuffalo.org/adulted or contact Ethel Melzer, Adult Education Director at 716-204-5380 or ethel@bjebuffalo.org

GIVE THE GIFT OF FILM THIS HOLIDAY!

The Buffalo International Jewish Film Festival (BIJFF) takes place March 17-23, 2017, at the Amherst Dipson Theatre and features award-winning films including The Women's Balcony, Fanny's Journey, A Borrowed Identity, films from the Ma'aleh film school in Israel and more. What better gift for the film lovers in your life? Six films for the price of 5 (\$50)! Flex passes are now available at www.bijff.com

KADIMAH ACADEMY HOSTS FIRST PARENT OF ALUMNI TEA

Temple Beth Zion was the setting Sunday afternoon October 30 for the first Kadimah Academy Parent of Alumni Tea, and it was beautiful! The turnout included past parents, current parents, grandparents, alumni, teachers, and even a parent/alum from the FIRST graduating Kadimah class - the connections running through the crowd were electrifying!

Dr. Chana Kotzin, past Kadimah parent and Buffalo Jewish community archivist gave a brief but wonderful presentation of a tiny bit of the history of the TBZ sanctuary, and Judge Lisa Bloch Rodwin (parent of two Kadimah alumni) gave remarks that focused on supporting the school as cheerleaders and encouraging alumni (and parents) to complete the online survey at www.kadimah.org to stay in touch with the school.



Judge Rodwin shares her story



Dan Mink, member of the first Kadimah graduating class with wife, Ronna.



Dr. Chana Kotzin presents a history of the Temple Beth Zion sanctuary, including the Ben Shahn Menorah

YAD B'YAD IS ON THE WEB

Yad B'Yad (Hebrew for Hand in Hand) provides outreach, advocacy, and program support that assists people with disabilities to achieve full participation in the Jewish and Buffalo communities. Our goal is to enrich the spiritual and communal lives of individuals with and without disabilities by expanding friendships, sharing mutual talents, and fostering an appreciation of individual differences. Yad B'Yad participants represent all races and faiths. Everyone is welcome!

Please check out the NEW and IMPROVED Yad B'Yad website at www.yadbyad.org to find out about current programming, how to get involved, and more! Yad B'Yad is a program of the Bureau of Jewish Education.

For more information, please contact Cindi Mikulik, YBY Director, at 716-204-5380 or yadbyad@bjebuffalo.org.



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Hebrew High & Weinberg: Better Together

By Jackie Kalter – Bureau of Jewish Education Social Media Intern



The Bureau of Jewish Education's Hebrew High program gratefully acknowledges the Better Together Program (generously supported by a prominent national foundation) which has enabled our students to develop meaningful relationships with the elderly at Weinberg Campus. In the beginning of our school year, tenth graders were told that they were going to be part of something great, but none of them knew the impact five weeks with the seniors at Weinberg would make.

Through the Better Together Program, these teens spent five amazing Wednesday evenings talking to, getting to know, and learning from Jewish residents at Weinberg Campus. In the beginning of the program, teens paired themselves up based on common interests through an "icebreaker" conversation. For the following meetings, teens brought their notebooks full of questions, Jewish historical facts, and conversation starters that their teachers, Hannah Lapidés and Chana Kotzin, put together to help guide discussion.

As the weeks went on, the residents of Weinberg started bringing personal memorabilia to share with the teens. Students were engulfed with the history

and the stories these amazing individuals had to share. And there was more chatter and less silence as the weeks went on, as well. Everyone seemed to have a great time sharing, laughing, and truly enjoying the company of one another.

Last month, tenth graders began a break from the Better Together Program so they could take other classes at Hebrew High. However, teens will be returning to Weinberg Campus to meet with their senior friends next March! At the conclusion of the program, teens will have completed final projects, which is their opportunity to create something memorable about their senior friend that they want to share with the public. A reception at the end of the school year will showcase the projects for residents, teens and their families. We look forward to sharing more about this wonderful opportunity as the year goes on.

Hebrew High is a supplemental program for Jewish teens in grades 8 - 12, regardless of affiliation. For more information about the Better Together Program or Hebrew High, please visit our website: www.bjebuffalo.org/hebrewhigh or contact Jill Komm, Principal, at 716-204-5380 or jill@bjebuffalo.org.



"I came to Weinberg for rehab and decided to stay."

"The care they gave me after my surgery and the comfort I enjoyed there felt better than my current living situation. So I chose to extend my short-term rehab stay into a new home. Best decision I ever made! I sure don't miss the hassles of home ownership. I'm loving the new life I have here, with lots of things to do and plenty of new friends to visit."



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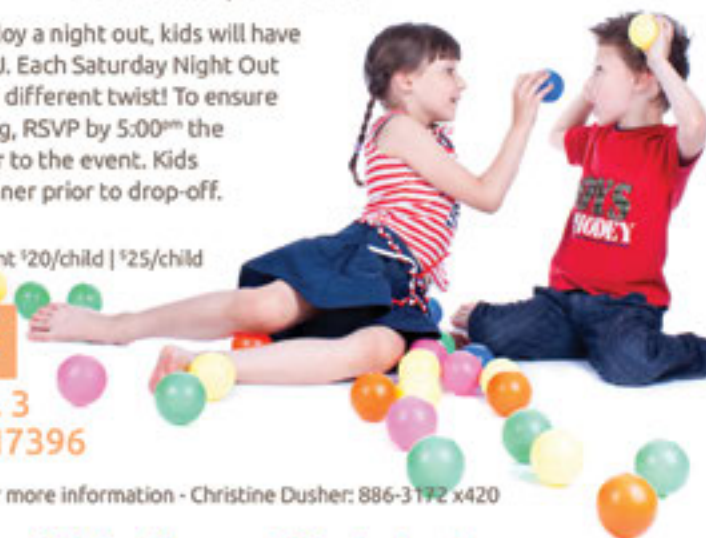
Grades: K-6 | 6:00-10:00pm

As parents enjoy a night out, kids will have a blast at the J. Each Saturday Night Out (SNO) offers a different twist! To ensure proper staffing, RSVP by 5:00pm the Thursday prior to the event. Kids should eat dinner prior to drop-off. Open to all.

member discount \$20/child | \$25/child

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2nd day: JCC mug & Myers Tel Aviv Café bucks

3rd day: One hour massage

4th day: 3 1/2 personal training sessions (land or water)

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6th day: 3 month individual membership certificate

7th day: 2 JRT tickets for a 2016/2017 show

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www.jccbuffalo.org

Beth El Genealogical Records

By Chana R. Kotzin, Ph.D.



Cite: Ms 222, Temple Beth El, 1847-2006, 1.1, University Archives, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York. Photograph credit: © Don Dannecker/IZON

Year by year, the fascination with genealogy grows and it seems like near and dear, neighbors and friends, are all in search of somebody! While these very personal explorations bring their practitioners personal joy and greater self-understanding, when an individual undertakes this for a group, or an organization, they elevate the personal pursuit to a community endeavor. This is why the Temple Beth El materials collected, collated and transformed by Muriel Selling are so important, not just for synagogue members but for the history of Jewish Buffalo more broadly too. Muriel Selling created a number of resources in her roles within the synagogue - as de-facto Temple historian - and as part of the leadership of the cemetery organization. One of her main listings combined historical materials and membership rosters to provide detailed membership lists that include not just individual names, and when members joined, but spouses' date of birth and date of death as well as marriage dates. In addition, where she was able, she included Hebrew names, place of work, company name, business name, college or university, profession, and Levy or Cohen status. This dot matrix continuous feed document does not photograph well, but it is a treasury of information, and its modest appearance belies its critical contents.

Likewise, the cemetery lists created and compiled by Muriel Selling include expected information such as grave number, name and date of death, but also includes records of rights such as reserved space status, and whether a deceased came from overseas, for example - if they had died during military service. It also includes family relationships; deed information; headstone details, location; cemetery topography, natural features ("tree nearby") and even pew holder status for the much older entries

These 3-inch-thick series of loose oversize pages also help anyone seeking further information for those buried up to the 1990s at Pine Ridge. Another resource was a series of volumes that provides a wide range of member materials that relate to the Beth El "Family History Project" which was captured as part of the Temple Beth El 150th Anniversary Committee in 1997. In two volumes, Muriel Selling enabled family members to supply

genealogical information, letters and photographs, and for this we have not just the genealogist avocation at play, but members stylizing their own family histories. Muriel Selling, a retired general contractor, was involved in a range of organizations in lay leadership positions, not just Beth El. Not only did she assemble these helpful materials, she also co-founded the Jewish Genealogy Society of Buffalo, and was a cemetery administrator for the independent fraternal Holy Order of the Living.

To explore these materials and more, please check the BJE website at www.bjebuffalo.org/jbap and click on the Temple Beth El finding aid link to plan your trip to the University at Buffalo archives. You can also contact Chana Kotzin at archivesproject@bjebuffalo.org or call 716-204-5380 for more information.

JCC STAFF AND MEMBERS ART SHOW AT BENDERSON/BUNIS GALLERY THROUGH DECEMBER 30

An exhibit of art work, created by JCC staff and members, will be on display at the Jewish Community Center Benderson Building, Bunis Family Art Gallery, 2nd floor, 2640 North Forest Road, Amherst, NY, November 1 - December 30, 2016.



This mixed media collaborative exhibit will include photography, beadwork, paintings, drawings, cross stitching, anatomy sketches, and more. An exhibit reception will take place on Monday, December 5, 6-8 p.m. in the gallery and the Lippman Lounge. Members of the community are invited to attend this free event, meet the artists and view the exhibit.

Gallery admission is free and the gallery is open during JCC business hours, 7 days a week. For more information visit jccbuffalo.org. For more information contact Jordana Halpern, Director, Cultural Arts, JCC at jhalpern@jccbuffalo.org or 716-204-2255.

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Jewish Family Service Returns To Roots For 2017

The well-being of the Buffalo Jewish community has been at the heart of the mission of Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County (JFS) for more than 150 years. "We were founded to provide support to our own individuals, families, children and elders as they made the transition to life in America. Thanks to the support of this same community from one generation to the next, we are now able to extend the same kind of support to the broader community of which we are a critical part," JFS President and CEO Marlene Schillinger says.

For the last few years, the agency has focused on developing its resettlement services for today's immigrants and refugees—in keeping with the core commandments of tikkun olam (acts of kindness to perfect or repair the world) and tzedakah (giving aid, assistance and money to the poor and need . showing empathy and compassion).

"In 2014 we founded the Western New York Center for Survivors of Torture, a comprehensive and collaborative initiative that provides much needed support to Holocaust Survivors and their families as well as for the many individuals and families who have now resettled here from war-torn regions around the world," says Schillinger.

"This year we expanded our American Sign Language Class for Deaf refugees, and were honored last September when the Jewish Federation arranged for Oscar-winner Marlee Matlin, who was in Buffalo to help launch a Federation fund-raising initiative, visit one of our classes."

In 2017, Jewish Family Service will return to its roots, re-focusing services tailored for the Jewish community regarding mental and behavioral health care, well aging support, care coordination for elders and people with disabilities, and career development. The agency began in 1862 when the Hebrew Benevolent Union, Sisterhood of Zion, Women's Jewish Benevolent Society and Ladies Sewing Aid Society formed the Federation of Jewish Charities. The Federation formed the Jewish Welfare Society in 1930, which in 1947 became the Jewish Community Service Society with three departments: Family Service, Child Care and Vocational Service.

In 1958, shortly after associating the agency with the United Way, former executive director Albert Deemer established its first psychiatric outpatient clinic: the Jewish Community Service Society officially became Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County



Temple Beth Zion members do a mitzvah by cleaning a play space for displaced refugees resettled through JFS Resettlement Services. — M. Schillinger photo



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein and JFS AmeriCorps Volunteer Anna Sharpe with resettled refugee family. — M. Schillinger photo

in 1960.

Today, the NYS-licensed JFS Mental Health/Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinic offers compassionate, confidential care that helps individuals of all ages struggling with mental health challenges improve their quality of life — and helps their families define and implement ways to support them. "We are among the few resources in Western New York with the ability to deliver mental health care with an understanding of Jewish faith and culture that can improve overall counseling and treatment outcomes," Schillinger says. "This is especially critical considering the current epidemic of prescription drug abuse, which sometimes is connected to undiagnosed or untreated behavioral and mental health disorders."

JFS also hopes to increase Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) certification within the Jewish community.

MHFA is an international training and education program that teaches people how to identify, understand signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders, and to respond appropriately to someone who may be experiencing a crisis. JFS offers the training to individuals and groups in partnership with Compeer Buffalo and the Erie County Mental Health Association: in October, the cooperative initiative earned an award from the P2 Collaborative of Western New York.

"Because over 1200 people in Western New York received a certificate by taking the eight-hour Mental Health First Aid training, hundreds of lives can be saved," says Schillinger.

She invites the community to visit the Jewish Community Services page on the JFS website at www.jfsbuffalo.org beginning January 1, 2017. The newly added presence will include detailed information on services tailored to serve Buffalo's Jewish community. "Our Jewish Community counts on us to provide high quality, confidential and compassionate services that reflect and respect our cultural and faith traditions," says JFS Board Chair Blaine Schwartz, Esq.

"This is why we were founded. But from elder care and care coordination to career counseling, resettlement, mental and behavioral health care, Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County is committed to extending a lifeline to help all who come through our doors meet the challenges of life change."

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Jewish proverb

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PREMIER OF HRC'S *DENIAL*!

A sold out Buffalo Premier of the film *Denial* took place October 22 at Amherst Dipson Theatre. The film about the trial of a Holocaust denier was introduced, with a Q&A after by Dr. Dan Leshem, the director of the Kupferberg Holocaust Museum in Queensborough College in NYC. Dr. Dan Leshem worked with the film's protagonist, Dr. Deborah Lipstadt while he earned his PhD at Emory University.



Dr. Dan Leshem



Reception before *Denial* hosted by Gelmans



Drew Beiter, Sophia Veffler, Dan Leshem, Tim Redmond



Reception before *Denial* hosted by Gelmans

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“FIDDLER ON THE ROOF” AT JCC



Former Refugee Youth perform *Fiddler on the Roof* at the Maxine and Robert Seller Theatre, Wednesday, December 14, 2016

A production of the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, performed by Our Lady of Hope Youth Choir, will take place in the Maxine and Robert Seller Theatre at the Jewish Community Center on Wednesday, December 15, 6:30 p.m.

The performance is directed by The Our Lady of Hope Youth Choir director Jennifer Serniuk, a PhD graduate student in Educational Culture, Policy, and Society at the University at Buffalo, who began working with congregants five years ago. “We began with only 10 children and that group has since grown to more than 25 with youth ranging from third grade up to freshman year in college. The choir sings regularly at Sunday mass, community functions, and recently at the Cathedral for Bishop Malone the Christmas Mass during Catholic Holy Week,” says Serniuk. “The ensemble is entirely made up of former refugee youth hailing from both camps and protracted urban settings. The ethnicities of the youth include Karen and Karenni from Burma and youth from Burundi, Togo, and Rwanda.”

Fiddler on the Roof will be the choir’s third musical endeavor following successful productions of *Once on This Island* and *Godspell*. “Most

of these students are not offered musical theater in their public schools, so this has been a fantastic opportunity for our youth to learn more about performance art and specifically



Singing “Tradition”

about other cultures,” says Serniuk. “With the assistance of Mrs. Judith Olin we all have learned a great deal about Jewish history, culture, and most importantly about a different and strong faith community. We are excited to present this work to students at the High School for Jewish Studies and members of the community at the Jewish Community Center.”

The performance of *Fiddler on the Roof* is a free community event and will take place in the Maxine and Robert Seller Theatre, home of the Jewish Repertory Theatre, located in the JCC at 2640 North Forest Road in Amherst, NY. For more information, contact 716-204-2255.

“Nuremberg Trials 70 Years Later – Legal Ethics and the Holocaust”

By Mara Koven-Gelman,
*Executive Director, Holocaust
Resource Center of Buffalo*

A Continuing Legal Education program (CLE) on the Nuremberg Trials-Legal Ethics and the Holocaust was held October 28, sponsored by Holocaust Resource Center, Erie County Bar Association, Buffalo Jewish Federation and the Robert H. Jackson Center was a sold out, well-received program! More than 100 lawyers and community members gathered in the Jury Assembly Room inside the Robert H. Jackson Federal Court House in Buffalo, that day. Several presenters and participants said it was the best CLE they have attended in their career.

The series of presentations included “How the Third Reich dismantled the German legal system for its own purposes,” and details of the Nuremberg Trials including the Alstoeffer Trial (focused trial on the judges) which was presented by Hon. Lawrence J. Vilardo, US District Judge Western District of New York) and raised the ultimate ethical issue of what would you do if that happened here?

Highlights included Professor John Q. Barrett from St. John’s University School of Law who described the



CLE in progress

Nuremberg Trials and Justice Robert H. Jackson’s role as the chief prosecutor, and Honorable Howard Gutman, former Ambassador to Belgium, who shared his family history of survival during the Shoah in Poland.

The dais and topics also included Judges of the Third Reich by Hon. Eugene M. Fahey, NYS State Court of Appeals; and Ethical Responses to Immoral Laws by Professor James G. Milles, University at Buffalo School of Law.

Referring to the Nuremberg Trials and the key Nazi defense of separating laws from ethics, Judge Fahey said “it was a moral nightmare; abandonment of the law doesn’t require the abandonment of morals.” He admitted that, “The language of the Nuremberg Laws and the judges’ rulings is very difficult to read publicly. But we need to do this; to learn so that we don’t recreate this dangerous time....”

The Q&A was moderated by Vincent E. Doyle III, Esq, Connors LLP, former President, and NYSBA.



Sharon Nosenchuck, Anna Marie Richmond, John Q. Barrett



Elise Rahner, Mary Kohlbacher, Celeste Walsh and Drew Beiter



Steven Weiss and Howard Rosenhoch

JDC's Torah & Tea in the Sukkah

A large group of Buffalo women, many of whom attended for the first time, enjoyed an inspiring morning of “Torah & Tea” in the Sukkah, hosted and led by Rivky Greenberg. They explored the value in choosing the right thing in every small battle, which is our primary purpose in life. They learned that winning the entire “war” and fully transforming is only secondary. They discussed various ways Judaism offers to help achieve true change. Women got to study, schmooze, sip tea and taste some delicious refreshments. They also had a chance to fulfill the special Mitzvah of shaking the Lulav and Etrog.

“Torah & Tea” is a program of the Jewish Discovery Center. A different topic is chosen every month and women are welcome to participate in one or any number of classes. You may email Rivky at TorahandTea@gmail.com or contact her at (716) 906-8890 to learn more about this program.



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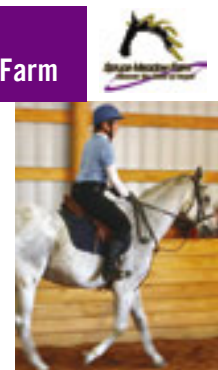


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YOM KIPPUR REMEMBRANCE IN RHODES, GREECE

By Alyssa Rabach

In planning a much anticipated trip to Santorini, Rhodes and Athens, Greece, my research included Jewish museums, landmarks and neighborhoods to visit. Knowing I would be in Rhodes over Yom Kippur, I was so excited to learn that in the Jewish Quarter (La Juderia), High Holiday services are held at Kamal Shalom. This is the only remaining Synagogue in Rhodes, built in 1577, and the oldest in all of Greece.

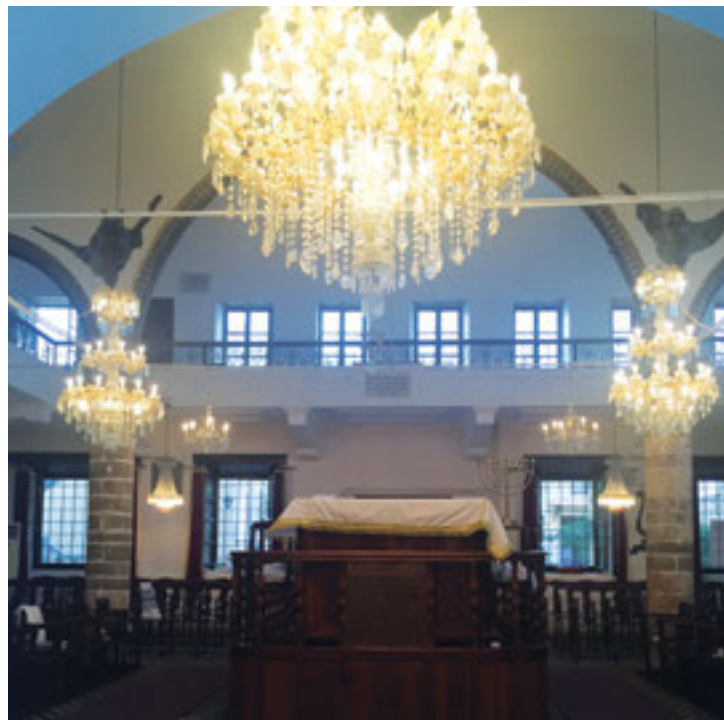
The Jewish community of Rhodes has a rich and tragic historical background dating back to ancient times. Over the last five hundred years, a large number of Sephardic Jews, who fled Spain at the time of the Spanish Inquisition traveled across the Mediterranean and settled in Rhodes, Izmir, Salonica and Istanbul. These Jews brought their customs, traditions and their language called “Ladino” and “Judeo-Spanish”. The Jewish community of 4,000 and five synagogues thrived until the 1930’s. Things gradually changed when the Italian government took over and passed anti-Jewish laws. A curfew was imposed, travel was restricted, Jewish schools closed and the Sabbath was no longer allowed to be observed. Over one hundred families were ordered to leave. Many others fled.

On July 23, 1944, the Germans invaded and arrested 1673 Jews (except for 42 Turkish Jews). They were treated brutally and then sent to Auschwitz. Only 151 survived. Another flourishing Sephardic community of the Mediterranean ceased to exist. In 1946, the first Mayor of a free Rhodes named the central square, the Square of the Jewish Martyrs. It was a unanimous resolution of the City Council, being the first official recognition of the Holocaust on behalf of a Greek authority.

Along with my travel companion Ed Mezvinsky*, we were welcomed to join both the service and break- fast. We would be joining the few remaining Jewish residents along with expats who traveled from Israel, England and as far away as the Congo. Located in Old Town where there are no cars allowed, we found the synagogue nestled in a hidden alleyway. The weathered doors with the original stone mezuzah did not prepare us for the magnificent restored interior. One immediately sees and feels the Turkish influence. The floor is decorated with black and white mosaic

stones patterns, large elegant hanging crystal chandeliers, heavy pillars to the ceiling that anchor the room, numerous elaborate wall paintings, two silk draped arks that were on either side of the entrance to the courtyard, and a hand carved raised *bimah* in the center. It took my breath away.

Once I settled into my seat in the women’s section, I felt the presence of many generations of what was once a vibrant and beautiful community over hundreds of years. The balcony that was originally built for the women is no longer used, but adds to the richness of the architecture. There was another presence I felt, which emotionally stirred within me. My daughter, Rachel, recently married a lovely young man whose grandparents came from Rhodes. I had framed a photograph of this handsome couple for the wedding and I could see their faces and felt my extended family with me. Now I am both smiling and teary.



Inside the Rhodes Synagogue



Sam Amiel and Alyssa Rabach in Rhodes

There were a total of only thirty five people. Men were called to the Torah for an *aliyah*. Ed was raised Orthodox and is well-versed in reading and chanting in Hebrew. When he finished his *Aliyah*, he

did not leave the *bimah*. Instead he continued to chant and I realized he was reciting the Haftorah. For a minute, his voice quivered with deep emotion. He chanted with *kavanah*. (and this was one long Haftorah!) I asked him what went through his mind. He said, “It was an emotional remembrance of his family Jewish roots that trace back from Ames, Iowa, as the son of immigrant parents from Czarist Russia (now the Ukraine) and Poland. He added that he reflected on his Bar Mitzvah and felt deeply honored and humbled by the experience.

For the last nine years, Sam Amiel travels from Israel to lead the services with his two sons. He has family roots in Rhodes and made *aliyah* from Seattle. He works for The Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in Israel, and he says he does his work in Rhodes “from his soul.”

We broke the Yom Kippur fast with our new friends, eating delicious traditional Greek food. No bagel and lox here! Sitting together on the rooftop after the services looking over the Jewish Quarter under the moon was beyond magical. It was a memorable experience and the highlight of the trip. It brought in a New Year experience that I will never forget.

**Mezvinsky is Advisor of Patient and Global Health for Jericho Road Health Center in Buffalo, NY. Former Member of Congress from Iowa, he also served as the US Representative to the UN Human Rights Commission.*

Alyssa Rabach is a former Public Relations Director for the Buffalo Jewish Federation. An interior designer, she is currently on the Advisory Board of The Jewish Journal and most recently participated in the Federation’s new Branding Task Force.

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