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THE JEWISH JOURNAL

A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

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JANUARY 2018 | SHEVAT 5778

JEWISH BUFFALO'S Difference Makers

(12-24)



David Horesh Sharon Levite

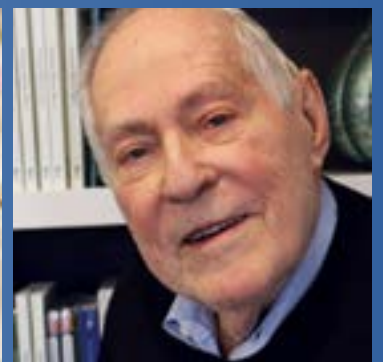
Barbara Macks Aviva Abramovsky

Charlie Garfinkel Marc Fineberg

Matt Schwartz Shelley Drake

Marc Adler Harold Gelfand

Pam Glick Murray Levine



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January 2018

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Welcome 2018! As we move into this new year of 2018, I'm feeling very positive about both our Jewish Community and our Buffalo Community. After all, we are entering a "chai" year, as "chai" is the Hebrew word for life, and also represents the number 18.

What is there to be positive about, you ask? 2017 was a pretty tough year for many reasons. Indeed it was for many people in the political realm; devastating wildfires and deadly hurricanes in the US and around the world; and friends and loved ones have suffered illness, as well.

I still say there is a great deal for which to be grateful and thankful. As you read through the pages of this month's *Journal*, learn about the newest group of *Difference Makers* in our community, you will see why I am so positive. These eleven people profiled give me hope and eleven reasons to believe in the future. The Federation's Annual meeting was held in early December, and we honored all the previous *Difference Makers* who had been profiled in 2016 and 2017. (See pages 10 & 11.) The combined talent, energy and *neshamas* (souls) in the room were astounding, and I felt very blessed to live in such a place where the contributions of these many people were awarded, applauded and showcased.

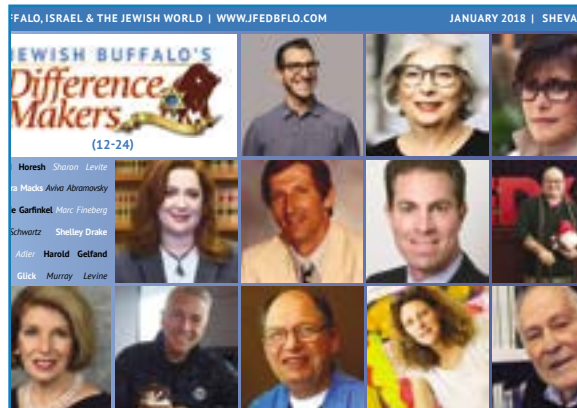
Israel will be celebrating its 70th birthday this year. In addition to community celebrations we will hear about soon, Federation is sponsoring a **Buffalo + Israel Experience** in October and we want to bring at least 70 people to Israel for this stellar 70th year.

So happy, happy New Year! As for resolutions, I just have two: to grow more vegetables in my garden, and to do my very best to make 2018 a magical, meaningful year of "Life!"

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

L'chaim!

On The Cover



Jewish Buffalo's newest Difference Makers: (top row from left) Dave Horesh, Sharon Levite, Barbara Macks. (middle row from left) Aviva Abramovsky, Charlie Garfinkel, Marc Fineberg, Matt Schwartz. (bottom row) Shelley Drake, Marc Adler, Harold Gelfand (z"l), Pam Glick and Murray Levine.

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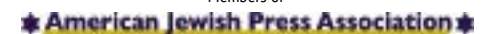


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Steven J. Weiss Re-elected Buffalo Jewish Federation President

Steven J. Weiss was re-elected president of the Buffalo Jewish Federation at the Federation's 114th Annual Meeting on December 7. He continues in this position for the second year of his two-year term. Other officers elected include Blaine Schwartz and Leslie Shuman Kramer as Vice Presidents, Andrew J. Shaevel as Secretary, Sheldon Yellen as Treasurer and Howard Rosenhoch as Immediate Past President.

Weiss is committed to addressing pressing issues in the Buffalo Jewish Community as well as the greater Buffalo Community, and is dedicated to cultivating and sustaining a strong local and global Jewish community—now and for generations to come.

Attorney Steven J. Weiss is one of the founding partners of Cannon Heyman & Weiss, LLP and concentrates his law practice in the areas of affordable housing and community development law and corporate finance transactions.

Weiss serves as a member of the Roswell Park Cancer Institute board, is a Board of Directors member of Jewish Federations of North America, was the Buffalo Federation's Campaign General

Cabinet for three years and chair and vice chair of Super Sunday. He co-chaired the 2012 Campaign Kick-Off Dinner with his wife, Ellen. He is the recipient of the Federation's 2002 Dr. Meyer and Ann S. Riwechun Leadership Award. The Weiss' have two grown daughters and live in downtown Buffalo.

"I'm thrilled to begin my second year working closely with our outstanding CEO, Rob Goldberg as well as our generous donors and amazing volunteers," Weiss said. "The changes to our Buffalo Jewish Federation in only the last few years are palpable. There's a better feeling. We're not only doing more, taking care of people in need and impacting more people,



Steven J. Weiss

providing deeper and more meaningful Jewish content, but we're raising more

money, working more closely with our agencies and the community's synagogues and the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies as partners and co-collaborators like never before. All of this is grounded on our vision of creating a vibrant and caring Jewish community here in Buffalo, in Israel and around the world and consistent with our mission of convening, inspiring, collaborating, leading, and enriching the Jewish community, guided by Jewish values," he concluded.

In addition Jessica Altman, Jordan Balsom, Brenda Freedman, Leslie Shuman Kramer, Dr. Laurie Sadler, Dr. Harvey Arbesman and Rise' Kulick were elected for three year terms to sit on the Buffalo Jewish Federation's Board of Governors. Julie Weinberg was elected to fill an unexpired one year term as a Governor and Marjorie Bryen was elected to fill an unexpired two year term.

*Thank you to everyone
who has made their gift to the
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If you have not yet made a 2017 gift,
there is still time -
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*Super Sunday is
January 28*



*You can make your
2018 gift then.*

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The Professional Team for Federation in 2018

Rob Goldberg, CEO of Buffalo Jewish Federation (BJF) is pleased to share a number of changes to the current professional staff team at BJF. "Working closely with my Talent and Performance Advisory group led by Margie Bryen," Goldberg told the Jewish Journal, "we have begun to realign our current team and have made a few additions to ensure that we play to the strengths of each team member and work more effectively going forward."

Randi Morkisz – Randi has been promoted to Assistant Executive Director. Beginning her 19th year at Federation, Randi will continue to provide leadership in overseeing the annual campaign and in her new role will also assist the CEO in a variety of areas including management of the staff team and Federation Housing.

Deborah Pivarsi – Debbie's new title will be Chief Financial Officer and Director of Shared Services, recognizing the increased amount of fiscal support Debbie and her team provide to a number of agencies throughout the community including Kadimah Academy, The Bureau of Jewish Education, The Cemetery Corporation, Holocaust Resource Center and Hillel of Buffalo.

Miriam Abramovich – As Director of Engagement, Miriam will be expanding her hours and taking on greater responsibility for setting the direction for a robust engagement strategy. She will be staffing the Engagement Task Force, managing this spring's engagement conference, and working in partnership with key volunteers as they lead the Buffalo+Israel Experience for



The Professional Team of the Buffalo Jewish Federation for 2018 includes (top row from left) Joan Kwiatkowski, Lori Lewkowicz, Randi Morkisz, Rob Goldberg, Deborah Pivarsi, Ellen Goldstein, Nadine Ryback; (seated from left) Mandy Weiss, Nicole Bard, Miriam Abramovich, Keren Green.

October 2018.

Ellen Goldstein – Ellen's new title will be Director of Public Relations. She will continue to oversee and produce the award-winning *Jewish Journal of Western New York* while focusing more of her time on strengthening mutually beneficial relationships with a variety of media, political and communal organizations.

Mandy Weiss – Mandy will continue as Director of PJ Library/PJ Our Way

while also taking on a number of new assignments related to agency relations.

Nicole Bard – Nicole, a recent graduate of University at Buffalo, joins the team as new Engagement Associate. Nicole will be the staff lead for Nickel City Jews, and will be working with Miriam Abramovich on designing next fall's Israel Experience, and a variety of other engagement activities.

Finally, Federation's staff team also

includes **Keren Green**, who began her work as Campaign Assistant/Special Projects Coordinator in October taking over the responsibilities of Mary Jo Fragale, the recent Kantor Professional Service Awardee, **Joan Kwiatkowski** as Executive Assistant, **Lori Lewkowicz** as Accounting Manager and **Nadine Ryback** as Campaign/Accounting Assistant.

Wanted: Volunteers for Super Sunday!

We are seeking Super Sunday volunteers Sunday, January 28 to help with the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo. If you have teens in high school who need volunteer hours, we can use them to make "Thank You" calls and write "Thank You" notes. There is also work for younger kids, as well as adults.

Please call Keren Green at 204-2250 to volunteer and receive your time slot. Thank You!

YES - Please sign me up to volunteer for Super Sunday, January 28.

Name (please print): _____ Phone: _____

I can work the following time shifts: 9:15 am - 11:30 am _____
12 noon - 2 pm _____

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Randi Morkisz at 204-2245
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with your request.

Super Sunday is January 28th at the JCC!

Buffalo Jewish Federation will hold its 38th consecutive Super Sunday Phonathon for its Campaign for Jewish Buffalo Sunday, January 28th from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Jewish Community Center, 2640 North Forest Road.

Chairs Craig Small and Stacey Block invite community members to join in this year, together with other volunteers, to reach out to people in our local community to raise needed dollars for the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo. Volunteers will be doing a mitzvah and perpetuating the spirit of tzedakah.

HERE's What's Happening That day— Even the smallest members of our community can do something super!

FOR KIDS—join us for a FREE 1-hour program (starting at 10 am and repeated at 1 pm), featuring a PJ Library story time all about tzedakah (helping those in need), an art project and a hands-on tzedakah project.

6th and 7th graders at Sunday School will be learning about the Jewish world and how to take their place in it that Sunday morning in the JCC gym, brought together by the Bureau of Jewish Education.

Once again, the members of the Buffalo



Jewish Coalition for Literacy will be collecting new or gently used books for children pre-school age through 4th grade. Please bring your new or used books in that day

Chairs Craig Small and Stacey Block urge everyone to join them and other community volunteers this Super Sunday. For more information, or to volunteer call Asst. Exec. Director Randi Morkisz at 716-204-2245 or rmorkisz@jfedbflo.com.

Be a Super Hero!



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Super Sunday January 28th

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Nickel City Jews - Looking Back and Lighting the Path Forward

By Sheri Rodman

As the new year commences and the snow is falling, I reflect on all that this past year has brought us and look forward to what's to come.

This past year was an exciting one for Nickel City Jews! Last fall we recognized two local young Jewish entrepreneurs, Harry Zensky at Hydraulic Hearth and Kilby Bronstein at Half and Half. They welcomed us into their businesses and shared their stories with intimate groups. Nearly 100 young Jewish Buffalonians and their friends helped us celebrate Hanukkah last December at LiFT nightclub where we auctioned off three menorahs made by local artist, Jane Marinsky.

We dressed in costume for our Purim party last March at Expo, the new urban food court on Main Street. In partnerships with Jewish Family Service of Buffalo and the Holocaust Resource Center, Nickel City Jews hosted two Shabbat dinners with local refugees and one with local Holocaust survivors,

Stephan Lewy and Sophia Veffler, to commemorate Yom Hashoah.

Nickel City Minyan, a new egalitarian monthly Friday night Shabbat service, was launched. Our hope is that this volunteer-led community will provide an inviting space for the members of the Buffalo community to share themselves, and their prayers. Monthly services are hosted at Congregation Beth Abraham, which has graciously and generously welcomed Nickel City Minyan into its home.

In partnership with the Jewish Community Center, we roasted marshmallows around a bonfire for Lag B'Omer. In August, we enjoyed the sunshine and live music while swapping stories about visiting Israel at our Blue & White Party at the Mansion on Delaware Avenue. We kissed the summer goodbye at our "Shabbasana" event, a pre-Shabbat yoga class in Delaware Park, followed by a potluck Shabbat dinner. We joined the community in September at the Federation Annual Event and

noshed on bagels, lox, and kugel at the Nickel City Yom Kippur break-fast.

As the seasons changed, in preparation for Thanksgiving, we hosted a Friendsgiving Shabbat dinner and celebrated Hanukkah last month with The Big Fry.

In 2017 we bid farewell to my counterpart, Dave Lefkowitz, who moved to Boston for graduate school and welcomed Logan Woodard and Nicole Bard to the Nickel City Jews professional team. At all of our events,

large and small, we've made new friends and reconnected with old friends and we continue to build relationships with Jewish and Jew-ish Buffalonians (and their friends and partners). Thank you for your support and helping us build a culture that's warm and vibrant.

As we move into the new year, we hope to continue increasing awareness of Nickel City Jews and P.J. Library, and encourage innovation with new strategies and programs within the landscape of Jewish Buffalo.

Gabrielle Balderman and Jacob Katz Become Nickel City Jews Co-Presidents

By Sheri Rodman

Serving on the Nickel City Jews leadership team since 2015 has been both an honor and pleasure. As our two-year term comes to an end, Dave Lefkowitz and I could not be more excited to pass the torch to Gabrielle Balderman and Jacob Katz, who are the incoming Nickel City Jews co-Presidents.

Both Gabby and Jake have served on the Nickel City Jews leadership team since January 2016, embracing a variety of different roles in including event planning, relationship building and strategic planning.

In her role on the Nickel City Jews leadership team, Gabby Balderman helps lead the organization and infuse Jewish education into the Nickel City Jews events. Gabby continues to support Jewish learning as the backbone for a strong community. Gabby earned a Bachelor's in biology and Graduate degree in dentistry from the University at Buffalo, and currently practices as a general dentist in the city of Buffalo. She currently resides in Kenmore with her husband, Alan "Sheri and Dave have left some big shoes to fill, but their hard work and vision have set up NCJ for long-term success," Gabby said. "I am truly humbled to have the opportunity to take the lead with Jake (my former Kadimah classmate!), engaging our peers on multiple levels and building an even more vibrant Jewish Buffalo."

Jake Katz, a highly awarded national amateur golfer and former



Jacob Katz and Gabrielle Balderman

professional golfer and a graduate of Binghamton University, returned to Buffalo four years ago to begin his professional career as a financial planner with Scheff Thompson Cress Investment Group. Jake's involvement in Nickel City Jews grew from active participant to sitting on the Nickel City Jews Street Team. Jake credits his parents and grandparents—Len and Judy Katz as well as Dr. Russell and Helene Seidner—for instilling the philanthropic and community involvement that he finds both rewarding and meaningful. "I am very excited to work with Gabby to build upon the work Sheri and Dave have put into making NCJ a vital part to our growing and vibrant Jewish Buffalo," Jake Katz said. "As our Jewish Community continues to grow and evolve, I look forward to making NCJ the best organization it can be and look forward to growing our reach within the community—especially to those who are new to our community."

Gabby's and Jake's enthusiasm for Nickel City Jews and dedication to Jewish Buffalo is unmatched and I look forward to continuing my service, now as the immediate past president, under their leadership.

Do you have a Tot?
Want to Celebrate Shabbat?

Tot Shabbat Hop!

All events are free and open to the public

Upcoming Hop:

Friday, January 19th - 5:45 pm
Complimentary pizza dinner
followed by a Tot Shabbat Service at
Temple Beth Zion's Broder Center (Amherst)

See Full Event Details:
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Young Leaders from Budapest in Buffalo January 7-8

The Buffalo Jewish Federation is proud to be a part of the Partnership2Gether program, which connects Jews in the diaspora's Midwestern Consortium with those living in the Western Galilee region of Israel and our European partner city, Budapest, Hungary.



Hedi Puszta

In early January, two representatives from the Budapest Jewish Community, Hedi Puszta and Marton Tordai will be traveling to Buffalo for a two-day visit and cultural exchange. Both Hedi and Marton work at the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI). Budapest has the largest post-war Jewish population in all of Central Europe. As professionals at JAFI in Budapest, they are at the forefront of revitalizing Jewish life in Central Europe for the next generation.

Hedi was born in 1986, at the end of Communism, as the first child of a non-religious young couple. As with many young Hungarians, it was a long journey to find her Jewish identity. Marton was also born into a Jewish family that didn't celebrate any Jewish holidays. It was only at the age of 13 that he discovered his Jewish identity. In addition to his professional role in

the Jewish community, Marton works as a freelance photographer specializing in photojournalism and travel photography. Hedi and Marton will be accompanied by Megan Maurer, a volunteer with JAFI and the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis (JFGI). Megan serves on the board of her Federation and chairs the P2G Budapest Task Force.

During their time in Buffalo, January 7th and 8th, Hedi, Marton and Megan will spend time with small groups including a dessert reception with Nickel City Jews, a program with PJ Our Way families, and breakfast with women who attended the 2017 Heart to Heart Mission. Time together will focus on intimate conversations about similarities and differences between Jewish life in North American and Jewish life in Europe, and of course fostering new relationships.

If you are interested in meeting Hedi, Marton or Megan, or if you would like to learn more about Partnership2Gether, please contact Miriam Abramovich (mabramovich@jfedbflo.com), Director of Engagement at the Buffalo Jewish Federation.



Marton Tordai

BUFFALO JEWISH FEDERATION

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Buffalo faith leaders take a journey of religion, and relationships

By Maayan Hoffman

Special to THE JEWISH JOURNAL

JERUSALEM. A rabbi and a reverend have two religions and sometimes different approaches to everyday life. However, more than two dozen rabbis, reverends and other faith and communal leaders of various backgrounds found common ground in the Holy Land from November 29 to December 8. They traveled together through Israel on a journey they described as joyful, humorous, sometimes painful, but mostly spiritual.

The clergy, all leaders in the Buffalo community or surrounding area, were brought together by the Buffalo Jewish Federation, in partnership with the National Federation for Just Communities (NFCJ). The purpose of the trip was spiritual and not geopolitical, explained Federation CEO Rob Goldberg, whose organization underwrote much of the trip.

“This is a spiritual journey, with Jews and non-Jews, including Evangelical Christians, Protestants, Catholics, women and men – it is amazing,” Goldberg told *The Jewish Journal*.

He said the mission was part of Federation’s ongoing efforts to revitalize the area’s community relations efforts – “For 15 years there was some bridge-building with the non-Jewish community, but we need much more.” The goal was for travelers to meet and form deeper relationships with one another. This, said Goldberg, could lead to opportunities for collaboration in times of tragedy or joy.



The entire group at the Western Wall before Shabbat

“My hope is that in Buffalo, next time there is a march, or a holy building is desecrated, we can tackle it together,” he said, noting that for a community like “little Buffalo, it is amazing that we could pull this off.”

The tour was led by Makor Educational Journeys. Participants crossed Israel, from Jerusalem – which received its official recognition as the capital of Israel by US President Donald Trump two days before the end of the mission – to Samaria in the West Bank, the Galilee and Tel Aviv.

They heard from some of the country’s most renowned faith leaders, including the Very Revd. Hosam E. Naoum, Dean of St. George, for a discussion on the challenges of interfaith dialogue in Jerusalem. Rabbi Michael Melchior, an interfaith activist and former government minister, who talked about religion as a bridge between Israelis and Palestinians. They had dinner one evening with Deacon Jiries Nasur and Rabbi Mark Rosenstein, who together discussed their relation to

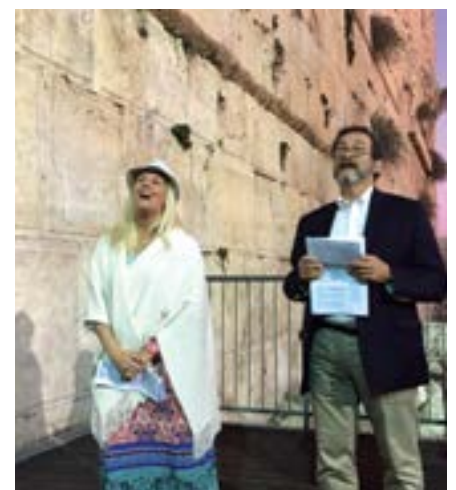
the land and the Bible.

In Jerusalem, participants ascended to the Mount of Olives and then walked through the ancient and holy city’s Jewish and Christian quarters, including stopping at the Cenacle, also known as the “Upper Room,” a room in the David’s Tomb Compound in Jerusalem, traditionally held to be the site of the Last Supper.

Goldberg went into the Cenacle with Sister Margaret Carney, president emeritus of St. Bonaventure University, a co-ed Franciscan Catholic university in Olean, New York. Catholics believe the Cenacle is not only where Jesus ate his last, fateful meal, but also where the holy spirit alighted upon the eleven Apostles after Easter.

“It was quite moving to experience the Cenacle with Sister Margaret and other members of the trip,” said Goldberg.

Visits to various holy sites sparked debates about how much faithful people should and could rely on archeology and science to prove their beliefs. The group’s private



Cantor Penny Myers and Cantor Irwin Gelman lead Erev Shabbat services at the Wall Friday evening

tour guide Joe Freedman tried to give perspective on the subject, explaining that there are few things that experts can prove or disprove. Rather, when it comes to whether Jesus was buried “here or 50 yards further over there,” it doesn’t really matter in the long run.

“What is important is faith and tradition,” Freedman said.

“I haven’t had a lot of time to sit and compare pages of the Bible and my belief system with what we are seeing, but I think that time will come when we decompress on the backside,” said Rev. Al Warner, founder and director of Set Free Inc.

Warner said he heard from several people that there is a feeling for Christians of coming home when they walk on the



In the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem.



Shabbat lunch in Jerusalem



In Haifa

“sacred soil of Israel, and it is true that as you step into the place we have spoken about and preached about for years, there is all kinds of new meaning, layers of new meaning, that seem to come to life.”

It also brought new recognition to certain likenesses between all monotheistic religions.

“I am beginning to see the similarities of the common spirit,” said Dr. G. Stanford Bratton, executive director of the Network of Religious Communities, a few days into the journey.

The first Friday night in Israel, the group experienced an explanatory Kabbalat Shabbat at the egalitarian section of the Western Wall. On Sunday morning, Rev. Greg Jakubowicz of St. Joseph University Parish presented an interactive mass for participants, followed by “tag-team preaching,” led by Warner, his wife Deb, and Rev. Mark E. Blue of the Second Baptist Church in Lackawanna, Bishop Darius G. Pridgen, senior pastor of True Bethel Baptist Church, his wife Monique, and son, Pastor Craig Pridgen.

“The highlight was the Western Wall and seeing the vibrancy of the Jewish young people on Shabbat,” said Bishop

Pridgen. “I witnessed young people running to the wall and wanting to be close to God. I will return home with a goal of digging deeper into what caused that type of excitement and that dedication to want to get to that wall. That is the excitement that any Christian pastor would want their congregation to experience.”

Jakubowicz led his service wearing a traditional cassock and rope belt. He used the floor to give thanks to the Jewish Federation for pulling the group together despite their differences in faith.

“We have one core – that one God,” said Jakubowicz, who then called on participants to rise and “offer each other a sign of peace.” Each visitor rose and for nearly five minutes circled the conference room in which the service took place, hugging and blessing one another.

Bratton read Psalm 107, which talks about “those He gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.” Then offered a personal prayer that the mission will help participants “see the world in

a new way, hear voices unfiltered by prejudices, and open our hearts that we might build bridges of respect, understanding and finally love.”

The tag-team preaching focused on building unity, too. Warner gave an example of “unity gone wrong” in the immovable ladder in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which the group had visited the day before.

Warner said when you gaze to the upper-story windows on the main façade, just beneath the window on the right, you’ll find a ladder that has been there for three centuries. It cannot be moved because, as per the Status Quo Agreement on the church, six Christian groups must come to total agreement about how something should be improved, cleaned or fixed, or nothing at all



can happen. The ladder serves as a reminder of the Christians’ long-standing divisions.

In contrast, Warner told the story of the Jewish prophet Nehemiah, who pulled the Jewish people together to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in 52 days; the walls had been down for 147 years. He explained that just as Nehemiah empowered each member of the community to build the section of the wall in front of his own house and then



Shabbat lunch

interconnect that section with his neighbor’s, this was the people’s charge today.

Warner said walls are built when the rough edges interlock. “Unless we interlock the blocks, the wall falls over,” he said. He noted that until now Buffalo has had its share of challenges, but he thinks that God is ready to build it up – and part of that building is the Buffalo Jewish Federation’s Clergy Interfaith Mission to Israel.

“God likes to build broken places, to build cities like Buffalo,” he said.

A lot of amens led to a spontaneous rendition of “Kumbaya My Lord.” The crowd stood in chorus together, swaying, in some cases, their arms interlocked.

Warner said that on the tour every day had a script, but the most powerful moments were the unscripted ones. For example, when the group was by the Tomb of the Virgin Mary, a group of women from the Philippines spontaneously started singing a hymn about the virgin mother.

“At first, the Christian members of the group didn’t think they knew the song because the women were singing the words in their language,” recalled Rabbi Alex Lazarus Klein of Congregation Shir Shalom. “Then they got to the chorus and all the Christian participants suddenly knew the melody and words. They sang the song together.

“Whether that is the real burial place of Mary or not, it became a holy moment in a holy place.”

Klein said it is not yet clear whether the tour will have immediate impact on the Buffalo community, but he does feel that his friendships have deepened, and a new level of trust has been built.

“We became more than colleagues,” said Cantor Irwin Gelman of Congregation Beth Abraham. “These are my new brothers and sisters in faith.”

“I was afraid to come over here, but my fear is gone,” added Reverend Blue. “God is telling us today we need to get our act together.”



At the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Haifa

Mazel Tov Difference Makers!



Many of the Buffalo Jewish Federation's "Difference Makers" attended the Annual Meeting and Celebration of Jewish Buffalonians in December at The Buffalo History Museum. Pictured above were those in attendance. They included (top row from left) Todd Sugarman, Hadar Borden, Samantha Sugarman, Nina Lukin, Rus Devorah Wallen, Steven Schwartz, Judge Lisa Rodwin, Bonnie Clement, Phyllis & Dr. Ted Steinberg, Wayne Wisbaum; (bottom row, from left) Richard Lipsitz, Jr., Charlie Garfinkel, Ethel Melzer, Amy Zeckhauser, Janet Gunner, Carin Greenfield, Vilona Trachtenberg, Dr. Sandra Block, Rachel Beerman & Danny Brink-Washington, and Aaron Schapiro.

Buffalo Fed @ GA 17 in LA

The Buffalo Jewish Federation was well represented at the Jewish Federations of North America's (JFNA) General Assembly (GA) in November in Los Angeles. Led by President Steven Weiss, the group of professionals and volunteers attended programs, led break-out sessions, even met Mayim Bialik at Limmud LA.



Federation's Annual Meeting and Celebration at The Buffalo History Museum

More than 200 members of Buffalo's Jewish Community joined in Federation's celebration of Jewish Buffalonians December 7. Emerging Leaders Stacie Stone and Jordan Balsom were honored, and Judy and Dan Kantor bestowed the first Kantor Professional Service Award to Mary Jo Fragale, while Ann Cohn's (z"l) family members presented the first Ann Holland Cohn Community Impact Award to the Levite Family in memory of Larry Levite (z"l).



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By Eileen M. Angelini, Ph.D.

In late November, I had the privilege to speak with Buffalo native Shelley Drake, M&T Bank's new Western New York regional president and recipient of Business First's 2017 annual Women of Influence Lifetime Achievement Award. When she explained that she gets up excited to go to work every day, it became immediately apparent why she has worked at M&T Bank for the past forty-six years. The genuine and effusive manner in which she spoke about M&T Bank was a clear indication of how she firmly believes in its culture and character.

One of the reasons for that belief is M&T's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, and to the communities in which it operates. Drake reported that M&T Bank has a Diversity Council made up of senior officers who work to enable M&T to be more effective in meeting the needs of its diverse employees, customers, shareholders and communities. She also proudly explained that M&T Bank operates using a community banking model, which means that the bank succeeds when its communities succeed, and thus ties it closely to the communities in which it does business. Without question, she is not only happy to be the bank's new regional president but feels the timing is perfect for her to represent it.

In her new role, Drake oversees middle market banking at seventy-seven retail branches in eight counties (Erie, Niagara, Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming). She will also maintain her role as President of the M&T Charitable Foundation, a role she has maintained for 15+ years. The M&T Charitable Foundation provides more than \$28 million in grants annually to more than 3,600 nonprofits throughout the bank's footprint, with \$6.5 million of that going to Western New York.

Even prior to her role with The M&T Charitable Foundation, Drake was active within the WNY non-profit community. She, for example, served two seven-year terms as a member of the board of directors of her *alma mater* Buffalo Seminary, with the last years there as chair of the board, and was on the board of The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies. She currently serves on the board of the Burchfield Penney Art Center and the Great Lakes Health System.

As an educator, I took special note of Drake's belief in the importance of mentorship, from both the perspective of being a mentor and a mentee. She maintains an open-door policy to all, evidence of how much she values the past mentorship she has received and how much she wants to be of assistance to others. While her many years of experience as a woman in the banking world have served her well in helping others, she undeniably recognizes the value of education. She thus spoke with great admiration of Robert G. Wilmers,

Buffalo's Banking on Shelley Drake



"We should admire Drake for all she has accomplished as a banker, philanthropist, mentor, and mother."

chairman and CEO of M&T Bank who has long believed that individual success and community revitalization can be achieved through education, a belief put into action through the bank's leadership in and support of the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood. (www.buffalopromiseneighborhood.org/).

Highly active in the community beyond what is expected of her at the bank, I asked Drake how she balances her executive tasks at the bank with her Foundation responsibilities and all her volunteer obligations while being the mother of twins

(obviously grown now but still a significant part of her life). Her response was a humble, "It is all tied together." However, we here in Buffalo should admire Drake for all she has accomplished as a banker, philanthropist, mentor, and mother. She is sure to succeed with her goal of making a difference in the community, whether it is formally through the M&T Charitable Foundation or informally as a trustworthy colleague and friend.

Dr. Eileen Angelini is a Fulbright Scholar and Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques, and a Member of the Board of Directors of the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo

Sharon Levite appointed President; Barbara Macks, Publisher of *Spree*

Buffalo Spree Publishing Inc. (BSP) announced the appointment of Sharon Levite to serve as the company's next President & CEO, and has promoted Barbara Macks to Publisher. With Levite's appointment, BSP reaffirms its commitment to WNY, and transitions to a woman-owned media company. As president & CEO, Levite will continue to build upon BSP's 50-year history of showcasing Western New York as a beautiful and vibrant place to live, work, and play.

"In 1998, my husband Larry bought *Buffalo Spree*, where he engineered a transformation, building a quarterly semi-literary magazine into a monthly glossy, filled with relevant, entertaining, and informative content aimed at a Western New York readership that has grown to more than 136,000," said Mrs. Levite. "With the talent and support of my management team and staff, I am proud to build upon Larry's success and bring Western New York's beauty to print with each of our monthly publications."

Macks has been with the company for the past 18 years, and most recently held the position of associate publisher and senior vice president of advertising. Responsible for more than \$5 million in annual advertising revenue across two markets, Macks has substantially grown the company's product offering, client partners, and print circulation throughout her executive tenure.

In 2002, under Macks' leadership, the company began publishing annual program books for theaters in WNY and Rochester. This new vertical strengthened BSP's relationship with the theater district, while also providing an invaluable service to many of the region's cultural organizations. BSP's program book roster includes Shea's Performing Arts Center, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Shea's 710 Theater, Artpark, MusicalFare, Irish Classical Theater, Kavinoky Theatre, Road Less Traveled Productions, Theatre of Youth, Curtain Up!, Allentown Art Festival, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Rochester Broadway Theater League, and Geva Theatre Center.

In addition to *Buffalo Spree* magazine and WNY program books, the company also produces *The Jewish Journal* in partnership with the Buffalo Jewish Federation, a senior newspaper, *Forever Young*, four ancillary publications, and Rochester's city and regional magazine, (585). In her role as publisher, Macks will continue to oversee the advertising sales for both Buffalo and Rochester offices, and act as the Chief Revenue Officer working directly with BSP's president & CEO. "The appointment of Barbara to



Sharon Levite

serve as publisher was a natural decision for us. Barbara has been with the company for nearly 20 years, and has grown its revenue, regional footprint, and client reach through her leadership, strategic direction, and creative ideas," said Levite. "The future of Buffalo Spree has never looked brighter and I am thrilled to have her by my side as we grow Buffalo and Rochester's official city and regional magazines."

Macks is an active member with the City and Regional Magazine Association (CRMA), North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA), serves



Barbara Macks

as the Theater District Association's membership chairperson for many years. "I am humbled to be named publisher for this company that I love so much," said Barbara Macks. "Larry not only taught me the nuts and bolts of running a magazine, but he showed me what it is like to work for a company that treats each individual like a family member. There isn't a day that goes by that we don't miss our Chairman of Fun—Larry—but I am honored to build upon his success and take Buffalo Spree Publishing into the future with our talented managers and staff."

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Harold Gelfand (z"l): A Model for the Jewish People

By Theodore L. Steinberg

Many people believe that Buffalo is currently experiencing something of a renaissance. If they are correct, we may hope that Buffalo's Jewish community is also experiencing a renaissance. If it is, we should rejoice and do whatever we can to further that movement, but we should also never forget those people who helped sustain the Jewish community in the pre-renaissance era, who helped keep it alive and vital until we could reach our current state. Unhappily, Buffalo's Jewish community recently lost one of those sustainers, a man who upheld Judaism, Torah, and Yiddishkeit in our community; a man whose activities largely took place within the confines of a single local synagogue but then reverberated throughout our community. Buffalo Jewry lost a giant when, on October 4, Harold Gelfand passed away.

Who was Harold Gelfand? We can start with simple biographical facts. Harold Gelfand—Zvi ben Avraham v'Beile Peshe—was born in the Bronx on October 23, 1942. As a boy in the Bronx, he attended the Salanter School (one of the three Jewish schools that merged in 1969 to become today's SAR Academy); but when he was eleven years old, his family moved to Los Angeles, where for more than three years he attended yeshiva. At seventeen, he embarked on a romantic journey when he first went out with his wife Janice. They married some four years later, a marriage that people describe as nearly ideal, a true love story. They were married for fifty-four years, a lifetime of love and teamwork. They have two daughters, Elaine and Cheryl, and four grandchildren.

From California they moved to Michigan, where Janice received her B.S. and Harold earned a Ph.D in Experimental Psychology in 1971, with a dissertation intriguingly entitled *Free Recall Learning: Output Contiguity and Interresponse Times as a Function of Presentation Structure*. From Michigan they moved to Iowa and then to Allegheny, New York, where Harold taught at St. Bonaventure University. And when he retired, they moved to Buffalo, where he became intimately involved with Temple Shaarey Tzedek and continued when it became Temple



The Rabbi (scribe) and Janice Gelfand complete a letter of their "Torah completion" in honor of Harold Gelfand. Courtesy of Iris Danziger.

Beth Tzedek.

Harold was full of love, both for his family and for his Judaism. He doted not only on his wife but also on his daughters and grandchildren, passing his extensive knowledge of Judaism on to his daughters and, over the phone, to those grandchildren. And he passed his love of Judaism on to other young people through mentoring programs at the synagogue.

In fact, Harold was a gifted teacher of both secular and religious subjects. At St. Bonaventure, he was a popular and influential teacher. With few exceptions (because there are always exceptions!), students loved his courses, and for a number of reasons: although he was demanding, he was also kind and patient, and he had a thorough command of his subject. For twenty years he taught a course called "Statistics and Research Design," a course that was essential to aspiring psychologists. He designed the course in such a way that it provided students with real-world experiences, including opportunities to participate in internships. He also authored a book with a pedagogical focus, *Mastering APA Style*, an invaluable work for students who intended to pursue research in psychology. Harold was like Chaucer's Clerk, for "gladly would he learn and gladly teach."

People like Harold, who are natural teachers, never stop teaching. Often they become pedantic, but the really fine teachers, like Harold, avoid that trap. When I mention Harold's name to members of Temple Beth Tzedek,



"Harold was a gifted teacher of both secular and religious subjects."

the words I hear are invariably "patient," "kind," "brilliant," "loved," "respected," and "generous."

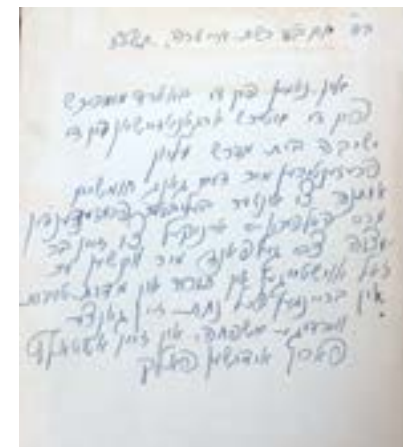
Harold was a pillar of Temple Beth Tzedek. As a physically big man, he stood out in a crowd and may even, at first, have seemed intimidating, but his true nature quickly revealed itself, so that he stood out for his finer qualities. Harold served as president of his congregation, a position that requires endless patience and diplomacy, but he served the congregation in other ways as well. He was either a member or the chair of numerous committees, including the Rabbi Search Committee and the Dedication Policy Team, a committee that provided all members of the congregation with opportunities to contribute to the shul.

But it was Harold's involvement with Torah that really stands out. There are many ways to be involved with Torah. One can, of course, live by the Torah, which Harold clearly did. It guided his everyday actions. One can also be a Torah scholar, which Harold was. He studied Torah and he taught it. He also read from the Torah, occasionally even having to fill in at the last minute when the designated reader took ill.

And Harold had another, almost unique connection to the Torah. Because Temple Beth Tzedek has a large number of Torah scrolls, someone has to care for their very physical being. That person was, naturally, Harold. He knew where every scroll was, whether it was on loan or

in one of the arks at TBZ. He knew the character of each scroll, whether it was too heavy for a particular person to carry, for instance. He knew when a scroll needed repairs, and he arranged for those repairs. And he knew that a Torah scroll cannot sit unused for a long period of time because disuse can cause damage, so on a rotating basis he would roll and unroll each scroll.

At the time of Harold's bar mitzvah in 1955, the board of his yeshiva in Los Angeles presented him with a Chumash, in which they wrote about what a promising student he was and they expressed their hope that he would go on to serve as a good representative of the Jewish people.



Above is a page from the bible that was in Harold Gelfand's collection which he received as a boy. I had the privilege of translating the inscription from Yiddish to English. It says:

"In the name of the board members of the Mutizh organization of the Yeshiva Beit Midrash Elyon: We present this complete Chumash sincerely to our beloved president Max Halperin's grandson, Zvi Gelfand, for his bar mitzvah, with our wishes that he will be adept in Torah and good deeds and bring much nachas to his whole important family and be a model for the Jewish people."

That hope, of the Yeshiva Board was clearly fulfilled in the life of Harold Gelfand. He could serve as a model for all of us.

Dr. Ted Steinberg, a Difference Maker, is a retired SUNY Fredonia professor who lives in Buffalo.

Meet Aviva Abramovsky, Dean of the University at Buffalo School of Law

By UB Law Office of Communications

Aviva Abramovsky, former Kaufman Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Syracuse University College of Law, has followed her roots back to Buffalo. Appointed the 19th dean of the University at Buffalo School of Law and the first woman to hold the position in 130 years, she considers her appointment “a kind of homecoming.”

Abramovsky has long-standing and deep roots with UB. She is the daughter of two UB alumni, Abraham Abramovsky, who graduated from the law school in 1970, and Deborah Abramovsky, who graduated with a degree in the fine arts in 1970. All three of her brothers received undergraduate degrees from Buffalo.

“As the daughter of two UB alumni who met at the university in the late '60s, I am literally the product of Buffalo, so it is no surprise that I have ultimately found myself in the City of Good Neighbors,” says Abramovsky.

She recalls her father speaking fondly of his time in Buffalo. Abraham Abramovsky passed away in 2007 after a long career as a criminal law professor at Fordham University School of Law. Shortly after the announcement of her appointment, she received several calls and emails from his former classmates, eager to share memories with her.

“I walk by my father’s class photo every day on my way down the hall to my office,” she says. “He is my daily source of inspiration.”

UB Provost Charles F. Zukoski says Abramovsky was chosen after an international search “because of her impressive leadership experience, academic accomplishments, and creative, entrepreneurial vision for the UB School of Law and the future of legal education.”



Aviva with Jewish leaders at the JCC reception



“I am deeply honored for this opportunity to collaborate with UB’s world-class law faculty to chart a new path for the law school,” Abramovsky says. “Legal education in the United States is at an inflection point, and UB School of Law is perfectly poised to take the lead in providing innovative, multidisciplinary and modern legal education in a world where the practice of law is radically changing.”

At Syracuse, Abramovsky served as associate dean for initiatives where she spearheaded Master of Laws (LLM) and two-year Juris Doctor (JD) programs for foreign lawyers; launched a visiting scholars and researchers program; developed international partnerships to enable a new international student exchange program; and created a legal English pre-matriculation program. In addition, Abramovsky directed Syracuse’s LLM program and clinical internship in London and previously served as associate dean for special projects.

She is an expert in commercial law, insurance law, regulation of financial entities and legal ethics. She has written numerous articles and legal treatises, including authoring McKinney’s Uniform Commercial Code forms for New York. She is also the editor of LSN Insurance Law, Legislation, & Policy. She contributed to Research

“I am deeply honored for this opportunity to collaborate with UB’s world-class law faculty to chart a new path for the law school.”

Handbook on International Insurance and Regulation which was awarded the 2013 British Insurance Law Association’s (BILA) Book Prize, and her scholarship has been recognized as a “litigation essential” by LexisNexis.

Abramovsky served as an academic evaluator for the American Bar Association’s federal judiciary committees for then Supreme Court nominees Samuel Alito and Sonia Sotomayor. Among other professional leadership positions, she also served as chair and later executive board member of the insurance law section of the American Association of Law Schools.

She holds a JD from the University of Pennsylvania and a bachelor’s degree in industrial and labor relations from Cornell University.

“While I have only been in Buffalo a few months, I have been struck by the rich sense of community and the degree of collegiality I have experienced since my arrival,” Abramovsky says. “That is especially true in the warm welcome I received from the Buffalo Jewish community.”

In October, she was the guest of honor at a reception hosted by the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies and the Jewish Federation. Most recently, on the first night of Hanukkah, she took part in the Chabad candle-lighting ceremony. In the spring, she plans to participate in a networking event for Jewish lawyers and Jewish law students, who look up to her as a role model.

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David Horesh is here to stay

By Jana Eisenberg

Newly named partner in Buffalo's award-winning creative branding and strategy agency Block Club, David Horesh vibrates with his company's stated qualities: a "Rust Belt work ethic and a global perspective." Also the firm's director of strategy, the Rochester native, 31, holds that his generation and those upcoming are in Buffalo at the right time to both contribute to the city's growth, and to grow themselves with their characteristic DIY spirit.

"Buffalo's narrative has changed a lot since I graduated from UB in 2007. As opposed to larger cities, where you'd more likely be joining something that's already in progress, here, if you're entrepreneurial, you can make your mark. Also, in major cities like Chicago, New York or LA, the high cost of living makes it hard to start your own business," Horesh said recently in Block Club's expanded offices in downtown Buffalo.

He compares the city to other "resurging" places like Pittsburgh and Detroit. "You can put a foothold down here," he said. "As long as you have an apartment, a laptop and access to an airport, you can do business all over the

world. "People in their 20s and 30s value entrepreneurship. But Millennials aren't the only generation that matters," he continued. "Buffalo waited so long for that 'silver bullet,' but while they were waiting, the people who were already here changed their attitude. And that's what's making it better now—the small business movement. People feel better, so they're opening businesses."

"The city's promise has transferred to a new generation," he added. "It's now attractive to young, energetic people; they're moving here, opening businesses. I think Buffalo will become more of a destination."

A self-described "big personality,"

Horesh embraces his own entrepreneurial spirit. "I've always wanted to chart my own path; I have more to say than working at a conventional business would allow," he said. With an eye toward doing good for the community, Block Club gives him that ability. "We can go in any direction that we choose," he said. "We can invest in other companies, start a coffee shop, open an office in Miami...Entrepreneurship and creativity go hand in hand—if you are not a thought leader, you're failing."

Aside from spending time with his wife, walking his dog and working out, he works. "I'm at the stage now where I'm building something; putting in hours so I don't have to when I'm in my 50s," said Horesh. Block Club clients and projects have included the United Nations Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Evergreen Health Services. They've helped create buzz around Ted conferences, and done branding and interiors for restaurants and startups including Big Ditch, Black Sheep and Tommyrotter Distillery.

While he said that his "Jewishness" is written on his face, he doesn't think about it much. The facts support his deep engagement with his heritage. "My connection to Judaism is Israel. My father is Israeli—my mother is from Rochester; they met in the '70s, when she was a kibbutznik. I speak Hebrew, and I've been to Israel a dozen times, mostly to visit family."

One exception was his Hillel birthright trip. "I joined Hillel when I was at UB—I met kids who were



"I've always wanted to chart my own path; I have more to say than working at a conventional business would allow."

just like me; some had Israeli parents," he said. "The birthright trips are a free adventure, and Hillel does a great job of marketing that. A group of 18- to 26-year-olds touring the Middle East on a bus may not have the same goals as Hillel does. They want you to meet a Jew, and have Jewish babies. So, while I didn't go to explore my Jewish identity, I did meet a pretty girl."

"Through my 'Israeli-ness,' I feel Jewish culturally; Jews are my people," said Horesh. His "mild participation" includes going to temple for high holiday services. His daily practice involves the pride of being Jewish—and he plans to imbue any future offspring with that pride, as well.

"Being Jewish is important to me, and bringing up a Jewish child in a city like Buffalo, where you're not going to stumble across Jews daily like you would in Brooklyn—you're going to have to make an effort," he said. "There are high stakes with a child that has little connection...their 'Jewishness' won't be just bestowed. I would teach them Hebrew, and take them to temple."

With his combined commitment to Buffalo, and his values steeped in a modern attitude, Horesh intends to stick around. "I'm on a pretty traditional track; I plan to have kids and build a life here," he summed up. "I would eventually like to be the executive director of a non-profit organization. I'm inspired by some of the executive directors I've met, like Dave Rust at Say Yes Buffalo, Tom Lynch at Goodwill, and Stuart Harper at the Buffalo City Mission. They are now committing what they've learned from their prior careers to this 'higher calling.' They're brilliant people, good at what they do. And now they're having a tangible effect on the community, protecting it and making it better. That's very enticing."

Jana Eisenberg is a frequent contributor to *The Jewish Journal* and other publications regionally and nationally.

In Honor of UN Holocaust Remembrance Day
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NFJC to Honor Charlotte Gendler January 24

The 2018 Community Leader Awards Luncheon of the National Federation for Community and Justice will take place Wednesday, January 24th at 12 Noon at the Buffalo Convention Center. Charlotte Gendler will be among the honorees that day. She will be receiving the Community Service/ Volunteerism Award. She is currently president of the Jewish Federation Cemetery Corp, serves on a Weinberg Campus Committee, served on the Board of Directors of Jewish Federation Housing, and the Kadimah School. She is immediate past president of the Bureau of Jewish Education. For twenty-eight years Charlotte was Controller of the Jewish Federation. In 2007 she received the Pugash Community Service Award from Jewish Family Service. Charlotte has been married to Alan for 60 years and has three children and five grandchildren.

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Portrait of the artist: Pam Glick comes home

by Maria Scrivani

You could be forgiven for likening the career trajectory of artist Pam Glick to a butterfly's emergence from a chrysalis: on the surface, it seems that amazing. The Buffalo native has recently returned to live and work in the Queen City, where she is garnering high praise and international acclaim for her bold expressive paintings—but many are forgetting that she started as a local star before moving on to more success in New York. Glick, a Park School graduate who grew up around the corner from Albright-Knox Art Gallery, was featured in that gallery's 1981 Western New York Artists show at the age of twenty-two. In Anthony Bannon's *Buffalo Evening News* review of that show, he notes the "exciting neo-Expressionist paintings of Pamela Glick." It was a heady moment for the new graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, her studio then in the basement of her mother's house. She soon left Buffalo to join the turbulent creative scene of eighties-era East Village, with Jean-Michel Basquiat as a neighbor. Marriage and motherhood eventually slowed the pace of artistic output, and, except for occasional visits, she never expected to return to Western New York. But life, imitating art, takes unexpected turns. Today, Glick is an enthusiastic participant in Buffalo's urban renaissance and high-energy arts scene. She is currently showing work at Anna Kaplan Contemporary; she also has a national and international presence in Berlin and in top Manhattan galleries.

So, here you are, back in Buffalo, incorporating the spirit and symmetry of Niagara Falls in your art. What happened?

I was happily living in New York, where I met my husband, a sculptor, designer, and furniture maker with roots in southern Vermont. We had our first child, Alva, in 1995. Living in our fourth-floor walkup with two dogs—that's when we decided to move to a more family-friendly locale. We had second son, Eli, two years later. We'd bought a farm in Vermont, with an old house, built in 1780, where we lived for twenty years. It was a very beautiful place. I never stopped my practice—did a lot of drawing but not much oil painting because of the smell, all that turpentine. I was doing cut-outs,



Photo by kc kratt

“I have always just gone with the flow of my work, evolving over time, not consciously doing anything to change my style.”

cutting out shapes, parts you could move around, did a few shows in Vermont, but not much else. I was really enmeshed in childcare and domestic life, but, in fact, my marriage was falling apart. I moved into our guesthouse. It was a netherworld; I was not really married, but not divorced. I turned that guest house into a studio, and I was painting all the time; it saved me. But, it was my younger son, then a sophomore in high

school, who really pushed me back home; both my boys were competitive ski racers, and Eli had recently suffered a second concussion. It was mild, but it made him decide to quit skiing. He said, “I think we should move back to Buffalo.” His older brother was already in college. We packed up the car and drove to Western New York, where Eli enrolled in my alma mater, the Park School. It's been such a happy ending; now I live with my mom

in the Elmwood Village. Eli's at Hobart College. Alva, a graduate of University of Vermont at Burlington, has joined us while he completes an internship at M&T Bank. My brother and his family are nearby.

And your art? How has that evolved?

In the summer of 2016, I had a show at White Columns, a not-for-profit gallery that is like the Hallwalls of New York City. My work was discovered on Instagram, which is how I've been sort of reintroduced to the wider art world—a big change from the days when we sent out slides to show our work! I have always just gone with the flow of my work, evolving over time, not consciously doing anything to change my style. I secured a studio at TriMain before I even got settled back here. I remember thinking, “What am I going to paint?” I just started painting Niagara Falls again, like I used to. I hadn't lived in a city for years, and it was like moving to Paris from Putney Mountain. Crazy, I know, but suddenly I could walk to a store! There were movie theaters all around. This “renaissance” that was brewing for so long has actually happened, and I have reaped the benefits. Seventy percent of the people I meet here are not originally from here—that's a big change. And there's tons of stuff to do, along the waterfront, for one thing. When I was growing up here, I never noticed any seagulls. I never knew we were on the water. Now, I ride my bike all over. I ride past the Albright, and I think, oh yes, some of my work is in there. The gallery bought two of my six-foot square paintings. That was a real confidence-booster. So, the Albright and the Burchfield Penney—and especially the Hallwalls crew—these are the reasons I live here, feel welcome, and part of a larger art community.

I go to New York City often, every six weeks or so. But, I am happy here. Buffalo is so easy: you have studio space, there is good food around, you can walk places. It's kind of an ideal place to work. And with the Internet? I sell a lot of art on Instagram. Shows are curated from there; it's a very supportive online art community. For me, and my family, it's good. It's healthy. It's a life.”

Longtime Spree contributor Maria Scrivani writes about local history and people who make a difference. This article is reprinted with permission from Buffalo Spree magazine.

Marc Adler: Embracing Change

By Rabbi Sara Rich

Sometimes change is as simple as French fries, cheese curds and gravy. At least that's true for Marc Adler, a communal leader, marketer, professor and restaurateur. As co-owner of Allen Street Poutine Company and Hertel Avenue Poutine & Cream, he has introduced poutine, a traditional Canadian staple, to the Buffalo food scene with a creative twist.



“I changed people’s lives by having the opportunity to teach them. And they changed my life as well.”

Marc applies the same principles of innovation to his restaurants, his marketing business, Why Not Marketing? LLC, and his numerous volunteer commitments. According to him, embracing change is critical for any organization to survive, and while it might take a long time to accomplish, it is worth the wait.

A Woodmere, Long Island, native, Marc first came to Western New York as a student at the University at Buffalo. He studied international business and met Patti, his wife of 34 years. They moved to

New York City and then to Washington, D.C. Following the birth of their son, Michael, in 1987, they resettled in Buffalo to be near Patti's family.

Upon his return to Buffalo, Marc quickly became a community leader. He served on the boards of the Buffalo Zoo, Temple Beth Am and Federation Housing. Marc comes from a family of volunteers: both of his parents were honored for 70 years of service (his mother with Hadassah and his father with B'nai B'rith) and his siblings are leaders in their communities.

Marc is a highly-regarded leader

at the University at Buffalo. A former president of the UB Alumni Association, he has also served on the boards of UB Athletics and the School of Management Alumni Association. In 1995, Marc began teaching marketing at Millard Fillmore College. Two decades later, he offered several courses at UB and Daemen College. Marc stays in touch with many of his students after they graduate and finds these relationships to be a personally fulfilling side of teaching. “I changed people’s lives by having the opportunity to teach them. And they changed my life as well.”

In 2016, the Buffalo Jewish Federation began the process of searching for a new Executive Director for Hillel of Buffalo. Considering Marc’s Jewish background and deep relationship with UB, the Federation tapped Marc to co-chair the search committee alongside Hadar Borden, an active member of the Buffalo Jewish community and program director of UB’s Blackstone LaunchPad

entrepreneurship program. “I was thrilled to be asked,” recalls Marc. “I didn’t have to think about it. I had an opportunity to help an organization that had floundered for too long, and shouldn’t have. I know how hard it will be to get it where it could be, but I feel like that’s a nice challenge.”

Marc will remain an active volunteer leader in the Hillel of Buffalo. Off campus, Marc is a member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation’s task force on engagement. “His experience with organizational planning and metrics is a tremendous asset to this committee,” says task force chair Ellen Weiss.

Whether he is helping his business partners work on branding for their restaurants, mentoring a former student, or advising volunteer leaders in the community, one thread runs in common: the need to be open to change.

“Change is good. I have always believed that change is necessary. Not change for the sake of changing, but rather changing for a reason. You can grow as long as you always welcome new ideas into your life.”

Change is essential – the rest is gravy.

Rabbi Sara Rich is executive director of Hillel of Buffalo.

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Matt Schwartz: Social work student takes food pantry on the road

By Cathleen Draper

*Published June 9, 2016 in UBNOW.
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“We only have one question: Are you hungry? If the answer is yes, then we feed you.”

– Matthew Schwartz, MSW student and founder Food Gnomes

UB social work student Matthew Schwartz is turning the tables on traditional food pantries, providing food directly to the hungry out of the trunk of his car. Schwartz, 31, a former case manager for Jewish Family Service of Buffalo and Erie County, noticed that many of his clients were struggling to access food pantries.

“I was working with some child survivors of the Holocaust and also my general community, and I saw one of the food pantry things,” Schwartz says, referring to a list of requirements for those wishing to access a food pantry. “I looked at it and I thought ‘this is so ridiculous the amount of information they’re requesting.’”

Food pantries can require a variety of information from those in need, among them identification in the form of a driver’s license or ID card, documentation of financial need and a local address. Transportation issues and limited food pantry hours also present obstacles to the hungry. “The system is not built to be conducive to the reality of people who require food pantry assistance,” Schwartz says.

He teamed up with the Jewish community, the United Church of Christ and other case managers locally to found Food Gnomes, a mobile food pantry that launched Nov. 6, 2016. Nine volunteers drive the organization, but Schwartz hopes to have a total of 12 by the fall.

Schwartz graduated from UB in 2008 with a bachelor’s in applied linguistics. He relocated to Israel, serving in the Israel Defense Forces for 37 months. Upon his return to his hometown on Long Island, he completed his MBA at the University of Phoenix. A “Buffalonian at heart,” Schwartz moved back to Western New York and later enrolled in UB’s MSW program. Social work appeals to him, he says, because it unites his expertise under one goal.

“It takes all of the skills I have and uses them as a tool kit,” Schwartz says. “It’s a way where I get to feel like I’ve made a difference.” He does make a difference — daily — serving clients and the hungry on



“Anything that gets people talking about social situations and social awareness and class consciousness is a very good thing.”

the streets through Food Gnomes.

Food Gnomes does not accept financial donations. Rather, the mobile food pantry is fueled by food drives and public donations of non-perishable goods. Schwartz doesn’t keep statistics on how many people are fed, eliminating a time-consuming bookkeeping process. “We’d rather spend the time getting food to people,” he says.

Many of the volunteer drivers — or gnomes — are case managers for local social services agencies. Gnomes also are equipped with brochures and pamphlets outlining housing options, domestic violence resources, career training and educational opportunities. “Volunteers are working with clients already who generally need the food, and they know how to make those referrals if someone stops them on the street,” Schwartz says. “So, it’s not just food. It’s ‘hey, here’s some food, but are things going OK? Is there anything else we can help you with?’”

Schwartz hopes to help more than just the needy in Buffalo; he envisions the organization assisting members of the UB community as well. He notes that SUNY Buffalo State provides a food pantry for its students. UB maintains a relationship with the University Presbyterian Church’s Food Pantry, where students in need can obtain food. The pantry is located at the church at 3330 Main St., across from the South Campus.

Schwartz envisions starting Food Gnome Fridays at UB, similar to Food

Truck Tuesdays at Larkin Square — but free. He feels Food Gnomes can start a conversation about hunger at UB, too.

“Anything that gets people talking about social situations and social awareness and class consciousness is a very good thing,” Schwartz says. “UB students are the best and brightest in the world, period. I think UB has a lot to offer the community.”

Schwartz offers a lot to the community as well through his work as a counselor and with Food Gnomes. “We really believe in having an impact by answering the needs as the community states them, not what we think they are,” Schwartz says.

“We only have one question: Are you hungry? If the answer is yes, then we feed you.”

2018 Update to Matt Schwartz and Food Gnomes

By Ellen Goldstein

This story about Matt Schwartz ran in the summer of 2016 in the UB publication UBNOW, and a few things have changed for Matt and for Food Gnomes. First, he says, the Food Gnomes no longer store food in the trunks of their cars. There was a food safety issue, he explained, and now the group has a full facility, generously hosted at Pilgrim St. Luke’s El Nuevo Camino-UCC Church on Richmond Avenue in the city. “We gather on Sundays and we fill up people’s cars and make deliveries to their homes. We go out twice monthly,” Matt said.

And second, Matt is 33 years old and currently works as a domestic violence counselor at Haven House, part of Child and Family Services, and a clinical social work intern at the Buffalo State College Counseling Center. He is graduating from UB School of Social Work with his Masters of Social Work this spring. Born and raised on Long island, he came here for UB as an undergraduate and fell in love with the city and Buffalo. He is also a talented sewist (a person who sews) and creates intricate kilts, which you can read about or order at KiltorDie.com.

My first question to Matt was “Why are you doing this?” He explained two reasons he is committed to helping



Photo by Nancy J. Parisi

hungry people eat. “The first is *Tikkun Olam*. Throughout the Torah, we are told to feed people, to leave part of our field unharvested. What happens if you are disabled, too tired to cook, having trouble feeding your kids? I wanted a Jewish answer to this, and part of an answer is that we get creative when times get tough. Gnomes are sneaky, and we were going to get creative. This system lets us deliver food to people’s homes with no paperwork and one question. ‘Are You Hungry?’”

The second is personal. “I was homeless in Israel for 3 months as a jobnik, a non-commissioned officer in foreign relations for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). I first was living on Kibbutz Zikim, one kilometer from Gaza. We were bombed almost every day for a year and a half. Then, I was sent to become a non-com- officer. When I returned to the kibbutz, my room had become infested with rats, and so I moved to another soldier’s apartment, but there was not much room. I was forced to leave that apartment, and at that time, the Army couldn’t really help. I found space at a soldier’s hostel 3 month later, but for that 3 month period of my life, I was homeless. Couch-surfing homeless.” He explained that because of that situation, one becomes familiar with food insecurity—where your next meal is coming from and how you are going to get it. “Food got to be really important to me” he added. “I learned that Holocaust survivors felt the same way.”

“Through Food Gnomes, We can set up pop-up pantries easily,” Matt explained. What about insurance, I asked. He said that the IRS sees groups like Food Gnomes as an unincorporated not-for-profit because they bring in less than \$5000 (US) per year. Food pantries are protected under the Federal “Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act”, which promotes *food* recovery by limiting the liability of *donors* to instances of gross negligence or intentional misconduct. “We take food safety seriously,” said Matt. “And we have lots of volunteers on a regular basis to keep things in order.”

“We run micro food drives throughout the city- all over, in offices, schools, through people who tithe their food shopping” he added. “When we began, we didn’t want people to just give money and forget about the hungry. We wanted it to be a participatory program. With non-perishable goods, volunteers have to connect with the people to whom they are donating. It is experiential, and it’s our way to do mitzvot,” he said proudly.

Ellen Goldstein is editor of The Jewish Journal.



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Marc Fineberg: Team Guy and Native Son: Making Buffalo Better One Shoulder at a Time

By Rob Goldberg

As I sit in the comfort of my living room on December 10th watching the Buffalo Bills play the Indianapolis Colts in a blizzard, I remember what Marc Fineberg, Bills' team physician, shared with me just a week earlier: "The weather can be a challenge on the sidelines. When we know it is going to be really cold, my wife Stacy makes sure I'm layered up. While the players can keep warm by running around, it's more of a challenge for us." At the same time I find myself laughing, as Marc also shared with me his belief that for native Buffalonians, weather plays a significant role in shaping who we are. "Sure, our weather is bad, but what do we do when it snows? We strap on our skis. We adapt and we band together. We are a tough bunch."

Marc Fineberg is the essence of what it means to be a Buffalonian. "Love thy neighbor, love the underdog. It's in our blood," he laughs. Marc returned to Buffalo nearly 20 years ago to join the Orthopedic Department of Orthopedic Surgery at the State University of New York at Buffalo. When asked why he wanted to return to his hometown, his answer was unequivocal: "It is where my family is and a place that has values I cherish."

Even though Marc trained in New York, Chicago and Boston, he always wanted to come home to be closer to his family and give his children an opportunity to flourish as he and his brothers did in the

"Supporting those in need and being a good citizen, that's what being Jewish means to me."

Williamsville School system. "I love the way in which people treat each other here. And it's a great place to raise a family."

Marc and Stacy Fineberg have three children, all of whom continue the proud Fineberg tradition of attending Williamsville Schools. Justin, their



oldest, graduated from Williamsville East and is thriving as a sophomore at Syracuse University. Daughter Sydney is a senior at Williamsville East, and the youngest, Ethan, is a Williamsville East freshman.

In a recent speech Marc delivered after being honored as one of this year's Williamsville Schools Wall of Fame inductees, he told the audience that his high school years at Williamsville North shaped his life. He learned to work hard, be a good time manager and be strategic. After the ceremony at a session with students, he told them he actually had a 20 year plan: "The plan required me to graduate at the top of my college class and excel at my medical school entrance exam." He told the students that he then needed to spend 4 years at a top medical school so that he could obtain a highly competitive spot in an orthopedic surgery residency program, then graduate from a top notch residency program in order to land an orthopedic sports medicine fellowship which would provide exposure to professional hockey and football. "I would then move home to Buffalo and immerse myself in the local medical and sports team communities. I figured.... no problem. I got this!"

And to our great fortune, Marc's plan was executed to perfection, and today he has a fulfilling career specializing in Sports Medicine and Arthroscopic Surgery. And beyond taking care of his home town teams, Marc's greatest passion is making sure athletes are safe. He explained to me that in Sports Medicine, often the strongest relationship is between the

doctor and the athletic trainer.

Concerned that high school athletes don't enjoy the same level of training as those in the pros, Marc created a group called "ATEAM" powered today by UB Orthopedics and Sports Medicine. The mission of ATEAM is to protect student athletes by ensuring that every Western New York high school has a well-trained, full-time athletic trainer who is tied into the local healthcare system. ATEAM provides grants to high schools to make this mission a reality. "Most schools don't invest much in athletic trainers," Marc told me. "So I started this program in order to supply and train trainers. They are critical to ensuring that our kids are safe. It's that simple."

Marc told me repeatedly during our time together that in everything he does – from the Bills and Sabres and ATEAM, to his work and teaching – it all comes down to relationships. "I love meeting people and getting to know them. And I love helping them – it's a gift to me." Marc's many gifts are grounded not only in Buffalo values but deeply in Jewish values. "The Jewish people are hard-working, have needed to be tough, and always give back. Supporting those in need and being a good citizen, that's what being Jewish means to me." Marc also has a passion for Israel, and last summer travelled to the Jewish homeland with his family. "I have always had a deep personal relationship with Israel. Unfortunately my studies and training always held me back from travelling there. But I told myself that when I turned 50 I was going. And so I did."

Perhaps it is Israeli grit that draws Marc to the Holy Land just as the resilience of being a Buffalonian beckoned him to return home two decades ago. Either way, this community is blessed to have Marc Fineberg as one of its difference makers, whether on the field, in the operating room or in the classroom. And what has made the decision to return to Buffalo even better for Marc is simple. "I can help my lifelong friends, family and hometown community every day," he beams. "And I can make Buffalo better, one shoulder at a time."

Rob Goldberg is CEO and Executive Director of Buffalo Jewish Federation.



Murray Levine: It's Never Too Late/*New Beginnings*

By Mark Goldman

"It's never too late," says Murray Levine, who at the age of 90 has published his first novel, a "romance novel" at that. The novel is called *New Beginnings*, a title that is as applicable to the book's heroine, Julia as it is to its author. The novel is nothing less than a "new beginning" for Murray, who began his first career as a psychologist in 1949. Dr. Levine is no mere psychologist, but rather a Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Buffalo. Murray's c.v. is as long as a short story, covering all aspects of his work which, until the publication of "New Beginnings" included papers on such distinctively unromantic topics as "From state hospital to psychiatric center: the implementation of planned organizational change"; "The Corroboration requirement in child sex abuse cases" and, among literally dozens more, my favorite, "Linguistic and socio-emotional influences on the accuracy of children's reports." So, what then would lead Dr. Levine, the author of more than 200 journal articles and books to write, and write so well, a steamy, sexy romance novel about the life and loves of his heroine, Julia?

Following the death of Addie Levine in 2015, his wife and long-time academic collaborator of over sixty years, Murray realized the importance of "new beginnings" and, understandably his ever fertile mind led him to the world of romance novels. "Talk about new beginnings," he said, "Why not give this a shot?" Murray approached the task, as his is wont as a social scientist, "scientifically." He researched the topic. Romance novels, he learned, generate in excess of one billion dollars in annual sales. He attended meetings (the only man in the group) of the Western New York Romance Writers Association. He did his research and found that 34% of all fiction books are romances; and that 84% of their readers are women between the ages of 30-44. (With this in mind, Murray considered a pen-name: "Marie LaVin" being at the top of his list).

Thus motivated by visions of fame and fortune and armed with his newly acquired knowledge, Murray began to conceive of his plot. The book would focus on Julia, a gorgeous, yet misdirected woman, with a history of broken relationships,



who fell smack dab in the middle of Murray's demographic. Aided by his fond and incredibly loving memories of his marriage to Addie, Murray, this highly regarded social scientist, was able to imagine and then to create the intimate thoughts and activities of his most compelling character, Julia. His descriptions of her wardrobe, her jewelry and even the scent of the perfume that she wears, are writerly feats worthy of an experienced novelist.

Describing Julia's preparation for a business meeting, Murray writes "...I thought I should wear a dress rather than a business suit. I selected a basic sheath with an off-the-shoulder sweep, knee length in subdued colors that showed off my figure. I put on my make-up carefully, so I looked natural but with enough color so that I looked lively. I wore a strand of real pearls to complement the dress." His ability to write from his character's female point of view is compelling and impressive. Julia is a complex character: at times desperate and lonely; at times warm and loving; at times a highly competent business executive and Murray is adept at describing the details of her world. Murray is comfortable and skilled at writing not only about the steamier side of Julia's life, but about the more complicated aspects—tax incentives, for example—related to her

He realized the importance of "new beginnings" and, understandably his ever fertile mind led him to the world of romance novels.

business and real estate dealings.

Though Julia dominates the story, her boyfriend Henry, a recent widower, older and far less experienced than Julia, comes alive as a result of this carefully described relationship. Steeped in the Jewish literary tradition, Murray happily acknowledges his influences, citing specifically the short stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer and the Yiddish Theater productions on Second Avenue that his parents took him to as a child growing up in the Bronx. His research led him to the conclusion that romance novels have invariably happy endings. Most readers, he says, read the ending first. So, don't worry, things will turn out happily for Julia and she will live on to appear, we can only hope, in yet another romance novel by Professor Murray Levine.

Copies of Murray Levine's *New Beginnings* are available at Amazon.com.

Mark Goldman enjoys writing about the interesting people who live in this most interesting community

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Charlie Garfinkel: Still the “Great” Gar

By Rob Goldberg

He tells me that he's no longer the “Great Gar,” but at this stage of his life, simply “The Gar.” He even displays the nickname on his patented white turtleneck and Nike training jacket. His persona since the early 70's, this tennis, squash and racquetball champion, is iconic, funny, and in a word: a winner.

Charlie Garfinkel is legendary, a true difference maker in our community and in the sport he loves most- racquetball. Charlie is arguably the greatest all around local racquet star to have ever competed in our community. He is the author of two books: *Racquetball the Easy Way* and *Racquetball for the Serious Player* and winner of over 150 tournaments in his career. A 2003 article in the *Buffalo Jewish Review* recounts his rise to fame: “Garfinkel burst onto the national racquetball scene by defeating the legendary Charlie Brumfield in Salt Lake City in 1970. He rose to a number 5 ranking on the pro tour, and defeated

“I believe in being a good person, a fair player. I wanted to prove to others that Jews can be great athletes, too.”

national champions such Dr. Bud Muehleisen, Bill Schmidtke, and Davey Bledsoe.” A current senior racquetball champion in Virginia, Scott Brown, told me that Garfinkel was one of the players he followed, someone he read about when he started his career. “He was among the early pioneers and a heady guy who inspired my game.”

Donn Esmonde of *The Buffalo News* once wrote of the Gar: “He is many things: A comedy act, a self-promotional juggernaut, a sly and shameless psyche artist and - oh yes - an uncompromising competitor.” I asked Charlie to expound on the source of his competitive spirit. “I always had something to prove,” he begins. “I was a shy kid, gangly at 6'5”.



And I had a very tough childhood. My family had little money, no car - we grew up over a deli in North Buffalo. And as a result I always had something to prove to others.” I remarked that he has quite a chip on his shoulder. He piped back: “You bet I do! I knew that I could compete

with anyone,” he explains. “I had a mindset. A confidence. I was always totally focused, even when playing a practice set my goal was always to win.”

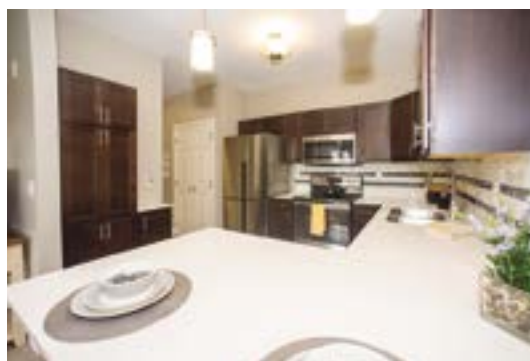
The Gar is also a humorist. An admirer of Don Rickles, he is king of the one-liner. “Once I get going,” he told me, “I can't stop!” he winks. Perhaps humor is a defense mechanism or maybe just his way of getting attention, but it is a central part of the way Charlie has been a success both on and off the court as he brought his humor and competitive drive to his teaching career as well. “I loved teaching; it was made for me. I was thorough and loved presenting to the kids in an engaging way.”

When we talked about his Jewish values, he welled up with tears. “I believe in being a good person, a fair player. I wanted to prove to others that Jews can be great athletes, too.” When I asked him what he would tell his parents if they were alive today, he paused and then said: “I would tell them that I knew that money was tight and you did the best that you could. I knew that you loved me even though you didn't always show it. But I made it. I'm a good person. I was a success. I married a great woman and I'm happy.”

I asked Gar about his wife, Leslie, and he again became emotional. “I was very lucky to have met Leslie. She was a cross between Elizabeth Taylor and Joan Collins! But most of all, she made me a better person.” He told me that he and Leslie are proud members of Temple Beth Zion and deliver Meals on Wheels each week. “It gives me a wonderful feeling of seeing the smiling faces of people we deliver to.”

When considering the physical changes associated with aging, aging with grace is especially hard for athletes, particularly in the sports at which Charlie excelled. “I'm not the ‘great’ Gar anymore after 2 knee replacements and a hip replacement. I'm just the Gar,” he sighs, stooping just slightly. There is sadness in his eyes for, like other great athletes, Charlie misses the game that shaped his identity and gave him purpose. And perhaps it is humor that helps Charlie to endure the aches and pains, the longing for the court and the head-to-head competition. But after spending hours together, while he claims that he is no longer “great,” I would beg to differ. In my book, Charlie Garfinkel is still the “Great Gar.”

Rob Goldberg is CEO and Executive Director of Buffalo Jewish Federation.



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- 2» JDRF Journey to a Cure Gala for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation** Saturday, January 20. 6:00 PM at the Seneca Niagara Casino in Niagara Falls. There is a cost for tickets. *For more information, contact Lauren Van Osten (716) 833-2873 | Lvanosten@jdrf.org*
- 3» Help Puerto Ricans now living in Buffalo** due to the hurricanes Sunday, January 7 from 8-11 PM at Stamps The Bar, 98 Main Street in Tonawanda. *Admission is canned goods and packages of bottled water.*
- 4» Super Sunday is January 28! Volunteer to work that day to help your Buffalo Jewish Federation** by calling *Keren Green at 716-204-2250* or, if you still have not made your 2018 pledge, ANSWER THE CALL when your friend or neighbor calls for your gift.
- 5» Encourage Hometown Talent! Attend the Buffalo Tango Orchestra CD Release Party** Friday, January 12 at 8PM at Pausa Art House. Moshe Shulman is leader of this musical group. Tickets are \$10-\$18. Pausa Art House is located at 19 Wadsworth St. in Buffalo near Kleinhans Music Hall.

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In December, Susan Bruckheimer identified the plaque at Temple Beth Zion's Sanctuary Building at 805 Delaware Avenue outside the Sisterhood Chapel.





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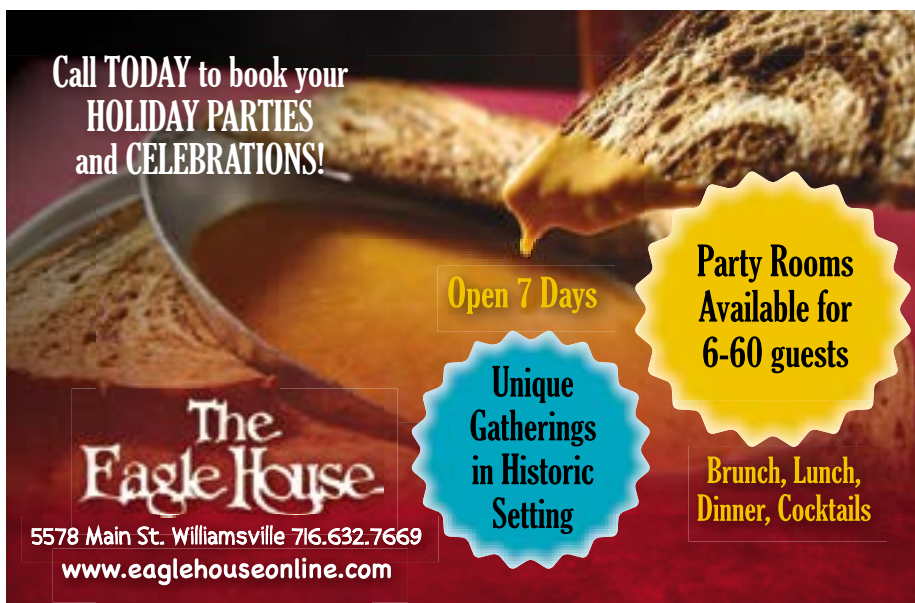


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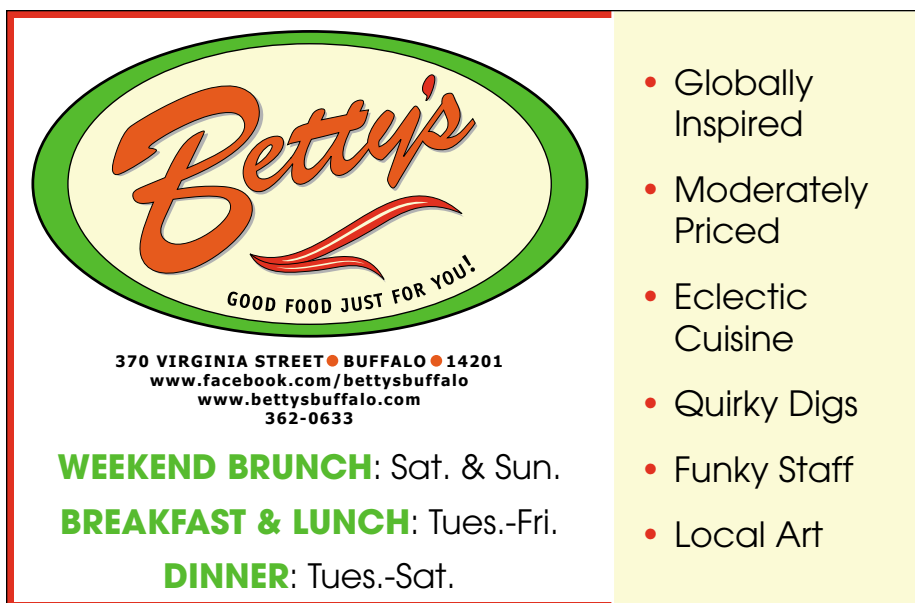
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www.jfedbflo.com
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Steven J. Weiss - President

Bureau of Jewish Education

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Getzville, NY 14068
TEL 716-204-5380
www.bjebuffalo.org
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2450 North Forest Road
Getzville, NY 14068
TEL 716-688-1642
www.chabadbuffalo.com
Rabbi Moshe Gurary - Director

Chai Early Childhood Center

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www.chainursery.com
Chani Labkovski - Director

Department of Jewish Thought

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TEL 716-688-5260
buffalohadassah@gmail.com
Elaine Kellick, Annette Magid, Mickey Savit, and Rhonda Wise - Co-Presidents

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2640 North Forest Road in JFP offices
Getzville, NY 14068
TEL 716-204-0542
Sam Golden - Loan Officer
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TEL 716-645-8787
Rabbi Sara Rich - Director
www.hillelofbuffalo.org

Holocaust Resource Center

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TEL: 716-634-9535
www.hrcbuffalo.org
Mara Koven-Gelman - Executive Director
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2640 North Forest Road
Getzville, NY 14068
TEL 716-688-4033
Richard Zakalik - Executive Director
Susan Freed-Oestreicher - President

Holland Family Building

787 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14209
TEL 716-886-3145
www.jccbuffalo.org

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TEL: 716-632-0467
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www.jewishdiscovery.org

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www.congregationbethabraham.net

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Williamsville, NY 14221
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Joanne Marquisee - Executive Director
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www.shirshalombuffalo.org

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www.SaranacSynagogue.org

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Due to postal regulations, the *Jewish Journal of Western New York* will no longer be forwarded to "temporary change" addresses.

If you plan to be away from your permanent address and will have your first class mail forwarded to your temporary address and would like to continue to receive the *Jewish Journal* over the winter or the summer, please call Nadine Ryback at 716-204-2248 to give us your "temporary" address. Thank you!



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TBZ Achim

The Brotherhood of Temple Beth Zion will hold its January Achim program January 14 at 10 AM at the Meadows Lounge, located on the second floor at the Weinberg Campus, 2650 North Forest Road. The program is held in the building across from the rear entrance to the Jewish Community Center.

The featured speaker will be Errol Craig Sull, a local author, educator and culinary expert. He has been a participant in the Achim program for many years and his programs are always interesting and timely. Sull will be discussing and sharing many important thoughts and experiences about baking with everyone. Questions and discussions will be welcome. He might also be preparing a cake and sharing the results with the audience.

Achim is a monthly program for the benefit of the residents, and their guests, at the Weinberg Campus and is open to the public at no cost. For further information, please contact Ken Graber at 681-9885.

Cantor Arlene Frank and Joyful Jewish Music

By Peter Simon

In the world of Arlene Frank, Cantor of Congregation Shir Shalom, every Jewish service should have some unique or defining musical element. It might be as sweeping as an entire slate of traditional Shabbat pieces sung to the tune of Beatle songs, or as simple as a new twist to a single prayer. But it has to be creative, consistent with the rest of the service and an element that gives worshippers something to contemplate or enjoy. "When people come to synagogue with great expectations and anticipation, and they're smiling from ear-to-ear, then I've done my job," Cantor Frank said. "I really want to offer a lot of different musical opportunities to a diverse congregation."



really enjoyed the services," said Cohan, a professor at the UB Medical School. "We're getting a lot of positive feedback."

Cantor Frank is pleasant, energetic and accessible, Sugarman said. She plays what she calls "Israeli cafe music" on her guitar in the religious school lobby as parents drop off and pick up their children. Services feature instruments as diverse as the bass, harmonica, flute, drums, piano, banjo and ukulele.

But participating with Cantor Frank is no walk in the park, though. Band members initially got hungry during practice sessions, so now they have dinner together before rehearsing for a solid two to three hours once a week.

Recruited relentlessly by Sugarman, Cantor Frank cut short what she thought would be a more extensive job search to come to Shir Shalom after her previous Temple, located 22 miles north of Manhattan, merged with another synagogue and reduced staff for financial reasons. Accepting the position at CSS, she said, was the perfect choice. "It just feels right and natural here" she said. "I don't think I was designed to do anything except what I'm doing now."

Peter Simon, a former Buffalo News reporter, is a member and past President of Congregation Shir Shalom.

With the partnership of a volunteer band, adult choir and children's choir—all consisting of Temple members—she has done just that since becoming Congregation Shir Shalom's cantor in July of 2016, said Todd Sugarman, CSS president. "She has brought spirit to our Friday night services," Sugarman said. "You go to Temple with joy in your heart. I call her our "Cantor-entertainer." She's upbeat. She wants to move forward, and nothing stands in her way. She has basically knocked it out of the park." For example, Shir Shalom's volunteer musicians and Cantor Frank merged the music of familiar Beatle songs with the lyrics of Hebrew prayers, and plan to do the same with Bob Dylan music. For Purim, an hour-long performance included everything from contemporary music to a piece from the Middle Ages. Songs in Ladino, Yiddish, Hebrew and English were featured in a Hanukkah service.

Chris Cohan, a member of the Temple Board of Trustees who plays mandolin in the band, said congregants largely appreciate Cantor Frank's innovations. "People come up to you and say they

Temple Beth Zion Sisterhood Hosts

Demo & Dine Luncheon

Webster's Kitchen

110 Webster Street, North Tonawanda

Sunday, January 21, at 11:30 a.m.

Enjoy a cooking demonstration with a three-course lunch.
Luncheon is open to all women and men.



FIRST COURSE - SOUP

Creamy Squash Bisque

SECOND COURSE - ENTRÉE

Choice of Salmon en Croute

OR Chicken Francaise

(Cooking demo will feature the salmon)

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Coffee, tea and water included.

(Wine or beer is available for an extra charge.)

Cost: \$35 per person inclusive

Seating is limited, so reserve your spot today. The deadline for reservations is January 4.

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

____ Salmon ____ Chicken Francaise = ____ Total Guests

____ Yes, I am interested in carpooling from the Broder Center.

Mail reservation with your check made out to TBZ Sisterhood to:

Sandra Wolchok, 6872 Forestview Drive, Lockport, NY 14094.

Bereavement Support Monthly @ Beth Zion

Each month, a lay-led Bereavement Support Group meets at Temple Beth Zion's Broder Center at 700 Sweet Home Road in Amherst. The group is led by members of the group in an informal and warm setting. All members of the community are welcome.

If you have questions, would like to RSVP or need further information, contact Carol Caserta at (716) 873-2836.

Tu B'Shevat



The New Year of Trees is January 31

Insurance and Point Reduction Program Offered in January

Temple Beth Zion will offer the New York State-approved motor vehicle insurance and point reduction program. The class will be taught by Warren Clark. Receive 10% off your collision and liability insurance premium for three years and up to 4 points reduced from your driving record for 18 months.

Sundays, January 21 and 28, from 9 a.m. to noon

at the Temple Beth Zion Broder Center, 700 Sweet Home Road.

You must attend both sessions of this 6-hour program to get the certificate.

\$30 per person
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To sign up, contact Becky at (716) 836-6565. Class size is limited by state law, so advance registration is required.

Let's Do The Turkey Trot!



Buffalo's famous Turkey Trot included TBZers. Rabbi Jonathan Freirich, Cantor Penny Myers, the Myers Boys and Dr. Bennet Myers completed the Thanksgiving Day road race from North Buffalo to Downtown Buffalo.



PHOTOGRAPH BY KC KRATT

Thank you to Sylvia L. Rosen
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Join us at The Center for Art in Craft Media 2017 presented by the Sylvia L. Rosen Endowment for Fine Art in Craft Media.

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Friday, January 12, 7 PM

Temple Beth Zion Sanctuary, 805 Delaware Ave.

TBZ's Second Annual Pulpit Exchange will bring our neighbors together to organize for a city, country, and world, infused with greater justice for everyone.

CBA & PixCongregation Beth Abraham Moves Forward With an Eye on Its Past

By Marty Kerker

Like Buffalo itself, Congregation Beth Abraham (CBA), one of Buffalo's oldest synagogues, is experiencing somewhat of a revival. While building toward the future, it is also important that we not lose sight of the past, and in this regard, we welcome your participation.

Congregation Beth Abraham was established 1921 when it split from Temple Beth Israel. The two synagogues lived and thrived within a block of each other on Elmwood Avenue until they reunited in 1957 as Beth Abraham in the 1073 Elmwood Avenue building. Like other Buffalo synagogues, CBA faced the challenge of shifting urban demographics and adapted by changing its orientation from Orthodox to Conservative. While its membership continued to decline, the Congregation persevered largely through the dedication of a handful of families, led by the late Harry Weinrib and Oscar Smukler.

In 2009 things started to turn around with the arrival of Cantor— and Director of Research Integration at Roswell Park—Irwin Gelman. Since then Beth Abraham has undergone a renaissance, led by a group of dedicated volunteers. The shul has come to life with spirited Kabbalat Shabbat and High Holiday Services as well as activities/events such as the Vintage Jewish Movie Group, Jewish Book Club, community seders, holiday parties and sing arounds. The synagogue has also played host to several B'nai Mitzvah, invited distinguished speakers and held joint services with other area Jewish entities. With generous financial support from the community, there have been major improvements to the building itself, including a renovated social hall, a new bathroom, kitchen, furnace and air conditioner. We are now exploring options for making the building handicapped accessible.



Inside view of Beth Abraham

As CBA has moved forward, it also has kept an eye on its past. If you visit the website, www.congregationbethabraham.net, you can download a PDF showing key dates in the evolution of the synagogue. We invite you to help us learn even more about CBA's rich history by attending a community open house/event Wednesday evening, tentatively scheduled for January 24, 7:00 PM. Enjoy snacks and share/hear personal stories, vignettes and memories of Beth Abraham, the

former Beth Israel and Jewish life on Elmwood Avenue.

To convey your level of interest, please let us know by sending an email to info@congregationbethabraham.net. Be sure to check the CBA website and also request to be put on the synagogue's email list if you would like to receive updated information.

Please note that all events, services and programs are open to the community at large -- there is no need to give up your existing Temple membership to become a part of the CBA family. Bruchim Haba'im -- welcome, everyone!

Scholar in Residence Weekend @TBT

Temple Beth Tzedek was pleased to host Rabbi Jonathan Porath for the Rabbi Isaac Klein Scholar in Residence Weekend, November 10 - 12.

Rabbi Porath instructed the congregation on the importance of preserving and creating Jewish experiences and memories on Friday



night, followed by a Shabbat dinner. Saturday morning, he shared vignettes of his 40 year friendship with Elie Wiesel, and Saturday night he instructed us on how we can maintain and solidify our Jewish identities while facing the challenges of a dwindling Jewish population in Buffalo. Sunday morning he provided us with a fascinating multi-media presentation on how American Jews were instrumental in saving many European Jews caught in the snares of the Holocaust.

Rabbi Porath was engaging, timely and interesting. All who attended were impressed with his interest in our community and expertise. This was the last Rabbi Isaac Klein Scholar in Residence Weekend until the congregation moves into its new building on North Forest Road.

Temple Beth Zion Nominated for National Register of Historic Places

By Ezra N. Rich

Temple Beth Zion's Delaware Avenue location, dedicated in 1967, has been nominated by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo for inclusion in the National Registers of Historic Places. The synagogue was added to the New York State Register of Historic Places in November.



The view from Delaware Avenue

An iconic example of mid-century modern architecture, TBZ's main sanctuary features Brutalist and Neo-Expressionist elements. It was designed by noted architect Max Abramovitz and features stained-glass windows, a menorah, and decorative art by famed artist Ben Shahn.

One of Buffalo's oldest Jewish congregations, Temple Beth Zion was founded in 1850. It moved to a Byzantine-style sanctuary at 599 Delaware Avenue in 1890. After that building was felled by a tragic fire in 1961, TBZ made two consequential

decisions regarding its rebuilding. The first was to maintain its presence in the City of Buffalo, going against the tide toward the suburbs. The second was to erect a sacred space that was distinct from both contemporary temple designs and the surrounding neighborhood. Seeking a site with the potential for sufficient parking, TBZ relocated from 599 to 805 Delaware Avenue.

Aware that eligibility begins when a building has existed for at least 50 years, Kenneth A. Rogers began the nomination process immediately after being the Temple's president a few years ago. The project involved significant contributions from TBZ members and staff, as well as Francis R. Kowsky, Ph.D., SUNY Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts, Emeritus, at Buffalo State College. "It is a cathedral in its own way," explains Rogers. "It was built at the end of the Cathedral era. The main sanctuary evokes a strong sense of place and awe. The chapel is a place of intimacy and natural light."

In tandem with the building's 50th anniversary celebration, a book highlighting TBZ's architecture is in development. An event formally recognizing the designations is being planned for 2018.

Other notable Reform temples on the National Register include Atlanta's The Temple, Cincinnati's Isaac M. Wise Temple, as well as New York City's Temple Emanu-El, Central Synagogue, and Congregation Beth Elohim.

To learn more about TBZ's historic space, please visit <http://www.tbz.org/about-tbz/tbz-places-spaces/>.

Ezra Rich is Marketing Communications Manager with Uniland Development Co.



The Ben Shahn window behind the bimah.



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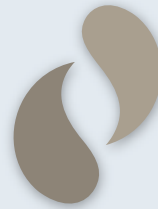


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Daniel I. Rifkin, MD is the founder of the Sleep Medicine Centers of Western New York, a comprehensive sleep medicine practice, established in 2002. He is Board Certified in Neurology and Sleep Medicine, and focuses the majority of his practice on the treatment of adult and pediatric sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, insomnia, narcolepsy, and restless legs. He engages in clinical research and is a member of the Department of Neurology at UB teaching students, residents, and fellows the joys of sleep medicine. We spend about a third of our lives sleeping so take great care of your sleep health!

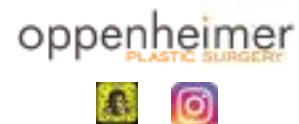
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Adam J. Oppenheimer, MD is a 3rd generation, board certified plastic surgeon who practices in Orlando, Florida. His specialty is Aesthetic Surgery and Women's Health. He has expertise in labiaplasty, vaginal tightening and breast augmentation using "gummy bear" (shaped) breast implants. Dr. Oppenheimer's goal is happy patients, and he strives to help them achieve THEIR plastic surgery goals. He has been chosen as a Top 100 Plastic Surgeon on RealSelf.com each year since he began his practice. You can view Dr. Oppenheimer's lighter side on Instagram or if you're more adventurous, watch him do live Mommy Makeover surgeries on snapchat: @RealDrOPP


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Daniel C. Oppenheimer, M.D. is board certified in diagnostic radiology. He is an Assistant Professor of Radiology in the Department of Imaging Sciences at the University of Rochester Medical Center. He specializes in abdominal imaging and emergency radiology. He completed Diagnostic Radiology residency at the University of Rochester Medical Center, followed by a fellowship in Abdominal Imaging at the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, MO. Dr. Oppenheimer is an active member of the Radiologic Society of North America, the American Roentgen Ray Society and the American Society of Emergency Radiology. His clinical interests include dual-energy computed tomography, Hepatobiliary MR, MR Enterography, and prostate MRI.

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CALENDAR



January 1

New Year's Day celebrated

January 15

MLK. Jr. Birthday Commemorated

January 3

Hebrew High begins
6:30- 8:30 PM- JCC/Benderson

January 21, 28

Insurance Point reduction Class
@ TBZ
Broder Center,
700 Sweet Home Road
There is a cost.
Call Becky at 836-6565

January 7-8

Budapest P2G members
visit Buffalo

Call Miriam Abramovich
at 204-2247 if you
would like to meet them

January 25 & 26

PALS/ Kadimah Pre-School
Open House
700 Sweet Home Road
Call Melissa Milch
at 836-6565 x 139

January 12

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Shabbat

7:00 PM

Temple Beth Zion
805 Delaware Ave

January 28

Buffalo Jewish Federation's
Super Sunday
JCC/ Benderson Building
9:00 AM- 2:00 PM

January 14

TBZ Achim Program

10 AM

Meadows Lounge @ Weinberg
Campus

January 31

Tu B'Shevat- The New Year of
Trees celebrated



MOZART'S OPERATIC FAVORITES

Sat. Jan. 27, 8pm | Sun. Jan. 28, 2:30pm

Andrew Bisantz, conductor

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Learning Together Transforms a Community!

By Susan Goldberg Schwartz,
Director of Adult Learning, Bureau of Jewish Education

Let's make Jewish Buffalo an engaged and transformative learning community! The Bureau of Jewish Education's Adult Learning Department is pleased to offer classes and other learning opportunities beginning in January 2018! Most classes will be held at the Jewish Community Center, 2640 North Forest Road, unless otherwise noted:

Beginning January 6, 2018

Hebrew Reading, taught by Michal Shmuel-Lewis, **Wednesday evenings**
Aleph-Bet/Beginning, 6:15 – 7:30pm and Intermediate/Advanced 7:40 – 8:45pm

Beginning January 17, 2018

Intro to Judaism, a 14 week class taught by the members of the Board of Rabbis and Cantors, **Wednesday evenings, 6:30 – 8:30pm**

On January 25, 2018

What if Everyone Read the Same Book? You are invited to read the book, **My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays, One Wondering Jew**, by Abigail Pogrebin and join in community conversations. This month we will focus our discussion on the holiday of *Tu B'Shevat* and the Mussar trait of *Chesed*/Loving-kindness. We will be meeting at 7:00pm at the Audubon Branch of the Buffalo and Erie County Library. Space is limited!



To Be Scheduled in Spring 2018:

Part 2, Power and Powerlessness in Jewish Life and Thought, conversations with faculty from the UB Department of Jewish Thought. With great power comes great responsibility. What does it mean to have power? Is power different from physical force? What are the Ethical connotations? How does power relate to innovation?

Join Professor Noam Pines, in conversation with Professor Sergey Dolgopolsky on the topic of: *"Jews won't Replace Us": Charlottesville as a Challenge to Jewish Thought*

For more information about Adult Learning programs, please contact Susan Schwartz, Director of Adult Learning, susan@bjebuffalo.org or 716-204-5830. Please look for more details and registration

HAPPENINGS AT HEBREW HIGH

Melissa Schreiber – Assistant Principal

Every Wednesday at 6:30 PM at the JCC, teens arrive to Hebrew High with anticipation of a break from their hectic schedules. Hebrew High helps to provide the teens' with fun experiential Jewish classes. During the first session, the class "Mindfully Crazy" took the idea of relaxing and taking a break to a new level.



"Mindfully Crazy," taught by Rabbi Adam Scheldt, focused on mindfulness through a Jewish lens. Rabbi Scheldt helped teens find their center and teach the relation it has to different Jewish values. We also had a guest teacher, Beverly Holtz, who is a local Yoga instructor and member of Nickel City Jews. She taught our teens some unique yoga poses and strategies to help unwind after a busy day. After teens spent time in this class, there was a noticeable change during break time. They seemed relaxed and reenergized. Our hope is that they will use these new teachings about mindfulness and Jewish values throughout the school year.



Hebrew High is a program of the Bureau of Jewish Education for teens in grades 8 - 12, regardless of affiliation. Session 2 began on December 13 and runs through February 7. Session 3 will be starting on February 14. Space is still available for both sessions. For more information, including registration documents, please visit bjebuffalo.org/hebrewhigh or contact Jill Komm, Principal, at 716-204-5380 or jill@bjebuffalo.org





Plant it.

Tu B'Shevat, our "Jewish Earth Day", marks the New Year of Trees. We celebrate by planting trees and eating dried fruits and nuts. Which parts of Jewish life nourish and inspire you?

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YAD B'YAD AND PJ LIBRARY DEDICATE THE FIRST LIBRARY OF THE WOMEN'S JEWISH GROUP HOME

*By Cindi Mikulik,
Director of Yad B'Yad*

Yad B'Yad and PJ Library joined together to establish a library at the Women's Jewish Group Home. On November 5, the new library was dedicated in a poignant ceremony. Residents were joined by their families, friends, and community representatives for the occasion.

The ceremony was opened by Yad B'Yad Director Cindi Mikulik. Mandy Weiss, Director of PJ Library, spoke about the agency mission and presented the first book to Vickie Rubin, who, along with her daughter Jessica, accepted the book on behalf of the families. Rabbi Alex Lazarus- Klein shared a few words about the home and dedicated the library in memory of Rena Merrick (OBM), parent of one of the residents. He ended with leading everyone in the singing of the



Vickie and Jessica Rubin accept the first book from Mandy Weiss



Robin Raphael, Jill Komm, Cindi Mikulik, Mandy Weiss, miriam treger, Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein around the new book shelf

Shehechyanu blessing. Robin Raphael, Yad B'Yad Co-Chair, shared the first volume of the library by reading it aloud for everyone to enjoy.

The program ended with Cindi Mikulik presenting the families with over twenty additional books that had been gifted to the women over the previous few months. Following the ceremony, everyone passed around the new books and enjoyed a lovely reception.

The Women's Jewish Group home will receive a new book every month from PJ Library. It will be added to the beautiful bookcase that was provided by People Inc., especially for this purpose. A quiet, comfortable reading corner is being set up in the home.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the ceremony and helped establish this beautiful library. It will be enjoyed for many, many years to come!



Residents of the group home with their family and friends



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein led the group in blessing the home and new books

Yad B'Yad is a program of the Bureau of Jewish Education that works to include individuals with disabilities into the community. For more information about Yad B'Yad, programming, or volunteering, please contact Cindi Mikulik at 716-204-5380, yadbyad@bjebuffalo.org, or www.yadbyad.org.

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Friday	5:30am - 7:00pm
Sat	8:00am - 6:00pm

Update from Weinberg Campus

By Kenneth Rogers,
Chair, Board of Directors

In December 2015, Weinberg Campus announced that it was embarking on a process to secure the facility's future and continue its mission within the context of rapid changes in the health care industry, the economics and demographics of the Western New York community, and the need for greater integration of services among health-care systems and networks. As a result of a two-year process during which numerous parties expressed interest, we are extremely fortunate to have reached an agreement with Elderwood to acquire the majority of our main Campus at 2700 North Forest Road. We are very pleased that Weinberg Campus will become part of Elderwood, one of Western New York's preeminent long-term care organizations.

The Board of Directors is confident that this is the right decision for our residents, clients, staff and the community. Elderwood meets all of the criteria outlined by the Weinberg Campus Board at the outset of the sale process. With their track record of operating quality facilities Elderwood



Kenneth Rogers

will bring substantial resources and capabilities to ensure that the mission of Weinberg Campus continues.

The sale process is far from complete. The purchase agreement with Elderwood allows them to apply for approval of the purchase with various New York State agencies. In addition,

the Attorney General of New York State must give his approval. All of this will take time. We are hopeful that we can close the purchase within one year. In addition, there are other parts of the Weinberg Campus that are being sold to other entities, or that we are still looking to sell. The purchase by Elderwood does not include any of the property north of North Forest Road, or any of the property used by the Jewish Community Center for outdoor recreation and camping purposes.

It should be noted that our residents, clients, families, and staff will see no changes during the transition. We will continue to offer top-notch care in a beautiful setting. We will do everything in our powers to make the transition as seamless as possible.

The Board of Weinberg Campus remains extremely grateful to Peter Fleischmann and the Board of the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, who have been aiding the process from day one.

MICHAEL GARCIA IS NEW CENTERLAND DIRECTOR



Meet Michael Garcia, the new Day Camp Director at the JCC's Camp Centerland.

Michael holds a BA in Human Services from Springfield College (MA), has worked in camping in the YMCA for the past 28 years, and has run small city camps all the way up to large outdoor day camps. He has a consulting business that focuses on youth development with an expertise in camping and before/after school programs.

A native of New Milford, CT Michael has lived in Williamsville, NY since July 2016. He is married and has a 16 year old son.

"I am a camp guy through and through," he said. "I have been working with children my entire life. I believe it is important when working with children that you have a focus. I have three areas I like to focus on when working with children. 1. Belonging: I believe that children need to create a sense of belonging in their community. Every child this summer should say "this is MY CAMP". This will allow them to own their actions and be committed to creating a better world around them. 2. Achievement – Children need to have a sense of real achievement in their lives. Not the "everybody gets a trophy" philosophy but a true sense of being a success. We need to redefine success for them. Allowing them to set their own goals and helping them to achieve them. 3. Relationships – I believe that children need to work on building relationships. Not just with other campers but with the staff. If we can put a positive role model in the life of every child we will be better off," he said. "Feel free to come on by the Camp Office in the Benderson JCC and say hi!"

DONATED ART WORK ON DISPLAY AT JCC/ BENDERSON MARCH 1-APRIL 30

Jewish Family Service of Buffalo and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo are collaborating to present an art exhibit of donated art from members of the community.

"This is a very special exhibit in that it comes from members of the community, proceeds from sales will be donated back to two agencies that serve the community and any art not sold will be donated to new members of the community," said Richard Zakalik, Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center, home to the Bunis Family Art Gallery, where the exhibit will take place, March 1 – April 30, 2018.

Art in the exhibit includes work by Israeli artist A. Elgi, Buffalo artist Irving Mink, German artist Herbert Schneider and more including original paintings, prints, needlework, drawings and photographs.

"The JCC often get calls from people who are looking for places to donate artwork, typically because a family member is downsizing and while the family doesn't want to keep the art, they don't want to throw it away and are looking for a place where the art can be enjoyed and appreciated," says Jordana Halpern, who curates the gallery as Cultural Arts director at the JCC. "We wanted to create an exhibit that would benefit the community, including new members of the community who have relocated with the help of Jewish Family Service, which has been helping families and individuals make the

challenging transition from Sudan, Iraq, Nepal, Somalia, Burma, Bhutan and other strife-torn areas of the world."

"We're excited to be working with the JCC on this program," said Marlene Schillinger, President and CEO of Jewish Family Service. "Our agency provides a broad range of services including resettlement, health services, counselling and advocacy for people who need support during times of challenge and personal change. This program will serve to connect new residents in WNY to families with long histories here. It's an opportunity to forge connections and extend warm welcomes through sharing of art. Without being formal about it, we'll be giving people a chance to share their history, adopt some history and hopefully share and promote Buffalo's city of good neighbors."

At the end of the exhibit, new WNY residents will participate in a closing gallery reception, Monday, April 30, where they can learn about the artwork and the family that donated it, and choose a piece to take to their home.

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

KADIMAH KAVOD FOR VETERANS

By Marci Wiseman

Kavod, a word meaning honor, was certainly the order of the day when students from Kadimah Academy interviewed guest veterans at the school for Veteran's Day. A special program was held on November 9 and included songs, poetry, music, and recitations from the students in grades K through 8. The students dressed in patriotic colors and waved flags while parading around a crowded room filled with special guests, parents, grandparents, and, of course veterans, some coming from area nursing homes and the VA Hospital.

The program, coordinated by English Language Arts teacher, Nancy Bolles, featured a colorful history of the holiday, interviews of the veterans by middle school students, and even an original poem by 8th grader Caleb Senick:

Defending our stripes of red, white, and blue

There's nothing in the world we can say to thank you

We thank our veterans for answering the call

For serving, for fighting, and protecting us all

We thank our veterans for making the sacrifice

So we honor them all with the Day of Armistice

The students met veterans from a variety of battles including Vietnam, Korea, and World War II, representing the Army, Navy, and the Marines. They met infantrymen, demolitions experts, radio

operators, plane jumpers, medics, CORPSmen, and radar operators, some who enlisted, and some who were drafted. Yosef Kalfa was 17 years old when he enlisted. He said he "didn't have an exciting life so he joined to either have stories to tell or die trying, knowing he lived a life of adventure and that he helped his country."

After lunch, students and faculty were invited to a meet-and-greet with 103-year old veteran Sydney Cole, who attended the event with his son Richard. The elder Mr. Cole shared many of his life experiences, discussed how different the world he grew up in was from today, and answered many of the students' questions, wrapping up with a comment about the high price of freedom and how very thankful he is for our country.



Students performing



Richard (L) and Sydney Cole



Avy Sterman and Fran Paskowitz



Vets Louis Wiseman (L) and Alan Gendler

UN Holocaust Remembrance Day features Jeannie Smith 1/28

In honor of UN Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo and the Permanent Chair of Polish Culture at Canisius College present Jeannie Smith, daughter of Righteous Among the Nations, Irena Gut Opdyke, in a lecture on her mother's efforts to save Jews in WWII in German-occupied Poland, entitled *One Person Can Make a Difference*

The event takes place Sunday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m. at Canisius College in the Grupp Fireside Lounge on the second floor of the Richard E. Winter Student Center on Hughes Avenue on the Canisius College Campus.

Jeannie Smith's mother Irena's message of standing up against hate and the understanding that we are our brother's keeper is the focus of the presentation. Irena received international recognition for her actions during the Holocaust while working for a high-ranking German official. Her life story was told on Broadway in the nationally acclaimed play, *Irena's Vow*. Ms. Smith travels extensively telling her mother's story as a message of faith, hope and love that good can triumph over evil. The lecture is



Jeannie Smith

free and open to the public. Campus and street parking are available. A reception will follow the lecture.

Co-sponsors of the event include the Frank Walter Fund of the History Department at Canisius College, Daemen College Polish Studies Program, Polish Arts Club of Buffalo, Polish Legacy Project of the Polish American Congress of WNY, and the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo are co-sponsors.

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For more information or questions contact: Cindi Mikulic, Yad B'Yad Director
716.204.5390 or yadbyst@tjebuffalo.org

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(NOT) THE LAST WORD

THE SEPHARDIC SYNAGOGUE EXPERIENCE IN ISRAEL

Dr. Stuart L. Fischman

For a long time Jane and I have been members of Moreshet Israel, the “flagship” Conservative synagogue in the center of Jerusalem. Now that we are in Israel full time I daven there on Rosh Hashanah. On Yom Kippur, no one in Israel drives, so that is not an option. For a few years, I davened at the Reform synagogue where I live in Mevaseret. That was quite pleasant, but a 45-minute walk uphill! Not an option this year! (I’m recovering from a broken hip).

I guess it was “beshert” that, after 3+ years of construction, a Sephardic synagogue opened on our corner—about a 3 minute walk from home. I saw that the doors were open on Rosh Hashanah, so I ventured up during the week and was warmly welcomed by a few congregants supervising the “finishing touches”. The building is unbelievable! Beautiful wood, stained glass, theatre-type seating. My guide pointed out that there are no dedication plaques anywhere—not on the building nor the Torah mantles, etc. Everything is paid for. Buffalo should be so lucky!(I digress.)

The machzorim were all in Hebrew and I certainly am not familiar with the Sephardic nusach. I thought it prudent to prepare myself for prayer and went downtown to the reliable bookseller, Mike Pomerantz. He “fitted me out” with an appropriate machzor, nusach Sephardi, Hebrew and English. During the ten Days of Awe, I looked over the text in an attempt (futile, at best) to become familiar with the customs of the Sephardim. I also compared various passages with those in my familiar Conservative machzor.

On erev Yom Kippur, I organized my “yom tov” kippa, tallit, and new machzor along with my crutch and walked up the hill to the synagogue. As soon as the doors were opened, there was the expected rush for seats—everyone is welcome, no tickets. Seeing my “handicapped” status, I was guided to a seat and stored my crutch. I was able to negotiate mincha quite easily. Not much of a challenge, I thought.

Next, a leader of the congregation ascended to the reader’s desk and I expected a few words of greeting (I later learned that it was he who funded the facility). For sure, I was not able to follow the Hebrew—I had hoped he might speak in Ladino, which is close to Spanish. However, the founders were from Morocco, where Ladino was not a lingua franca.

After a few words, he began “asking questions” and numbers were shouted out by some congregants. I realized that this was, in fact, an auction! The bidders were vying for aliyot and other honors. Record keeping was interesting. Another leader was sitting in a front row with a box of file cards containing the names of the “regulars”—there are no dues paying



A beaming Stuart Fischman after enjoying lunch with the Federation’s Clergy Interfaith Mission participants last month at Jerusalem.

members of the congregation. He also had the aliyot on a set of cards, along with photocopies of Israeli currency. When the auctioneer recognized the successful bidder, the relevant cards were clipped together. The process was repeated before the Torah service in the morning and again in the afternoon. Based on amounts called out, I would expect a balanced budget!

At first this seemed awkward on a High Holiday. Then I recalled that when I was a child, on the Sunday before the Holidays, my grandfather would take me to the Orthodox shul where he davened. (It was one of the synagogues on Elmwood near Bird, now part of Beth Abraham). An elder of the congregation—generally a cousin—was sitting at a table and would assign a seat, based on the level of the contribution. And I also thought of our Yom Kippur pledge cards, where a tab would be folded down, indicating a contribution to the synagogue budget. Marty Trossman (z’l) often had that honor and called it the “coal for the furnace” plea. Clearly, there may be a difference in the minchag, but it is a valid analogy.

To return to the service itself: There were several differences in the order of the service. My Sephardic machzor was a valuable guide, and there were numerous “options” indicated at various points in the service. For example, “Syrian congregations continue on page XX”. Kol Nidre came at a midpoint in the service, rather than at the beginning. All the Torah cases were of the Sephardic type, with magnificent design and decoration. There were many more piyutim than I recalled from the typical Conservative service. They were sung with great vigor by the congregation! It was most certainly a participatory gathering! There was a group of young men in one quadrant of the sanctuary, dressed alike in white shirts and black trousers—perhaps Chabad followers.

They formed an informal and most active “choir”, as they adhered to Psalms 147-150 and “sang a most joyful noise unto the Lord”.

Before the afternoon service began, several of us were chatting on the plaza outside the synagogue. The regulars’ ancestry included Syria, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Morocco and Turkey—countries from which they were expelled in 1948. The number of Jews forcibly expelled

from Moslem countries was approximately the same as the number of Arabs who left Israel at that time. My new friends represent successful business and professional men—not content to live as refugees, political pawns in the Middle East.

All told, it was a most pleasant and meaningful Yom Kippur experience. The congregants were most welcoming—all neighbors residing in walking distance of the synagogue. When I meet them on the street, at our clinic, or in the mall, they greet me and ask after Jane’s and my health.

Please appreciate that this essay is not meant to be demeaning of the customs and practice of my co-religionists. It is intended to present a part of the spectrum of observance of our religion here in the State of Israel—our eternal homeland.

Addendum:

An excellent description of our Sephardic community appeared recently in the Jerusalem Report. The reference is: Jager, Elliot, “Sephardic Judaism”, J. Report 28:16 pp. 10-15. (13 November 2107).

Dr. Stuart Fischman, a former Buffalonian, lives in Israel with his wife, Jane.



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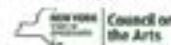
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