

The Award Winning

# THE JEWISH JOURNAL

A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

» SAVOR SUKKOT (4-7)

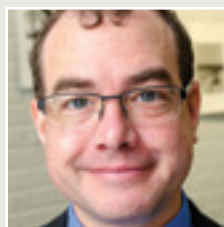
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OCTOBER 2020 | TISHREI-HESHVAN 5781

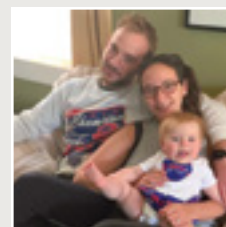
# KOLOT 2020



BRINGING OUR AUTHENTIC KOLOT (VOICES) TO LEADERSHIP



**WELCOME:**  
NEW JCC  
CEO  
(11)



**INSIDE:**  
BUFFALOVE  
(18)



**LOOK:**  
HERD  
COMMUNITY  
(24)

The 2020 Walk to End Alzheimer's is a vital fundraiser to ensure those impacted by dementia continue to have access to free local resources like education programs and support groups. In Buffalo, we are fortunate to have two key leaders in this effort:



**Lauren Klenosky** is the Walk Manager, leading the way so her children won't have to battle this disease.

**Barbara Ginsberg** is a top supporter who fundraises in memory of her husband and his fight against Alzheimer's disease.



Please consider supporting our efforts to end Alzheimer's with a donation or corporate sponsorship. Call Lauren Klenosky at (716) 241-0355 or get started online at [alz.org/WNYwalk](http://alz.org/WNYwalk).



# THE MUSIC WILL PLAY OnDemand

2021

BPO

FALL PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE FOR STREAMED CONCERT EVENTS

FREE to all subscribers and available to patrons wishing to purchase a virtual ticket



## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### A CELEBRATION OF THE SEASONS

Sat Sep 26, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*  
Nikki Chooi, *violin*

A theme of joyful rebirth takes center stage as JoAnn Falletta conducts the opening of the BPO season. **Copland's *Appalachian Spring***, an enduring portrait of the American landscape, and **Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons***, an exquisite musical narrative of nature's seasons played by concertmaster **Nikki Chooi** and set to a visual display of Vivaldi's poetry, are paired with a contemporary work, ***Starburst***, by **Jessie Montgomery**, a past finalist of the national Sphinx Competition for young Black and Latinx classical string players.

## BPO Pops

### BROADWAY TO BUFFALO

Sat Oct 3, 8pm

The Pops season opens with the new generation of Broadway stars along with **Buffalo's Second Generation Theatre Company**, as Principal Pops Conductor John Morris Russell conducts beloved musical theatre favorites, including classics from ***Cabaret***, ***Funny Girl***, ***Evita***, ***Les Miserables***, ***Carousel***, ***Man of La Mancha***, ***Gilbert and Sullivan*** and more. An evening of song and celebration!

## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### LOVE & LONGING

Sat Oct 10, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*  
Eric Huebner, *piano*

Two works originally composed for keyboard and later transcribed for orchestra, **Bach's *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in D*** is a virtuosic display of technique and interpretation played by principal pianist for the New York Philharmonic, **Eric Huebner**, while **Grieg's *Holberg Suite*** invokes dancing rhythms. **Dvorák's *Serenade for Winds in D*** was composed in only two weeks, capturing the lyrical and lively flavor of his native Bohemia.

## BPO Pops

### THAT STUDIO SOUND:

#### JAZZ CLASSICS FOR LOVERS

Sat Oct 17, 8pm

John Morris Russell, *conductor*

From the famed recording studios at Capitol Records in Los Angeles, arranger Nelson Riddle and the biggest singing sensations of the era created a body of work that defines the cool sophistication of popular jazz in the 1950s and 60s. The BPO brings arrangements of classics by **Gershwin**, **Porter**, and **Jobim**, recorded by the likes of Frank, Nat, and Ella, back to life in all their original splendor with Buffalo crooners **Katy Miner** and **Chris Vasquez**. A romantic evening of sultry swing!

## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### TARTAN & TANGO

Sat Oct 24, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*  
Jason Vieaux, *guitar*  
Julien Labro, *bandoneon*

Intoxicating Spanish rhythms highlight the performance by hometown favorite, guitarist **Jason Vieaux**, in this program featuring a tango from Argentinean master **Astor Piazzolla: *Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)***. Combined with **Puccini's *Crisantemi***, a poignant and dramatic elegy for a fallen friend, and the beauty and yearning for the Highlands in **Bantock's *Celtic Symphony***, this program expresses a full range of emotion.

## BPO Pops

### SIMPLY BEWITCHING

Sat Oct 31, 8pm

John Morris Russell, *conductor*

From Hollywood horror, chilling orchestral classics, and creepy musical tales, you'll be spellbound by the magic of your BPO. Music from ***Psycho***, ***The Legend of Sleepy Hollow***, and autumnal favorites weave together an enchanted night of thrills and chills.



## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### A STRING SERENADE

Sat Nov 7, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*  
Madeline Olson, *harp*

As the first African American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music (1996), it is fitting that **George Walker's *Lyric for Strings*** is included on a program of works brimming with inspiration. **Mozart's *Wind Serenade No. 11*** is pleasingly playful yet heartfelt, **Handel's *Harp Concerto No. 6***, played by principal harpist **Madeline Olson**, lends the harp a delicate magic, and **Bach's *Air*** is celestial with the instantly-recognizable second movement of his Baroque masterpiece, ***Orchestral Suite No. 3***.

## BPO Pops

### A BRASS ACT

Sat Nov 14, 8pm

Thrill to the power and majesty of the BPO Brass as they perform popular classics, from splendid fanfares and marches, to ragtime and jazz. A jamboree of musical styles from the world over that will be glorious, tuneful, irreverent, and fun. You won't want to miss a beat!

## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### BACH, BEETHOVEN & BEYOND

Sat Nov 21, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*

Two early 20th century composers have grand masters to thank in this classic program. **Beethoven's *Septet*** led to increased early fame for the young composer. The extraordinary and familiar **Brandenburg Concerto No. 3** by **J.S. Bach** was an inspiration for **Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks***, and **Respighi's *Ancient Airs and Dances Suite No. 3*** was influenced by Baroque-era Italian works.

## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### BAROQUE FIREWORKS

Sat Dec 5, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*  
Henry Ward, *oboe*  
Caroline Gilbert, *viola*  
Anna Shemetyeva, *viola*

Baroque is front and center as JoAnn Falletta conducts **Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*** with its iconic and lavish score, **Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 6***, and **Marcello's *Oboe Concerto in C minor*** played by principal oboist **Henry Ward**, which echoes the lyricism of an aria. Your BPO Brass plays the exciting ***Canzon septimi toni No. 1*** by the influential 16th century organist **Giovanni Gabrieli**, and **Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll***, a delicate musical love letter to his new wife on her Christmas birthday, complete this Baroque program.

## M&T BANK CLASSICS

### JOANN'S CLASSICAL CHRISTMAS

Sat Dec 12, 8pm

JoAnn Falletta, *conductor*  
Sigourney Cook, *soprano*  
Nikki Chooi, *violin*

**Salvatore Andolina, alto saxophone**  
BPO musicians highlight our annual offering when **Sal Andolina** presents a special saxophone rendition of holiday favorites, and the BPO Brass shine in **Darin Kelly's *Of Nights and Lights***, a sparkling Hanukkah composition. Perennial classics including selections from **Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors***, **Respighi's *The Adoration of the Magi***, **Vaughan-Williams *Fantasia on Greensleeves***, and more bring the spirit of the season to life.

## BPO Pops

### BPO HOLIDAY POPS

Sat Dec 19, 8pm

John Morris Russell, *conductor*  
Celebrate the holidays with "Mr. Christmas" himself, Maestro John Morris Russell, with festive Pops favorites from your BPO! It's Western New York's most celebrated holiday tradition with an eclectic variety of seasonal music from popular song, film, musical theatre, gospel, and jazz. As heartwarming as it is fun, it's a concert for everyone, featuring guest appearances by soulful Buffalo singers **Zoe Scruggs** and **George Brown**, and maybe even the "man with the bag" himself... if you're nice!

For more information, call (716) 885-5000 or visit [bpo.org](http://bpo.org)

# October 2020

## Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Life has changed for all of us over the last six months. COVID-19 all over the world, civil unrest in our American cities prompted by racial injustice, a contentious presidential election, school and learning badly disrupted from kindergarten through college, fires in the West. So many things are upside down. And our world is not the same. Maybe it will never be again. And maybe that's not all bad. These months have forced many of us to change, to grow, to learn new things, broaden our points of view, make new friends, and find gratitude amid the disruption.

In our Buffalo Jewish community, life has continued and in many places is flourishing. The JCC outdoor pool was open and fully utilized every day. Summer camp at Centerland and other camps happened despite smaller numbers. Families, teenagers, young adults were able to meet up, even though socially distant, through the many events Federation's CJEL created. The Buffalo Jewish International Film Festival took place in our living rooms. Many attended Shabbat services by Zoom or seated outside in the fragrant summer air. My garden grew magnificently and visitors came to see it, albeit several hundred fewer than last year.

But for today, it's the gratitude part that I try to focus on. I have had the time and opportunity to realize how blessed I am to live in Jewish Buffalo. How lucky I am to have loving friends and family. How fortunate I am to be able to work, have enough to eat and sleep with a roof over my head every single day. I think that has been my gift from this pandemic. Being able to count my blessings goes a long way in these days when we all continue to see so much loss, death and uncomfortable changes in our daily lives.

To help you get through October in a positive frame of mind, peruse this issue of the *Jewish Journal* and see how you can take a new class through CJEL (pages 14 & 15) or enjoy the festivals of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah by eating in a Sukkah, going to a synagogue or temple, or cooking festive treats (pages 4-7). Read Dr. Gerald Berkowitz's account of his family's hijacking experience in Israel 50 years ago and be happy he is here with us to write about it. And whatever else you do this month, make your plan to vote in the upcoming elections this November. Our JCRC (pages 12-13) explains safe voting for us all—in person or through the mail—and urges us all to exercise our hard won right as Americans to vote.

Hag Sameach – Best wishes for a joyous Sukkot festival!

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

## On The Cover



“Kolot” means voices, and this striking logo, created by Federation’s Social Media & Communications Director Jill Komm, evokes the voices of a diverse group of women. Kolot 2020 is a leadership program designed for Federation’s female board members and stewarded by Federation President Leslie Shuman Kramer. Read about it in Leslie’s column on page 3 and on page 14.

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Submit editorial stories, photos, and calendar items by the 1st of the preceding month of issue to [ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org).

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# Point of View

**“Point of View” is an interesting thing. It determines how we tell stories and how we see our history. The events in our own lives greatly influence each of our own points of view. For instance, my siblings and I may remember the same events in our childhood differently from one another. And certainly our memories differ from those of our parents.**

When it comes to history, the saying goes, “History is written by the victors”. Those in power, those with the pen get to write history from their perspective. When we read a novel, the narrator’s voice sets the tone and shares his/her view of the story. In the book *Ahab’s Wife*, by Sena Jeter Naslund, we read the story of Una, which differs greatly from the perspective of her husband Ahab in *Moby Dick*. And in the popular novel *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant, we get a glimpse of what we might learn of our patriarchs and matriarchs if the women of the time penned the Bible.

This month the women of the Buffalo



Leslie Kramer

Jewish Federation’s Board of Directors will be examining our own perspectives when we participate in a two day retreat, focused on amplifying female voices in leadership. In fact, we have named the retreat KOLOT—which means “voices” in Hebrew. Tying in biblical texts, we

will explore as women and individuals how to find and use our authentic voices in leadership roles. Together, we will examine and challenge our own, each other’s and society’s stereotypes and images of women, and we will explore our own roots—our Jewish texts—seeking an understanding of our history through our own points of view. In creating this experience, we hope the outcome will be a closer group of women, and one that can bring suggestions and better practices back to our male counterparts on the Board.

I am proud to be bringing this opportunity to our Board’s women. The idea evolved from a conversation last August among a group of female Jewish community leaders. I reflected upon my own access to outstanding and inspiring national gatherings and trips of women only. I reflected upon the power of those experiences—where being among strong, smart, like-minded women recharged my batteries and introduced me to women I could see as mentors in my role as a

community leader. I wanted to bring that opportunity to the incredible women of this Buffalo Jewish community. So the planning began.

Initially, we envisioned a weekend getaway featuring a Jewish scholar with deep educational sessions and plenty of time to build camaraderie and friendships. Now with the pandemic, rather than shelve our plans, we doubled down to create what we hope will be a powerful experience for the 21 women on our Board. While it will be entirely virtual, the planning team of Cheryl Stein, Marina Maulucci Finkelstein and myself, and our staff partner Miriam Abramovich, Director of the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning, have been working closely with our guest facilitator Nicole Nevarez, the inaugural National Director of *Ta’amod*, an organization devoted to helping Jewish institutions develop cultures of safety, respect and equity, to create a substantive and provocative experience.

**DID YOU MISS THE BIG SHOW?**

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# The Building of Sukkahs

BY DANIEL KESTER

It is a cold October day, and I am driving through the narrow streets of Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, trying to find a parking space. One of the centers of Judaism before World War II, Vilnius was known as the “Jerusalem of the North.” But that was before almost all of the Jews of Lithuania were murdered in the Holocaust, with only a handful surviving. So there I am, driving around, when I see a large tent with tree branches on top of it. “That almost looks like a Sukkah,” I think, laughing. I look again, and think, “That really does look like a Sukkah!” So I pull over, go in, and before I know what’s happening, I’m holding a *Lulav* and *Etrog* and a rabbi is leading me through the Sukkot prayers. He is the Vilnius Chabad Rabbi, and he invites me to their Simchat Torah service that evening, where I feast on traditional Lithuanian Jewish delicacies such as vodka and sushi.

The experience reminds me that no matter where in the world we are, if Jews are living there, Sukkahs are built for the holiday of Sukkot.

The building of Sukkahs, which are small huts, dates back to ancient times. In fact, during biblical times, the holiday of Sukkot was the most important holiday of the year and is one of the holidays mentioned in the Bible. It was one of three holidays where Jews from all over the Kingdom came to Jerusalem to make

sacrifices at the Temple. At the time Jerusalem did not have the plethora of hotels it does now, so pilgrims would build small huts that they would sleep in. These huts evolved into the Sukkahs we now celebrate Sukkot in.

By tradition, the Sukkah represents the huts that the Israelites lived in during the Exodus from Egypt. But the actual origin of the holiday, as a celebration of the fall harvest, probably goes back much further, to pre-Judaic times.



The Sukkah at the Women's Group Home. Dan is in the red shirt



Sukkah in Vilnius, Lithuania



Putting up the The Shir Shalom Sukkah by the Men's Group

As President of the Congregation Shir Shalom Men's Group, one of my responsibilities is to carry out this ancient tradition. Every year, immediately after Yom Kippur, I recruit, coerce, and cajole temple members to help with the construction of our Synagogue's Sukkah.

Like many Synagogues, Shir Shalom uses a purchased Sukkah that can be assembled by a few people in a couple of hours. We start with an aluminum frame. Then we hang cloth walls on the frame. A Sukkah needs to have at least three walls. Next comes the roof which should be made of branches or other plant material. At Shir Shalom we used to use corn stalks for the roof; now we use bamboo mats,

which stay up there longer in the autumn wind.

Finally, we decorate, using products of the fall harvest, including pumpkins, gourds, and dried corn cobs. The children in our religious school typically help decorate it with drawings and other arts and crafts items they have made. An important step is using sand bags to keep the frame in place; we learned this the hard way after a strong wind blew our whole Sukkah across the parking lot one year!

In addition to the Synagogue's Sukkah, for the last several years we have also built two additional Sukkahs, one at The Amberleigh retirement community, the other at the Women's Group Home for disabled Jewish women. These Sukkahs are smaller, using lumber for the frames, and burlap cloth for the walls. The students from Hillel at UB have helped build both of these. The building of the Sukkah at the group home is always a special experience, with the group bringing music and singing and food. The appreciation of the group home residents and their families is wonderful to see.

The building of the Sukkah is something that unites and connects us. It connects our community, including the elderly, the young, and the disabled. It connects Jews around the world, from Vilnius to Williamsville. It connects us with nature. And it connects us with Jews throughout history, back to biblical times.

*Dr. Daniel Kester is a retired Materials Scientist. He is President of the Congregation Shir Shalom Men's Group, a Vice President of the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, and is on the boards of Jewish Family Services and the Holocaust Resource Center.*

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# Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah Worship



## Temple Beth Tzedek

**Friday, October 2**

Sukkot 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Livestream only**

**Saturday, October 3**

Service 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Service 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Livestream only**

**Sunday October 4**

Service 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Hoshanah Rabbah - 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

**Friday, October 9**

Shemini Atzeret - 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Livestream only**

**Saturday, October 10**

Shemini Atzeret - 9:30 a.m. - Noon

Simhat Torah - 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Sunday, October 11**

Simhat Torah - Services 9:30 a.m. - Noon

6:45 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. - **Livestream only**

## Temple Beth Zion

**Friday, October 2**

Sukkot Service 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

Contact TBZ office for details at

836-6565 or www.tbz.org.

**Friday, October 9**

Simchat Torah in-person service 6:00 p.m.

at Camp Centerland (next to the Bend-

erson JCC in Getzville). Limited seating.

Bring your own chair.

Contact TBZ office for details at

836-6565 or www.tbz.org.

## Congregation Shir Shalom

**Friday, October 2**

6:00 p.m. Sukkot Park and Pray in the Shir

Shalom Parking Lot, with an abbreviated

Friday night service, Lulav and Etrog sta-

tions and a walk through Sukkah.

**Friday, October 9**

6:00 p.m. - Simchat Torah Park and Pray

in the Shir Shalom Parking Lot. Listen to

the end and the beginning of the Torah,

with live Klezmer music.

**Saturday, October 10**

11:00 a.m. - Yizkor (memorial) Service will

be streamed. Details on the Shir Shalom

Buffalo website.

Noon - Zoom Torah Service, contact the

CSS office for details.

## Kehillat Ohr Tzion

For location and further details, please con-

tact Rabbi Ori at 631-371-4201/

oribergman@gmail.com

**Saturday, October 3 & Sunday, October 4**

Sukkot- 9:30 a.m. service both days

**Saturday, October 10**

Shimini Atzeret/Simchat Torah -

Service - 9:30 a.m.

Simchat Torah Service- 7:30 p.m.

**Sunday, October 11**

Service 9:30 a.m.

## JDC Learning Center

831 Maple Rd. #110

**Friday, October 2**

Sukkot Mincha/Maariv 6:30 p.m.

**Saturday, October 3**

Shacharis 10:00 a.m.

Mincha/Maariv 6:30 p.m.

**Sunday, October 4**

Shacharis 10:00 a.m.

Mincha/Maariv 6:30 p.m.

**Friday, October 9**

Shmini Atzeret:Mincha/Maariv 6:20 p.m.

**Saturday, October 10**

Shacharis 10:00 a.m.

Yizkor 11:30 a.m.

Simchas Torah Mincha 6:20 p.m.

Maariv and Simchas Torah Celebration

(Hakafos) 7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, October 11**

Shacharis 10:30 a.m.

Simchas Torah Celebration (Hakafos) and

Holiday Meal 11:30 a.m.

Mincha/Maariv 6:30 p.m.

## JDC

757 Hopkins Road

**Monday, October 5**

Sukkah Hop Drive By 5:00 p.m.

Hop into your vehicle as we explore some

local Sukkot in the neighborhood.

Meet at 757 Hopkins Road.

**Thursday, October 8**

Sushi & Pizza in the Sukkah - 5:00- 7:00 p.m.

Simchat Beit Hashoavah celebration-

7:00 p.m.

**Saturday, October 10**

7:30 p.m. Come dance the night away

celebrating the Torah

**Any Time during Sukkot**

Sukkah on Wheels - Visits to your home or

office. Call 634-7600 to request a visit.



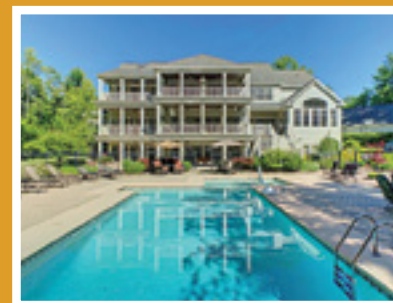
# Bonnie is Buffalo!



**120 Ruskin Road • \$549,900**

This magnificent Spanish, all brick Snyder home is totally updated with the most elegant architecturally designed décor. The breathtaking 3600 square feet home has a custom built 1st floor master suite and boasts recently renovated 21x20 all white kitchen and baths with the finest amenities. The family room with newer Pella windows and hand cut stone fireplace overlooks the private gardens and stone patio. Included are 3 fireplaces, hardwood, exposed floors, Mexican tile, updated roof, generator, 4 car heated garage & so much more.

This majestic 7500 + square feet, stone, Southern plantation with a first floor master suite is an elegantly designed estate that is situated on a private 6 + acre, cul-de-sac setting. This fabulous residence boasts 7 bedrooms, 5 full and 2 half baths, 2 staircases, 4 fireplaces, heated hardwood, wide plank floors, in-ground gunite Beauty Pool, spa, built-in fire pit and invisible pet fence. Some additional special features include 3,000 square feet lower level with full gym, sauna, steam room & great room. The cherry kitchen includes a 16x16 morning room, fireplace and top of the line appliances. The master suite has a wonderful dressing area. The 2nd floor includes a 19x13 great room and study. You will love the 2 story grand foyer with double leaded glass entry doors. Also featured is surround sound throughout, central vacuum, generator, Pella windows, 2 laundry rooms and back entrance.



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community for more than 100 years.

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Please go to our website:  
[buffalojewishfederation.org/donate](http://buffalojewishfederation.org/donate),  
or call Assistant Executive Director Randi Morkisz  
at 716-628-3431.

## Sukkot Treats

Summer, autumn and harvest fruits and vegetables are used as holiday treats for Sukkot. We have gathered three recipes we hope you will try this season. The first is from Buffalo chef Zach Rosenbloom, who is owner of The Bloom & Rose, a local knish company, and Executive sous chef of Park Country Club. He says his Balzano Cake it is almost foolproof. Zach was featured in Part 2 of the JCC/ Federation Rosh Hashanah Cooking series last month. The next two recipes are from Leah Koenig, a chef and cookbook author who was featured in Part 1 of the JCC/Federation Rosh Hashanah Cooking series.



Zach Rosenbloom

### Balzano Cake

*The texture of this cake is similar to a crispy fluffy pancake, so don't expect a traditional cake*

- 1 stick of butter plus more for greasing
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 vanilla bean
- 4 pears (any will work)
- ½ cup all purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup milk
- Powdered sugar to top



Heat oven to 350°F. Grease a nine-inch-circle pan with butter. Cut a circle of parchment paper to fit the bottom of the pan and place inside pan. Grease sides of pan and parchment round with butter.

Melt butter in small saucepan. Set aside. Beat together eggs and half of sugar in a bowl. Continue to beat while slowly adding remaining sugar until thick — it should form a ribbon when dropped from spoon.

Split vanilla bean in half lengthwise. Scrape seeds into the egg-sugar mixture and add pod to melted butter.

Peel pears and cut straight down around the core into four big chunks. Discard the core then slice the pear pieces thinly.

Remove vanilla pod from butter and discard. Stir butter into sugar-egg mixture. Combine flour, salt and baking powder, then stir into batter alternating with the milk. Stir in pears, coating every piece with batter. Pour batter into pan.

Bake for 25 minutes, then rotate the pan. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes more, but not for much longer, or until cake pulls away slightly from the pan and is brown on top. Cool for at least 30 minutes, then cut into wedges sprinkling each with powdered sugar if desired.

The great thing about a recipe like this is there are so many adjustments that could be made. The Balzano cake is originally an apple cake, so apples will work fine and to be completely honest, all stone fruit would work great as well. If you are looking to change up for more later fall flavors, change the pears and vanilla to butternut squash and cinnamon. One squash should do it-- just peel and remove seeds. Slice as thin as possible and sprinkle approximately 1T of cinnamon onto the squash. Now you will have a completely new dessert!





## Leah Koenig's Plum Cake

Adapted from *THE JEWISH COOKBOOK* by Leah Koenig  
(Phaidon, \$49.95 US/\$59.95 CAN, September 11, 2019)

**Preparation time:** 15 minutes **Cooking time:** 35 minutes **Serves:** 6-8

This simple German cake, which is known as both *pflaumenkuchen* and *zwetschgengkuchen*, is best enjoyed in the late summer when a wide variety of plums come into peak season. The glossy layer of jam spread on top transforms it from ordinary to extraordinary. Plum cake makes a lovely dessert or snack paired with freshly whipped cream or ice cream, and leftovers are great for breakfast topped with yogurt.

- 1 cup (140 g) all-purpose (plain) flour
- ¼ cup (30 g) almond flour (ground almonds)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 stick (4 oz/115 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature, or 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup (100 g) sugar
- 1/3 cup (60 g) light brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon almond extract (optional)
- 1 lb (455 g) plums, pitted and halved  
(or cut into quarters or eighths if large)
- 1 tablespoon cherry or apricot jam



Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9-inch round cake pan or springform pan, then line with a round of parchment paper. In a medium bowl, whisk together the all-purpose (plain) flour, almond flour (ground almonds), baking powder, cinnamon, and salt.

In a stand mixer (or using a handheld electric mixer and a large bowl), beat together the butter, sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2–3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition until incorporated. Beat in the vanilla and almond extract (if using). Add the flour mixture and beat at low speed, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary, until just incorporated. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and smooth gently with a rubber spatula. It will look like not enough batter, but the cake will puff up as it bakes. Arrange the plums, cut side down, on top of the batter.

Bake until golden brown and a skewer inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean, 30–35 minutes. Let the cake cool in the pan on a wire rack for 5 minutes. Run a knife around the edges of the pan, carefully remove the cake, and set it on the rack.

In a small microwave-safe bowl, microwave the jam in 20-second intervals, stirring after each, until melted and spreadable. While the cake is still warm, brush the jam evenly on top. Let cool to room temperature before slicing.

# Dining Guide



## Leah Koenig's Stuffed Dates with Almonds and Rose Water

Adapted from *THE JEWISH COOKBOOK*  
(Phaidon, \$49.95 US/\$59.95 CAN, September 11, 2019)

**Preparation time:** 25 minutes **Serves:** 6-8

Dates stuffed with sweet almond paste or ground nuts are served across North Africa and the Middle East. Jewish families traditionally make them for Purim or festive occasions like bar mitzvahs and weddings. Moroccan Jews also include the confection as part of an extensive sweets and cookie spread during Mimouna, the celebratory meal held to commemorate the end of Passover.



- 4 oz almond paste (not marzipan)
- 1 teaspoon rose water
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 20 Medjool dates
- 20 salted roasted pistachios

Break the almond paste into small pieces and place in the bowl of a stand mixer. Add the rose water, cinnamon, and cardamom and beat on medium speed until fully combined. Slice each date lengthwise, taking care not to go through to the other side. Remove and discard the pits. Scoop out 1 teaspoon of the almond paste mixture and roll into an oval. Tuck into one of the sliced dates and top with 1 pistachio, pressing it down gently into the almond paste. Repeat with remaining dates, filling, and pistachios.

## Walk Off Hunger

Congregation Shir Shalom will host a Meet Up event at the Synagogue for the 2020 Walk Off Hunger to benefit Feed More WNY on October 3 and October 10 between 10 a.m. and 12 noon. **Contact synagogue office for more details.**

## JDC Learning Center: We Bring The Sukkah To You!

A Sukkah Mobile is a great way of celebrating the mitzvah of Sukkot - one family at a time - in accordance with COVID-19 safety physical distancing. Choose a time for us to drive the Sukkah Mobile to your home. There will be a Lulav and Etrog in the Sukkah truck for you to shake, Sukkot treats, and if applicable an activity for your children. **Call 716-400-1550 to schedule your family's date and time during the week of October 5- October 9.** The inside of the Sukkah will be disinfected after each use.

## TBZ Multi-Faith Sukkot

**Saturday, October 3, 7:00 p.m., Sukkot Havdalah**  
**In person at Canalside and on Zoom**

Join a multi-faith community for welcoming one another into a Sukkah and celebrating Havdalah, as we dedicate ourselves to becoming better neighbors. Havdalah and Sukkot blessings, inspirational words, and conversations. Please wear a mask and respect physical distances. **Contact synagogue office for more details.**



# Virtual Kick Off 2021: Making the Magic Happen

It's time for the annual Campaign for Jewish Buffalo Kick Off Event, but The Hyatt is closed indefinitely and due to COVID, large groups are unable to gather. Did Buffalo Jewish Federation "Cry Gevalt!"

On the contrary! Federation pivoted and not only made the best of the situation, but created a sensational 45-minute event on September 23rd that was star-studded, fun and enjoyed by over 500 individuals, nearly a hundred of whom had *never* participated in a previous Kick Off event. And it raised thousands of dollars to fuel the campaign that powers Jewish Buffalo.

The crew working behind the scenes secured two great hosts – Nancy Fernandez and Rusty Buehler – two talented native Buffalonians who have returned to their home town. Segments were filmed in advance - from a musical rendition of RENT's "Season of Love" by Made in Buffalo's Cheryl Stern to a magic act delivered by Garrett Thomas. There were greetings from last year's special guest Alan Zweibel and next year's guest speaker Bruce Feiler; and there were uplifting pieces about PJ Library, the Partnership2Gether program and Nickel City Jews. All were woven together by Uplifter Video to create a fast-paced and fun experience. And every person who registered in advance received a goody bag overflowing with sweetness and delight!

*Kol HaKavod* – "all the honor" – to the Federation crew – a team of dedicated volunteers and passionate professionals - who made the magic happen to kick off the 2021 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo.

*Did you miss the big show? See it here today: [bit.ly/starstuddedkickoff](https://bit.ly/starstuddedkickoff).*



Magician Garrett Thomas



Bruce Feiler



Alina Spaulding



Cheryl Stern in Mrs. Maisel



a PJ Library Family



Alan Zweibel



Hosts Nancy Fernandez & Rusty Buehler



PJ Library video shoot



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# THANK YOU!

FROM THE CAMPAIGN  
FOR JEWISH BUFFALO

**Our sincere appreciation to  
this year's event committee.  
Thank you for your ideas, creativity  
and leadership for our special  
virtual event to kick off the 2021  
Campaign for Jewish Buffalo.**

Howard Rosenhoch, General Campaign Chair

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Rise' Kulick

Kenneth Polk

Leslie S. Kramer

Ellen Weiss



# Test Time

BY RABBI SARA RICH

**The return to school brings back images of sharpened pencils, packed lunches, and new shoes. For college students, it is more like charged laptops, a school ID linked to meal plans, and branded campus gear. When reality sets in for students, back-to-school means the return to one of the most challenging aspects of college: tests.**

Tests are an inevitable part of college life, and while stressful, they have an important function. They enable professors to ascertain how well students learned the material through their study and practice. Exam grades will determine their overall GPA, impacting their scholarships, future job searches and graduate school applications.

Beyond the direct consequences of these assessments, there is a secondary outcome. Knowing that they will be tested on the material influences the students' behavior. A savvy student will take clear notes which will be helpful when they review to prepare for the midterm. As time goes on, students gain mastery in time management, study skills, and ways to juggle multiple responsibilities.

The results of the test are significant as well: high marks reinforce the student's behavior leading up to the test. A poor grade suggests that



the student might need to recalibrate. I have met many students who received a grade they never saw in high school. The shock can throw off their sense of self. They need to change their actions by studying differently and asking for help from their professor. They also must look inward and remember that they themselves are more than just a

grade, and failure can be dealt with.

The concept of tests presents itself in the fall Jewish calendar. In a Torah portion that we read on Rosh HaShanah and again during the weekly portion shortly thereafter, Abraham is given a test by God that makes an organic chemistry final look like baby games. Genesis 22:1 reads, "God tested Abraham," and the next verse continues with God's commandment that Abraham offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah.

Ancient and medieval commentators were no less frustrated and stumped by this request as we are today. They have argued for generations about the nature and purpose of the test. Was God really expecting Abraham to sacrifice his son? Was the purpose of the test for Abraham to show his loyalty to God and agree to the command, to test Abraham's faith that God was making this request as part of a larger plan, or was it to test Abraham's judgment, his sense of ethics, his love for his son, or some other factor that would lead him to defy God entirely?

There is a concept in Jewish thought that the righteous are tested. Ramban, a medieval Spanish commentator, teaches that this test is an opportunity for Abraham to prove his faith in God. In Ramban's opinion, God only tests those that God knows will succeed. The test is the means through which an individual can put their good qualities into action and be rewarded as a result.

In scholastic terms, it is as though Ramban is saying that God only gives final exams to the best students, who have aptitude and strong study habits, as a way for these students to demonstrate their skills. God as a professor would not offer weaker students the chance to take the exam. This view of enduring a difficult test is that the individual gains something through the experience. The test is not only

an evaluation, but also a productive part of individual development.

This fall, as individuals and as a community, we continue to be tested. We must protect our safety and adapt to modified school and work arrangements, all while reconfiguring our social gatherings and event plans and holy days. We are tested by the emotional strain of the illness and loss of our loved ones, prolonged distance from friends and family, and the unpredictability of the coming year. I do not believe that God has sent COVID-19 to test our resilience or problem-solving skills, because that God would be cruel and unjust. However, I do believe that we are growing stronger through these tests and we are emerging with new skills and means of coping.

When we received a text message in March that schools would be closed for a month, I panicked, wondering how would we do that?! Now, half a year later, with my children in a hybrid educational model for an unknown duration of time, I see that it can be done.

We do not know what additional tests will come this year, but we are better prepared for them than we were last spring. Some of these tests will strike us initially as far too difficult to handle. However, we can look internally and at our community and see – that yes, we have been tested and we have passed. We have more strength than we knew. We have ingenuity, creativity and ways of supporting one another.

May the year to come bring an end to today's physical and emotional suffering. And as we pass through this trial together, may we take stock of the ways that we have proven ourselves as resilient, steadfast and strong. May we go from strength to strength.

*Rabbi Sara Rich is the Executive Director at Hillel of Buffalo.*



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# JCC Names Michael Rawl New CEO

Michael Rawl has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of our community's JCC. He will begin serving in his new role next month. Michael envisions a Greater Buffalo JCC that is not only the "town square" of the Jewish people, but an embassy from which Jewish values connect with the broader community.

Michael comes to Buffalo after serving as the executive director of the Youngstown, Ohio JCC for six years. Michael's leadership in Youngstown revitalized the 65+ year old organization by restoring confidence through the alignment of mission and revenue, including a renewed focus on families, and the development of unique community partnerships that have significantly increased opportunities for greater expression of Jewish values.



Michael Rawl

Michael is a graduate of The Ohio State University, where he earned a BA in Comparative Studies and played men's water polo. He will soon complete the Executive MA in Jewish Professional Studies program at Spertus Institute of Jewish Learning and Leadership. Before discovering his love for communal work, Michael worked in consumer finance and the recycling industries.

Michael has a love for the outdoors and spends much of his vacation time backpacking with his wife Adrienne and their five children. He can also be found tending to his garden, two dogs, ten chickens, dozens of tilapia, and a small pack of human offspring who seem to eat more every day.

We look forward to welcoming the Rawls to Jewish Buffalo this fall.

## Unveilings

BY MICHAEL KOMM,  
4th Generation Monument Builder

Unveilings have been a custom of our people for centuries and as the Jewish monument company here in Buffalo, my family has been assisting families with their unveilings as part of the monument process for over 90 years. The unveiling is actually the last ritual in a long list of prescribed rituals that we follow during the 11 months after the death of a loved one. We use this time for reflection on one's life, as a way of embedding the good and righteous deeds they performed into our own lives, and into the lives of our children. In passing these attributes

down to others, we are immortalizing our loved ones *Tikun Olam* (repair of the world), and continuing it on through us. The monument unveiling also permits us and encourages us to move on with our own lives and continue our own practice of making this world better, through our own *mitzvot* (good deeds).

In a practical way, the scheduling of an unveiling should and must take into consideration that the crafting of the monument itself, even if it is adding an inscription to an existing monument, takes a good deal of time. Sometimes waiting for higher quality pieces of granite can take several months just to arrive to our studio. Especially in our climate, monument foundations and lettering of existing monuments in the cemetery cannot be completed

in the winter months because of our cold climate. As we approach Fall, the question I get asked most often is "it will be 11 months in March since my loved one passed, when do I need to finalize my plans so the unveiling can happen?" The answer: sooner rather than later!

If you have a loved one who is in need of a monument please take into consideration the time required to craft and install their memorial. Families who work with our studio now can still expect that some memorials could be carved and ready before the winter arrives.

***If you have any questions or would like to set up an appointment to discuss a memorial for a loved one either in person or by phone or Zoom, feel free to give me a call at Leon Komm & Son Monument Company, 716-893-2500.***

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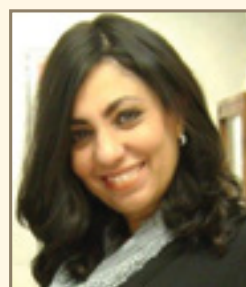
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# JCRC Creates Racial Justice Webpage

Buffalo Jewish Federation's JCRC (Jewish Community Relations Council) is launching a racial justice resource webpage in response to data from the recent JCRC Survey. Sixty-nine percent of respondents said the pursuit of racial justice is very important to them. Through the Jewish values of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and *Lo Ta'amod Al Dam Rey'echa* (do not stand idly by), JCRC is providing these resources to inform and encourage ways to impact justice and equity in our society.

There is much to learn and absorb. From COVID-19's disproportionate impact on people of color, to the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Daniel Prude and many others by police officers,

systemic racism continues to dehumanize marginalized groups of people in America.

The "Engage in Racial Justice" webpage provides suggestions of how to educate oneself on racial justice as a member of the Jewish Community. There are specific resources discussing how the Jewish community needs to look at itself and inclusion of Jews of Color. Overall resources (many are free) include: anti-racist books,

podcasts, movies, TV shows, articles, webinars, and activities. By taking the time to educate oneself, examine actions, and start conversations with others, we can begin to understand the roots of discrimination and racism in America. *Go to the website at <https://buffalojewishfederation.org/racial-justice/>*



## VOTE: Your Voice Matters!

Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council and its partners, League of Women Voters Buffalo Niagara, NAACP Buffalo Chapter, National Federation for Just Communities of WNY, Inc., Network of Religious Communities, VOICE Buffalo, and VIBE are dedicated to ensuring that every American has the information and easy access to voter and election education. We embrace the opportunity to engage with our political system as a tool for pursuing justice, giving people choice, and repairing the world. In that spirit, we encourage to vote: your voice matters.

*Find out more at updated website: [Erie County Safe Voting 2020](#).*

## ERIE COUNTY

# 3 WAYS TO VOTE

1

**VOTE EARLY**

Sat Oct 24 - Sun Nov 1

Find locations and times here:  
[ELECTIONS.ERIE.GOV/EARLY-VOTING](https://elections.erie.gov/early-voting)

2

**ABSENTEE BALLOT**

Due to COVID-19, any registered voter can apply for an absentee ballot

[ELECTIONS.ERIE.GOV/ABSENTEE](https://elections.erie.gov/absentee)

3

**ON ELECTION DAY**

Tues Nov 3: 6 AM - 9 PM

Find your polling location:  
[ELECTIONS.ERIE.GOV/VSEARCH2](https://elections.erie.gov/vsearch2)

BUFFALO JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

## EARLY VOTING

### Erie County

---

**SAT OCT 24 - SUN NOV 1**

**M-F: NOON - 9 PM**  
**SAT-SUN: NOON - 6 PM**

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REGISTERED VOTERS CAN CAST  
THEIR BALLOT AT ANY OF THE 37  
LOCATIONS IN ERIE COUNTY

**FIND LOCATIONS HERE:**  
[ELECTIONS.ERIE.GOV/EARLY-VOTING](https://elections.erie.gov/early-voting)

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BUFFALO JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL



# JCRC Supports NAACP

JCRC is supporting NAACP Buffalo Chapter in their weekly Give-Away Events. Food, masks, hand-sanitizer and voter/census engagement is part of each giveaway.



Above is Irwin Gelman filling hand-sanitizer bottles. JCRC also created 500 early voting cards to remind people that one of the safe and secure ways to vote in the November election is during nine days of early voting in NYS. **Registered voters can vote early in any of the 37 voting sites in Erie County. More information here: <https://elections.erie.gov/Early-Voting>**

Save the Date!



## Kristallnacht Commemoration

featuring Guest Speaker:

**Julie Kohner**

CEO of Voices of the Generations and the daughter of a Holocaust Survivor, Julie will share her mother's powerful story through film and conversation

November 9, 2020

7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Virtual Event



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## VIRTUAL CONCERT & CONVERSATION OCTOBER 14TH AT NOON (EST)



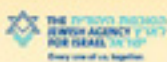
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Music2Gether Participant

with

**Avital Ben Dror**—Partnership2Gether,  
Community Engagement Coordinator

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Presented by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo and  
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Lindy Korn, Esq.  
Attorney & Mediator





# Conversations about Belonging

BY ROBIN RAPHAEL

During the past year, I had the privilege of chairing Jewish Buffalo's Inclusion Planning Team. Made up of representatives and advocates from across our community, this thoughtful and talented group was charged with exploring the landscape of Inclusion across Jewish Buffalo and making recommendations about the strategic direction of the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning's Inclusion efforts.

After a year of convening, consultations, conversations, and learning, our work culminated with a set of recommendations that have been approved by the CJEL Leadership Council and the Buffalo Jewish Federation's Board of Governors.

The first recommendation was to change the name of this work from "Inclusion" to "Belonging." This change reflects the expansion of the scope of our work to include a multitude of underserved groups, including the LGBTQ+ community, those exploring or new to Judaism, Jews of Color, families of multiple faiths, and individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities. The term "Belonging" also represents our aspirations. We aspire to work towards designing communities where all individuals are integral and fully seen across Jewish Buffalo, represented at all levels of leadership, and where we advocate for all people to belong in all parts of society.

For me, the most powerful

part of this work has been the conversations I have been a part of. So many people have shared with me their aspirations for building a Jewish Buffalo where all people feel like they belong.

For example, Kirstie Henry, the new Vice-Chair of Belonging, shared with me that she now includes her preferred pronouns in her Zoom name. This has allowed her to engage in interesting conversations with many people about why including preferred pronouns promotes a sense of belonging (because it creates space for those who are transgender or gender non-conforming to share their preferred pronouns).

In addition, Ellen Goldstein, editor of *The Jewish Journal of WNY*, shared how proud she was that many synagogues in Buffalo were pioneers in streaming their Shabbat and holiday services to allow those who were unable to physically attend services to still be able to participate in their religious communities.

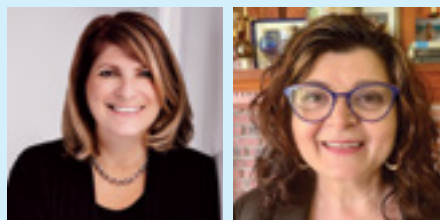
If you are interested in discussing the new Belonging Initiative, or about your aspirations for belonging, please reach out to me at [robinmr1996@gmail.com](mailto:robinmr1996@gmail.com) and check out future issues of *The Jewish Journal* for more information about the recommendations of the Inclusion Planning Team.

*Robin Raphael is the Chair of Belonging at the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning.*



## FEDERATION WOMEN'S BOARD RETREAT

The Buffalo Jewish Federation will host an inaugural 2020 BJF Women's Board Retreat called *KOLOT: Bringing our authentic Voices to Leadership Sunday*, October 19 and Monday, October 20. Under the stewardship of Federation President Leslie Kramer (see Leslie's story on page 3), KOLOT was envisioned and designed in partnership with retreat Co-Chairs Cheryl Stein, Marina Maulucci Finkelstein, and CJEL Director Miriam Abramovich.



Cheryl Stein, Marina Maulucci Finkelstein

This two-day fully virtual retreat will feature Nicole Nevarez, as Facilitator and Educator. Nicole is the inaugural National Director of *Ta'amod* an organization devoted to helping Jewish institutions develop cultures of safety, respect and equity. A Jewish educator, trainer and facilitator, Nicole has held leadership positions in both local and national Jewish organizations. Prior to her current role, she served as New York Director for Moving Traditions, a Jewish communal organization committed to teen wellness work through a gender and Jewish lens. Nicole believes that when we do the work to reflect on ourselves and our organizations, we have the power to impact deep systemic change. She lives in San Diego, CA with her husband, Rabbi Jason Nevarez, their two children and Sadie the dog.

*Women Leading* participants will have a shared experience designed to cultivate trust among one another and explore and develop skills that have direct application

### Adult Hebrew – Beginners

Teacher: Yonina Foster

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

Fee: \$175/ for each 12 week semester (books purchased separately)

1st Semester: Oct 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov 4, 11, 18 Dec 2, 9, 16 Jan 6, 13

2nd Semester: Jan 20, 27 Feb 3, 10, 17, 24 Mar 3, 10, 17, 24 (no class 31) April 7, 14

No experience necessary. This basic introductory Hebrew reading course is for beginners interested in learning the Hebrew alphabet, grammar and vocabulary with a focus on reading prayers for Shabbat, synagogue services and traditional blessings.

### Adult Hebrew – Intermediate

Teacher: Yonina Foster

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

Fee: \$175/ for each 12 week semester (books purchased separately)

1st Semester: Oct 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov 4, 11, 18 Dec 2, 9, 16 Jan 6, 13

2nd Semester: Jan 20, 27 Feb 3, 10, 17, 24 Mar 3, 10, 17, 24 (no class 31) April 7, 14

This intermediate level Hebrew course is to further develop skills for those who already know the Hebrew alphabet and can read several words and phrases. Must have beginning Hebrew and ability to read alef-bet. The focus of this course is on Hebrew prayer.



Nicole Nevarez

to their leadership work. They will learn from Jewish texts, an expert trainer, and from each other to support and amplify the work of women who lead in Jewish Buffalo. KOLOT will be a unique opportunity for women to be encouraged, equipped and strengthened by one another.



# FALL CLASSES

## Intro to Judaism

Wednesdays beginning 11/4  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Cost: \$72/12 week course  
(books purchased separately)

In collaboration with the Buffalo Board of Rabbis and Cantors, this exceptional course is designed for couples of multiple faiths considering marriage, individuals interested in conversion, or individuals (Jewish and non-Jewish) interested in learning more about Jewish religion and history. This course will explore the Jewish calendar and life cycles, worship and beliefs, the Bible, Rabbinic literature, anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, Zionism and the State of Israel.

## Living A Jewish Year

Tuesdays, monthly beginning 10/13  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Cost: \$72 (includes books and materials)

This year-long program will guide participants through a substantive Jewish learning experience emphasizing how a

celebration of Jewish time can help individuals integrate Judaism into the natural rhythms of their lives. Participants will experience living the Jewish calendar through the celebration of a variety of holidays and festivals. Additionally, the curriculum is designed to explore and discuss a different Jewish *middah*/character trait each month, using ancient and modern Jewish texts, stories and simple activities, as a starting point of the conversation.

## Women Gathering Cohorts

New cohorts beginning in  
September and October  
No Cost

Women gathering together has been a hallmark of Judaism since Biblical times. In each of these small groups, Wise Aging, Wise Women, Mussar for Moms and Well Circle, women will gather to connect with one another through text, joyful conversation, and a commitment to lift one another up.

Contact Susan Schwartz at [susan@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:susan@buffalojewishfederation.org) for registration information and with questions.

## PJ LIBRARY AND PJ OUR WAY PROGRAMS



### My Grown Up and Me

Monthly, Sundays beginning 9/13  
10:00 a.m.

Location: Zoom

No Cost

**My Grown Up and Me** is a monthly Jewish gathering for infants/toddlers and the adults who love them! Join us one Sunday morning a month for a 30-minute virtual gathering (over Zoom) which will include music, activities to do at home with our little ones, and a bit of PJ Library Story Time flair. Linger longer to schmooze with other families. This program is ideal for parents with children ages 3 and under.

### Shabbat ShaFamily

Monthly, Fridays beginning 9/11  
5:45-6:15 p.m.

Location: Facebook Live

No Cost

PJ Library of Buffalo's monthly roving Kabbalat Shabbat experience for tots is now called Shabbat ShaFamily. The whole family is invited for songs, stories, and to welcome-in Shabbat with prayer. Each month will

feature clergy and friends from congregations and organizations across Jewish Buffalo. For the remainder of 2020, Shabbat ShaFamily will be hosted on Facebook LIVE.

### PJ Our Way 4th and 5th Grade Book Club

Monthly Book Club for children in grades 4-5. Come together in a virtual space to play games and discuss the monthly book selection. Cohort: 4th and 5th graders

### 6th and 7th Grade Book Club

Monthly Book Club for children in grades 6-7. Come together in a virtual space to play games and discuss the monthly book selection. Cohort: 6th and 7th graders

Contact Susan Schwartz at [susan@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:susan@buffalojewishfederation.org) for questions about PJ Library and Mike Steklof at [mike@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:mike@buffalojewishfederation.org) for questions about PJ Our Way.

## BUFFALO JEWISH TEEN INITIATIVE CLASSES AND PROGRAMS

### Teen Retreat

Saturday 9/26  
11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Location: Camp Centerland

No Cost

Kick off a year of learning with the Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative at a Shabbat retreat at Camp Centerland. This *Shabbat-friendly* retreat is designed for participants in the **Buffalo Jewish Teen Leadership Fellowship**, **Being Jewish in 2020**, and **Student to Student**. The day will include learning, self-exploration, community building and all the fun of being at camp! This retreat is for teens in grades 8 - 12, who are enrolled in (or are considering enrolling in) a Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative course for the year. CJEL Gathering Guidelines will be observed; all participants will be required to wear masks.

### Being Jewish in 2020

Wednesdays beginning 10/7  
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Cost: \$36

This year was not what anyone expected it to be. How has your life changed in 2020? How have the pandemic, George Floyd, and the upcoming election affected your life? Join University of Michigan senior Ben Wolfson, and Rabbi Ori to discuss what it's like to be a teen today and how Judaism can help us make sense and make meaning of our lives in 2020. This course is for teens in grades 8 - 9.

### Teen Leadership Fellowship

Wednesdays beginning 10/14  
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Cost: \$118

Teen Leadership Fellowship is the premier, selective program of the Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative. The fellowship will offer participants a year-long opportunity to both develop practical skills (applicable in high school, college and beyond) and gain awareness of community history, civic responsibility, race/diversity, and personal potential all through the lens of applied Jewish wisdom. Each session will involve meeting prominent community leaders pertaining to the session topic. This program is facilitated by Hadar Borden, Director Blackstone LaunchPad and The WNY Prosperity Fellowship Program at the University at Buffalo and requires participants to apply for selection to the fellowship. Fellows are required to complete an impact project as part of the fellowship.

Contact Mike Steklof at [mike@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:mike@buffalojewishfederation.org) for registration information and with questions.

### Student to Student

First Training:  
9/16

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

No Cost

Student to Student is a national initiative which trains Jewish teens to travel to area high schools to engage in dialogue about Judaism with their non-Jewish peers. Trained teens make presentations and lead informal discussions about Judaism in local schools that lack a Jewish presence. The goal of this program is to reduce stereotypes and prejudice among teens through peer-to-peer dialogue. Participating students will receive up to 20 hours of community service for participating.





# CJEL Launches “Women’s Gathering Together” Cohorts!

BY SUSAN SCHWARTZ AND MIRIAM ABRAMOVICH

Women gathering together has been a hallmark of Judaism since biblical times. The first day of the month on the lunar calendar, Rosh Chodesh, is set aside as a sacred time for women to gather, study, tell stories, and share experiences.

Inspired by over 60 women who have been impacted by participating in a CJEL Wise Aging or Mussar for Moms cohort, we recognize that women at every stage in life crave time to gather, learn, and share experiences. Whether new professionals, parents of young children or teens, soon to become empty nesters, recently retired, career focused or widowed, women share common experiences and challenges.

Having sacred time to gather inspired the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning (CJEL) to design a series of small group learning cohorts called Women Gathering. These groups were set to begin last April, when the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, causing our launch to be postponed to this fall.

As the new Jewish year begins, albeit

## Mussar for Moms from Sharon Nisengard:

*The highlight of Mussar for Moms was engaging in meaningful conversations with the women in our group, many of whom I had never met. To hear so many different ways of interpreting the Mussar traits, and discussing topics from parenting to dealing with day to day family life, this class provided a deeply rich environment for growth as a mother and a partner, and a human.*

different from any New Year in our lifetimes, we believe that women of all ages and stages in life can benefit from deep and meaningful conversations with one another. Beginning

## Wise Women from Ellen Weiss:

*I have really enjoyed being part of the Wise Women group. It has served as a vehicle where women from similar backgrounds, ages, and stages of life can come together and feel comfortable sharing experiences and advice on being part of the so called “sandwich generation.” Reading current books and articles, along with Jewish texts, our discussions grapple with our changing relationships with our adult children, friends, significant other, and parents, through our Jewish lens.*

this fall, we are forming new virtual cohorts for:

WELL CIRCLE: Women in their 20s, 30s and 40s – monthly gathering

MUSSAR FOR MOMS: Women who are parenting young children – bi-monthly gathering

WISE WOMEN: Women who are empty nesters – monthly gathering

WISE AGING: Women 60 years and older – monthly gathering

In each of these small groups,

women will connect with one another through Jewish text and time, joyful conversation, and a commitment to lift one another up. Women Gathering cohorts are free, thanks to the generosity of a local donor. All gatherings will be held over Zoom.

**For more information about each Women Gathering cohort, email Susan@buffalojewishfederation.org. Or, register at: <http://bit.ly/CJEL2020>**

## Wise Aging from anonymous:

*The discussions have been thought provoking. It has been very helpful to connect with other women as we navigate through the aging process. (I turn 70 in a week.) Having the support of the group has been very helpful.*

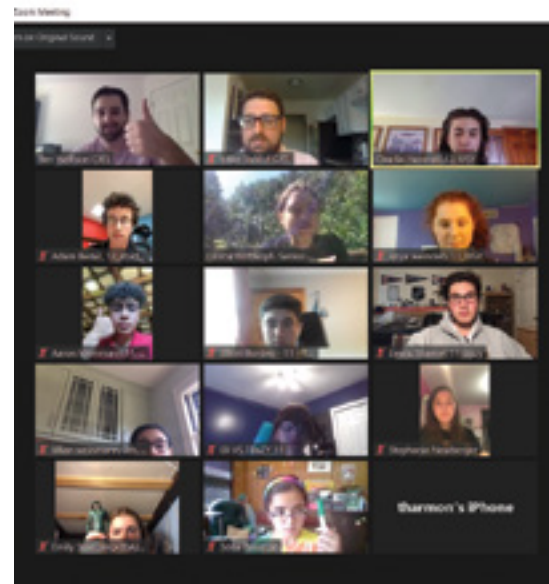
## Teen Leadership Council

BY BEN WOLFSON

This summer I was privileged to help design and launch Buffalo’s first Jewish Teen Leadership Council. A project of the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning, the Teen Leadership Council is a collaborative effort partnering with youth groups and youth leaders from Temple Beth Zion, Temple Beth Tzedek, Congregation Shir Shalom, Kehillat Ohr Tzion, the Kadimah Scholars program, and the Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative. Teen leaders representing each organization come together once a month to collaborate, discuss, and learn from and with one another.

The purpose of the Council is to increase engagement among Jewish teens at all teen gatherings throughout Jewish Buffalo. At our first meeting, the teen leaders discussed fall plans for each of their groups, began to work on a collaborative program, and learned about our “why,” diving into “why” they have each chosen to become actively involved in Jewish life in Buffalo.

*Ben Wolfson has been working as the CJEL Intern since this spring.*



## Are you a descendant of a Holocaust Survivor?

If so, please join us  
for the first Zoom meeting of our

## Descendants of Holocaust Survivors Group

OCTOBER 21, 2020 • 5:30 PM TO 6:30 PM

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RESOURCE CENTER

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BUFFALO JEWISH  
FEDERATION

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[ELIZABETH@HRCBUFFALO.ORG](mailto:ELIZABETH@HRCBUFFALO.ORG) TO RECEIVE THE ZOOM LINK





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## BAR MITZVAH BOY

by Mark Leiren-Young  
November 5 – 25, 2020

A non-observant Jewish grandfather/successful divorce attorney decides he needs to have a Bar Mitzvah ASAP and finds his faith during study with a Rabbi who seems to be losing hers. A heartfelt comedy/drama that explores faith, religion, and what it means to be part of a community.

Watch from the convenience of your home or anywhere you have a screen and Wi-Fi! Play will be available for 21 consecutive days for one month only. You decide when you want to enjoy the show!

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[www.jccbuffalo.org](http://www.jccbuffalo.org)

## Book Fest In Your Living Room Presents:

### Virtual Book and Arts Fair Events

Over 30 author events through November.

In Partnership with the National JCC Literary Consortium and Led by the Marcus JCC of Atlanta, we are excited to present over 30 author events for you to attend from the comfort and safety of your home live on Zoom. Ticket prices vary, and ticket/book packages are available for some events.

For more information, to purchase tickets and full list of events, visit [www.jccbuffalo.org](http://www.jccbuffalo.org).

#### Highlighted events:



**Brad Meltzer and Christopher Eliopoulos,**  
**Ordinary People Change the World Series**  
Tuesday, October 13, 6:30pm

**Judy Gold**  
**Yes, I Can Say That**  
Thursday, October 22, 8:00pm



**Dale Berra**  
**My Dad, Yogi**  
Tuesday, November 10, 8:00pm



### Virtual Concert & Conversation

October 14 at 12:00pm

Robbie Hausmann—BPO Cellist, Music2Gether Participant with  
Avital Ben Dror—Partnership2Gether, Community Engagement Coordinator

FREE and open to the Community. Registration required. RSVP to Patricia at [pquinn@jccbuffalo.org](mailto:pquinn@jccbuffalo.org). A Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to the event.



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# Buffalove and the Zeftel Family

BY JILL KOMM

When the pandemic began this past spring, the Zeftel family packed up their New York City apartment and headed to Kenmore to ride out the uncertainty. Jon Zeftel, a native Buffalonian, and his wife Jenni married in April 2017, and their daughter Violet was born last December. With a new baby, the Zeftels knew they would be safer staying at Jon's parents' home in Western New York.

Jon grew up in Kenmore (Kenmore West class of 2005) and after graduating from Penn State in 2009 with a BA in sociology and French, he spent a year in Buffalo working at a Baker Victory residential treatment facility for adolescents. He then spent a year in Montpellier, France, teaching English to high school students before moving to New York City in 2011. Then he worked for four formative years, 2013-2017, at the YM-YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood, managing youth programs there. Jon then received his Master's



Degree in Urban Policy and Leadership, with a specialization in non-profit management from Hunter College in December 2015. He became the Manhattan Region BBYO Director in Fall 2017, and is currently responsible for engaging Jewish teens in meaningful Jewish experiences in Manhattan and the Bronx.

Jenni joined the Foundation for Jewish Camp in October 2017 as the Director of Day Camp and Strategic Programs after a six year

tenure at lower Manhattan's 14th Street Y (where she also met Jon). At the Y, Jenni advanced from Assistant Director/Program Coordinator of the Y's largest Jewish day camp program, New Country Day Camp, to Director of Youth Programs overseeing all program departments serving ages 5-18. Jenni holds a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Hunter College and is passionate about "Open Tent Judaism" a platform she helped to develop at the 14th Street Y used for building Jewish identity while celebrating diversity and inclusion.

Since shuffling off to Buffalo, the Zeftels have enjoyed walking around the Kenmore, North Buffalo, Elmwood Village and Allentown areas – hitting up Grindhaus coffee shop, Lloyds, Churn and the Bidwell Farmers Market (to name a few!). They even ventured up to Becker Farms for a mini family retreat. They're hoping to join in on some of our PJ Library programs this fall!

When asked how life in Buffalo compares to New York City, the Zeftels said there is no comparison! "The space, the pace of life, the air, the ease of getting from place to place, all this has made Buffalo a wonderful place to be! But we headed back to New York City on Erev Rosh Hashanah for an indeterminate length of time," Jenni said. "We are excited to see my family, but sad to leave Buffalo after a 6-month stay, and eager to return soon." We hope the Zeftels will keep a little bit of Buffalove wherever they go!

*Jill Komm is Federation's social media and communications director.*

## Supporting WNY Families

**Covid-19 has brought many new challenges to the work we do here at JFS.**

As the school year quickly approached, the pandemic also affected our annual JFS school supply drive.

With the combination of more families facing financial challenges and the inability of students to share supplies, the need has never been greater. This year's drive required more supplies, more logistics, and new technology to support young learners in a remote environment.

Through your support, JFS was able to equip 65 at risk children with the supplies they need to start the year off right!

Thank you for partnering with our agency to ensure every student has the supplies they need to have a successful school year no matter where they learn.

**Your support truly makes a difference in our community.**



**Join the JFS family today and help us make a difference!**

Here are some of the ways you can get involved from the safety of your own home:

- English as a New Language (ENL) Mentorship
- Voter Registration Assistance
- Letter Writing to Holocaust Survivors & other seniors

**To sign up or ask questions, contact Sierra Johnston:**

PHONE: 716.548.0431  
EMAIL: [sjohnson@jfsbuffalo.org](mailto:sjohnson@jfsbuffalo.org)

[jfsbuffalo.org](http://jfsbuffalo.org)



# Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies Awards \$109,000 in Scholarships and Academic Loans

BY IRV LEVY, FJP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies Scholarship and Loan Program is made possible through the generous families that have left permanently endowed funds to provide financial assistance to those young adults in need in our community who are pursuing higher education. Over the years, we have received countless stories from students who have shared that, absent the assistance provided by the Foundation, they would not have been able to achieve the academic success that they have enjoyed.

Many of those students have gone on to become leaders in our community; many have showed their appreciation for the generosity they received from the Foundation by paying it forward through their support of others in need.

The Foundation recognizes the following members of our community who created their legacy by touching lives while they were alive and who have preserved their legacy by touching lives after they have passed. For our students in need, these members of our community changed the future.

**BENJAMIN & M. MADALENE SMITH  
Scholarship Fund**

**IOLA ZECKHAUSER  
Scholarship Fund**

**ISADORE & BESSIE FEDERMAN  
Scholarship Fund**

**JEWISH LIBERAL ARTS CLUB &  
KOHAN FAMILY Scholarship**

**JONATHAN DAVID LODGE #50  
KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS**

**KASNACHEY FAMILY Fund**

**LOUIS M. JACOBS Fund**

**MEYER H. & ANN S. RIWCHUN  
Scholarship Fund**

**SIDNEY AND JEANETTE BIRZON  
Memorial Fund**

Lenore Levy serves as the Chair of the Scholarship Committee. For more than 20 years, the Academic Scholarship Committee has been gathering to evaluate the applications of local Jewish youth for the awarding of grants and interest free loans.

The Scholarship Program is managed in collaboration with Jewish Family Services.



Lenore Levy

In March each year, the program begins with an announcement published in *The Jewish Journal*. In addition, the Foundation publicizes the program through community-wide emails and targeted emails to our community leadership.

This year we received a total of 29 scholarship applications. Clearly, the need is greater than ever. The applications are mailed directly to Jewish Family Services. After the deadline of June 1st, JFS reviews the applications and schedules personal interviews. JFS then provides a confidential evaluation of each candidate's need for the Foundation's Committee. The Committee meets to review and award the scholarships during the first week of August.

As the Executive Director, I find the scholarship program to be one of the most rewarding parts of working for the Foundation. Many thanks to Lenore and the members of the scholarship committee and to the wonderful folks at JFS for the critical role they play in making this happen every year. Most importantly, thank you to the members of our community who continue to make an impact. May their memory always be a blessing.

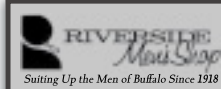
**If you would like more information on creating a scholarship fund at the Foundation, please contact Irv Levy at 716-204-1139 or [Irv@JewishPhilanthropies.org](mailto:Irv@JewishPhilanthropies.org).**

## Congratulations Teresa David!

After 25 years with the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, Teresa David will be retiring from her position as Chief Financial Officer. The Foundation has grown exponentially during Teresa's tenure, and Teresa was instrumental in recruiting and training the accounting team and developing the policies and procedures to ensure the Foundation's reporting was accurate. Teresa has done a wonderful job of preparing the team for her retirement and ensuring that the Foundation will continue to operate flawlessly. Teresa's love for the Foundation can only be matched by the love and appreciation of the entire Foundation team and Board. Thank you, Teresa. Enjoy this new chapter and keep in touch. You will be missed!



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*Honoring our Legacy  
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Tuesday, October 13, 2020  
7:00 pm Live Virtual Event

Register at <https://bit.ly/fjpmeeting>

Local registrants who RSVP by October 5 will receive a goody bag for the event

**Questions? Need help registering?**

Contact Barbara Miller 716.204.1134  
[barb@jewishphilanthropies.org](mailto:barb@jewishphilanthropies.org)



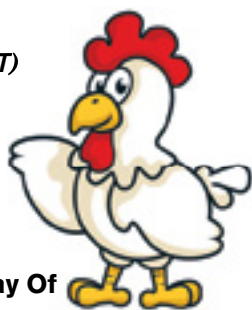
Happy New Year from Temple Beth Zion



## DRIVE THRU CHIAVETTA'S CHICKEN BBQ

Wednesday, October 14, 2020  
3-7PM  
(or until SOLD OUT)

1/2 Chicken  
2 Side Salads  
Roll & butter



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## 5 THINGS You Can Do This October to Repair the World

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- 1» Consider Voting Early in person this year. Erie County Early Voting is October 24-November 1; M-F noon-9 p.m.; Sat & Sun noon-6 p.m. Go to [www.elections.erie.gov/early-voting](http://www.elections.erie.gov/early-voting) to find places to vote early- not your regular voting place.
- 2» The Community's 2020 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo is still open. If you have not done so already, make your 2020 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo gift this month at [www.buffalojewishfederation.org/donate](http://www.buffalojewishfederation.org/donate).
- 3» Join The Sisterhood of Temple Beth Zion Team for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk October 17. All are welcome (men too!). Walk this year in the Broder Center (Sweet Home Road) neighborhood. To join the team, call Marilyn Schillroth (716) 832-4757.
- 4» Feed More WNY Families in WNY are hungry and there are still food scarcities during this difficult time. You can help by donating to Feed More WNY, which now encompasses Meals on Wheels and The Food Bank. Go to [www.feedmorewny.org](http://www.feedmorewny.org) to donate online, volunteer or learn more.
- 5» Connect with our P2Gether Communities in Israel and the US through a virtual cello concert by our own BPO cellist Robbie Hausman Wednesday, October 14 at noon. Free, but registration required. RSVP to Patricia Quinn at [pquinn@jccbuffalo.org](mailto:pquinn@jccbuffalo.org). A Zoom link will be e-mailed to you before the concert.

## WHERE IN JBFLO ?



Where is this found  
in Jewish Buffalo?

The first 5 people to correctly identify  
the location will win  
\$10 gift certificate to the  
JCC's Buffalo Kosher Gourmet at the  
Myers Family Tel Aviv Café.

E-mail your answers to  
[ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org)

Last month we did not run this feature.

## The Jewish Repertory Theatre goes Global!



Pandemics bring theatre companies many new challenges including how to capture performances with video (multiple cameras), how to produce safely (zoom rehearsals, masks and smaller casts who can distance), and how to create digital entertainment that delivers theatre to the audience, where ever they may be watching.

"There have been a lot of unexpected things," said Jordana Halpern, Managing Director of the Jewish Repertory Theatre of Western New York, which begins its 18<sup>th</sup> season with FIVE STAGED READINGS in November. "Interestingly, there have been wonderful new developments that we couldn't have anticipated a few months ago when we decided to plan a season of professionally taped staged readings," she said.

One of those "good surprises" has been subscription and ticket sales from across the United States and Canada. "When the JCC in Houston, Texas learned about some of our titles, they asked if they could promote the plays to their members, as their theatre had not yet decided whether to present a season," said Halpern. "Now in addition to Western New York, we're seeing ticket sales from Houston, Texas, Florence, Kentucky; Ottawa, Ontario; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Gloucester, Massachusetts, and Delray Beach, Florida. Our JRT patrons have been inviting friends and family to join our virtual audience as it's a great opportunity to enjoy cultural arts together while so many are still far apart from each other."

**Jewish Repertory Theatre's season opens November 5 with Bar Mitzvah Boy, by Mark Leiren-Young. All plays will be available for 21 days each month, November, 2020 – March, 2021. For more information and to purchase subscriptions or tickets, visit [www.jewishrepertorytheatre.com](http://www.jewishrepertorytheatre.com).**

## Hot Summer at Centerland: By the Numbers!

The JCC's Camp Centerland, located on the Irving M. Shuman campgrounds, celebrated 10 weeks of a COVID-19-free summer and a list of remarkable accomplishments, including:

- 10 weeks of camp or 49 days or 392 hours or 23,520 minutes
- 146 individual campers attended for 727 camper weeks
- 54% of campers were new to Centerland
- 43 staff (including 5 AmeriCorps staff)
- 1,720 hours of staff training
- 22.5 hours of TAG activities engaging children in values-based activities - *Powered by the Buffalo Jewish Federation*
- 455 Zip Line zips
- 1,500 Art Projects completed
- 1,400 Rock Wall climbs
- 1,068 Arrows shot (most even hit the targets!)
- 94 hours of Holland Express bus journeys
- 4 Awesome Forts – they were built and rebuilt
- 1,000,000+ slides on the slip & kick
- 1,292 parent emails



"I couldn't be prouder of our staff, families and children who worked together so that campers could experience the joy of friendships and develop new skills that help them feel inspired and empowered," said Michael Garcia, Centerland Director at the JCC. "We hope our campers use this summer experience to continue building connections with families and friends, at home, at school and with their upcoming fall activities."

### Centerland Fundraising Campaign exceeds \$20,000 Goal

A recent Camp Centerland fundraising campaign exceeded its \$20,000 goal, thanks to the many supportive community members who donated \$21,273 to Camp Centerland's first community fundraising challenge. "We were beyond thrilled to raise \$1,273 more than our goal," said Garcia. "This is a community that understands the value of summer camp and knows it is an investment in our youth and their futures. And we are so proud of this success in a very different camping year."



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# Black September 50 Years Later: Hijacked in Israel

BY DR. GERALD BERKOWITZ

On Sunday, Sept. 6, 1970, my pregnant wife, Rivke (A"H"), our two-year-old daughter, Talia, and I boarded TWA 741 from Lod Airport in Israel to return to the US. Our plane was scheduled to stop in Athens and Frankfurt before landing at JFK Airport in New York. We were apprehensive, as there had been a number of hijackings during the summer and our stops were hot spots. These hijackings seemed to follow a set pattern: a plane from a European country was hijacked and taken to an Arab country; then the release of terrorists from that country's prisons was demanded; next, the demand was met and the plane was released and resumed its journey. This usually happened within 24 hours. Our experience did not follow that pattern.

I got off the plane when we landed in Frankfurt to get some air. I saw a man who looked suspicious, but when he went through the metal detector, the green light came on. Still uneasy, I saw him head for the rear stairs while I headed for the front one. The metal detector WASN'T working.

The next time I saw him, we were back onboard the plane in the air, and he was running down the aisle with a woman. Both had a gun and a grenade. They rushed from coach through first-class and then into the cockpit. Soon we heard the woman over the loudspeaker, "This is your new Captain speaking. This plane has been taken over by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). We're taking you to a friendly country with friendly people".

They sent the first-class passengers into coach, and took turns standing at the curtain, with the gun trained on us. We were told not to talk and to put our hands behind our heads. Eventually, we were allowed to move around and talk, and after what seemed like a long time we felt the plane start to descend.

Rivke looked out the window and said, "This is not an airport". We had an amazing landing with no lights at a WWII British landing strip in the Jordanian desert called Dawson Field. Armed men swarmed onto the plane. Passports were collected and we were told to settle down for the night. Later, we heard a roar. A second plane had been brought to Dawson. Still another plane had been hijacked to Cairo and blown up after the passengers were removed. An El Al flight was also hijacked, but that hijacking failed.

The next day the women and children were told that they had to leave the plane. The women wanted to stay; the



Dr. Jerry Berkowitz



The late Rivke Berkowitz

men urged them to go, so they would be safe. The women had to descend on a wooden ladder that didn't quite reach the door. Men steadying the ladder looked up the women's clothing, laughing and making comments. When the women came down, they were asked their religion, and then the Jews and non-Jews were separated. The International Red Cross (IRC) was there. Some women and children were loaded into vehicles. The IRC left and the Jewish women and children were returned to the plane. Rivke said to me, "Whatever happens now, we'll face it together."

That night, five other men and I were taken off the plane. Later that week, the rest of the men were removed from the planes and put



The Berkowitz family at a 2019 Bar Mitzvah

into Palestinian refugee camps. On Saturday, the women were sent to Amman, Jordan and the planes were blown up. We were then told that the passengers had been blown up with the planes, when in fact they were actually flown to the States.

Of the five other men with me, two of them had American and Israeli passports. The other three had American diplomatic passports. I was taken because they thought I was Israeli, even though I'm not. The other five were blindfolded. I wasn't. A truck, with its lights off then came and we were loaded into the back with an armed guard. We drove with the lights off because the driver had to get through the Jordanian troops who surrounded the PFLP group surrounding the planes. Every time we stopped behind a large dune, I thought we were going to be killed. The sand would cover us and our bodies would never be found. If so, Rivke would not be allowed to remarry; she'd be an *agunah*- a "chained woman" according to *halakha*. We drove in the desert until we hit a major highway. We were then taken to Irbid, a Northern Jordanian city controlled by the PFLP.

The next stop was a Headquarters of the PFLP. We were put into a small room and given two blankets, one to sleep on and one to use as a cover. The room had a window, which we were told not to touch or look out of, a very small table, two chairs, an unglazed water pitcher and ONE glass. We had only the clothes that we were wearing when we left the plane. I wore them, never washing them or me, until I returned to the US over 20 days later.

The bathroom was a hole in the ground outside in a "shed". We had no toothbrushes, reading material, tallises, tefillin, or prayer books. The room in back of ours was a well-

stocked ammunition dump. The room was locked and a guard constantly posted outside. We even needed permission to go to the bathroom. That day, war broke out between the Jordanians and the Palestinians. Small arms and mortar fire was constant. The Israelis and Jordanians strafed our building.

Initially, the Palestinians were winning this fight and they decided to overthrow King Hussein. But eventually, the tide turned and the Palestinians then requested aid from the Syrians. At that point, we were moved at night to an unfinished schoolhouse across the street from our ammo dump. As we crossed the street, we could see the Syrian tanks down the block.

But soon, the Jordanians were losing and through Britain, requested aid from Israel. The Israeli Air Force finally drove the Syrians out. We now became a liability and, after the other hostages had been released and sent home, we were turned over to the Jordanians and flown back to the US on the eve of Rosh Hashanah. I rejoiced when I finally saw Rivke and Talia at JFK and knew then that they were ALIVE!!!

*Dr. Gerald Berkowitz is a retired teacher and professor. Because of space restrictions, this article has been condensed. The Jerusalem Post Magazine of 9/4/20 has a story and photos with Dr. Berkowitz and other hostages recalling the horrific event. Complete details can be found in the meticulously documented Terror in Black September by David Raab. There is also a documentary American Experience-Hijacked with Rivke Berkowitz featured.*



# Jewish Thought and the University Today

BY DR. SERGEY DOLGOPOLSKI

**I would like to invite the community to take part in the life of the University at Buffalo's Department of Jewish Thought in the new context, as well as to benefit from educational opportunities the Department provides to approximately 400 students a year and to interested community members.**

Soft terror is our human condition today, in my view. There is no particular group of "terrorists" to blame. With or without masks on -- every single individual now posits a potential threat to the state, to its ability to control the spread of the virus. The "soft terror" also implies the internet communication making the virus information viral as well.

The place of humanities in the University (as distinct from social and natural sciences) needs to elevate, as a result. When technology advances, humans tend to forget themselves in excitement, but when things come to crisis, humans recall the importance of their humanity and, in the university context, of humanities to explore always anew: what it means to be a human--to be someone who is not merely an object or a subject of a technological process.

The Department of Jewish Thought is at the forefront of research on this new (or perhaps not so new) condition of humanity in the tension between technology-driven knowledge, the sense of certainty (false one) it gives on the one hand and the sense of enigma (true one) of who the human being is and what it means to act as a human. The importance of the disciplines of humanities increases in this situation of crisis. Drastically.

With the crisis, xenophobia spikes; and the overt anti-Jewish actions do, too. On the long run however, the covert, passive-aggressive anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism remains a very serious concern, recognized as it is, for example by the President of Brandeis University. In this context, reclaiming Jewish tradition as a resource for broader humanities in a University becomes even more crucial; and the Department of Jewish Thought responds to this necessity.

In this context, let me tell you about the most recent work of our UB Department of Jewish Thought professors.

Working on the Bible and its Interpretation in German and Jewish traditions of philosophy and history in the 19th century and their importance today is



Dr. Sergey Dolgopolski

**Professor Alexandra Zirkle**, who is the Irving M. and Marilyn C. Shuman Visiting Professor. She is currently working on a book on *Biblical Interpretation and the Shaping of Modern German Judaism* and has recently published four articles:

"Heinrich Graetz and the Exegetical Contours of Modern Jewish History." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 109.3 (Summer 2019), pp. 360-383

"Biblical Hermeneutics: Between Wissenschaft and Religion," *DAAT: A Journal of Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah* 88 (2019), pp. 11-32

"Dismantling Orientalist Fantasies and Protestant Hegemony: German Jewish Exegetes and Their Retrieval of Josephus the Jew," *Josephus in Modern Jewish Culture*, ed. Andrea Schatz. (Brill, 2019), pp. 218-239

"Re-Forming Professions: Salomon Herxheimer and Ludwig Philippson on the Past and Present of Jewish Farmers." *Deutsch-jüdische Bibelwissenschaft – Historische, exegetische und theologische Perspektiven*. Eds. Daniel Vorpahl, Shani Tzoref, and Sophia K.hler. (De Gruyter, 2019), pp. 41-56.

Exploring Jewish Medieval ethics and

interpretation of Scripture in medieval and modern contexts together, **Professor Alex Green's** second book, *Power and Progress: Joseph Ibn Kaspi and the Meaning of History* was published in both hardcover and paperback last year (2019) with SUNY Press. He co-editing the volume on "Jewish Virtue Ethics" with distinguished scholars Alan Mittleman and Geoffrey Claussen. Professor Green's latest article on Judah Halevi's Kuzari, "Does God Prefer the Powerful? Reforming the King in Judah Halevi's Kuzari" is forthcoming in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*. His first book *The Virtue Ethics of Levi Gersonides* (2016) continues to receive enthusiastic reviews in leading Jewish Studies journals, and was recently reviewed in *Journal of Jewish Ethics* and *Revue des Études Juives*.

Working on a question of Jewish personhood, identity, and the character trait of melancholia in Yiddish, German and Hebrew literature and thought in the 19th and 20th century, **Professor Noam Pines** published an article "A Light that Burns to the Bone: Trauma and Banality in Jean Améry's Essay on Torture" in *Monatshefte*, a leading journal in the field; in addition to two book reviews. Another article entitled "Fables of Domestication: The Portrait of Shylock as a Jewish Wolf" is currently under review. Professor Pines is currently working on the manuscript of his second book, *A Constellation of Awakening: Jewish Melancholia and the Prehistorical World*.

Working on the questions of ethics as the foundation of what it means to be human, **Professor Richard Cohen** leads Federal government's prestigious National Endowment for the Humanities funded Summer Seminar for College Teachers, on the topic of "Emmanuel Levinas: Ethics of Democracy" (rescheduled, due to pandemic

for August 2021), has published an article, "Husserl's Salvific Phenomenology: For a New Humanity," in *Paradosso: Revista di Filosofia*, 2019, Vol. 2, 157-175; and has been invited and agreed to become editor of the web-journal "Religions," along with many other co-editors.

I am also writing and publishing. Working on the intellectual resources of the Talmud Yerushalmi for the contemporary political thought, I published an article on "Ground without Place? Legislative Topoi in the Palestinian Talmud Today" *Judaica Petropolitana* (A Hebrew University of Jerusalem and St-Petersburg University Publication) N 11 (2019): 147-71; I am currently finishing a monograph on citation of the Divine law in the Palestinian Talmud, and I co-edit a collective monograph on "Talmud and Philosophy: intersections and divergencies" as well as a collective monograph on "Relativism and Devotion in the University Jewish Studies and in Yeshiva."

I would like to invite community members to feel welcome (if only on Zoom, for now) in the Department of Jewish Thought premises on the 7th floor Clemens Hall, which is now shared with the Department of Comparative Literature; to participate in the department activities by guest-visiting individual class sessions (which now can be done via Zoom), coming to department lectures open for the public (again by Zoom now); by helping to spread the word about the department, and by being generous if you can; as well as by taking the classes we offer, whether you want it for a degree or for a pure value of learning, which is one of the highest, if not the highest value of humanity. You may reach me to find out more at [sergey@buffalo.edu](mailto:sergey@buffalo.edu).

*Dr. Sergey Dolgopolski is the Gordon and Gretchen Gross Professor of Jewish Thought Department Chair at the University at Buffalo.*

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# Have you Heard of Herd Community?

BY RABBI SARA RICH

While college students officially graduate with degrees in their academic disciplines, it is well-known that college students “major” in making friends and creating memories that they will one day recount to their friends and children. Although the spread of COVID-19 on college campuses is a public health crisis, we can empathize with the students and acknowledge that these young adults are social beings who are meant, in this phase of life, to be focusing on their social lives alongside their academic pursuits.

This summer, Hillel staff conducted interviews with a sample of 20 students to find out if they were planning to return to campus in the fall, and to learn more about their feelings towards the upcoming semester. Two universal themes emerged from these conversations: 1) Students have found it incredibly difficult to be living with their parents and separated from their friends, for the past six months, and 2) while students did not think that a safe return to campus was truly possible, the risks of contracting COVID-19 or of having to return home mid-semester were worth it to them in order to be with

their friends, however short-lived that time may be.

What we heard from these students was the pain of social isolation, and a grieving for the loss of their treasured college experience. A core part of Hillel’s mission is to bring students into community with one another and to help them to build lasting friendships. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the classic opening barbeques and in-person Shabbat meals cannot take place. Instead, Hillel has developed an innovative solution to promote social connection and healthy habits. While we wait to attain herd immunity, Hillel

*While we wait to attain herd immunity,  
Hillel is proud to present*

**HERD**   
community

is proud to present “Herd Community.”

“Herd Community” is a virtual program comprised of individual and group challenges that are rewarded using a point system. Students register for Herd Community using an online form. Hillel staff then place students in “herds” of five, grouped by class years (freshmen/sophomores and juniors/seniors). In September and October, students can participate in virtual events and in individual challenges to earn points for themselves and their herds. Students earn points for participating in Hillel programming, as well as activities on their own time, such as virtual

game nights, community service, social justice discussion groups, Israeli film screenings, and spending time outdoors. To keep students excited and engaged, the staff will also send weekly flash challenges to give students the chance to earn extra points.

The intention of the rewards program is to incentivize healthy habits and safe social connections between students that will last for years. As with credit card points or company reward programs, people are motivated by bonuses and Hillel believes that these incentives will reinforce these behaviors. Students who participate in Herd Community will build friendships and will have a framework for celebrating Jewish holidays and Shabbat, engaging in Jewish learning and volunteer work, and finding their place in the Jewish community, even if that community is currently virtual.

To follow Herd Community, ‘like’ Hillel of Buffalo on Facebook and follow us on Instagram. We will be posting pictures and updates of the students and their herd activities.

*Rabbi Sara Rich is Director of Hillel of Buffalo.*

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## Creativity during the Pandemic: Temple Beth Zion Religious School

BY BETH STEINBERG

**The Religious School of Temple Beth Zion reopened for the new school year remotely on September 13. Almost everything is new, different, and very exciting!**

How did I spend my summer? Studying options for online learning that would energize and engage our students, promote their Jewish and Hebrew learning, challenge them to think deeply, and foster connections between students, families, teachers, and the TBZ community.

I was so lucky to discover a brand new offering from the Jewish Education Center (JEC) of Cleveland, written over this past spring and summer, specifically to respond to the needs of children and their families right now. I enthusiastically committed to bringing this program, called “La-Bri’ut - To Our Health and Wellness,” to TBZ. At last count, there were hundreds of synagogues and Jewish schools across North America which have chosen to use this curriculum. The anticipated reach is in the tens of thousands of young people!

Through five values-focused modules, our students are learning together in weekly, multi-age, cohort-based *mifgashim* (gatherings). Offline they have a variety of opportunities to further engage with these concepts. Lower elementary learners, using Activity Boxes that we have provided, explore through creative, hands-on activities. Engaging weekly challenges guide our upper elementary learners to find deeper understandings.

Students are encouraged to share their work online with the others in their cohort, and all learners have access to explanatory videos so that all but the youngest participants can engage in these activities without needing much parental guidance. (Not overwhelming parents was a very significant component of the curriculum design.) Each module also contains a set of Family Schmooze cards, designed to spark informal family conversations.

The five modules employ Jewish texts and teachings to present skills that will enhance resiliency and promote personal and communal health and wellness:

- ~ *Sukkat Shalom* (Shelter of Peace)
- ~ *Ometz Lev* (Inner Strength)
- ~ *G’vurah* (Courage)
- ~ *K’hillah* (Community)
- ~ *Hesed* (Loving Kindness/Hope)

Not that I would have wished for this pandemic, but I am truly awed by the quality and creativity of the ideas that have sprung up out of this massive crisis. *Kol hakavod* to the team at JEC who prepared this curriculum and made it available to us, to my wonderful TBZ faculty who embraced it, and to all of the families who are supporting us. To quote Max Levis, “Rosh Hashanah isn’t just about being new, it’s about a change.” Temple Beth Zion Religious School isn’t just about being new, it’s about a change as well. Happy, Healthy New Year to all.

*Beth Steinberg is Director of TBZ Religious School.*

## Other Units and Spaces

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## COMMUNITY

# New Chuppah Arrives At Shir Shalom

BY PETER SIMON

It was a perfect match. Congregation Shir Shalom was seeking a new chuppah to replace one that was getting worn and frayed after decades of use. At the same time, Judi Stern, a CSS congregant, had long developed a reputation for making outstanding quilts, including wedding chuppahs for her two children, Lois and Elliot. "They (CSS leaders) reached out to me and asked if I would make one for Temple," Judi explained. "I said, 'Sure.'"



Now, six months later, Shir Shalom has a bright, attractive chuppah, which already has been used as a wedding canopy.

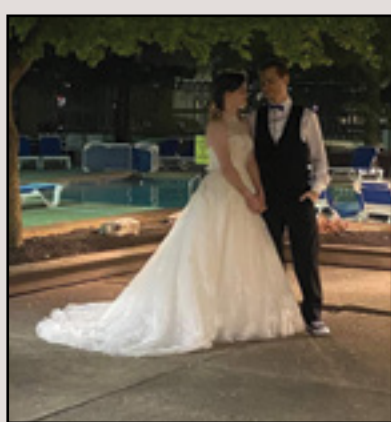
Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein said Judy's chuppah will add a joyful element to both Temple weddings and reconsecrations, where married couples renew their vows. That dynamic will be magnified, he said, because the chuppah was made by a Temple member. Judi Stern, a former social worker, quilts for about three hours a day, and said it never becomes burdensome. "I took up quilting 21 years ago and fell in love with it. I just find it very therapeutic. The time actually goes by quickly." However, Judi said, "it can be a very solitary activity."

That's where the Clarence Log Cabin Quilters come into play. They got together weekly for many years, but

stopped meeting when the pandemic hit. Instead, the quilters keep in touch through phone calls and FaceTime. "We try to stay connected," Judi said. In addition, Judi, who is married to Mont Stern, an anesthesiologist, keeps things interesting by working on several quilts at once. She estimates that she has completed well over 100 quilts, including one that was judged "best in show" in a Log Cabin Quilters competition. Her work covers a broad range, including baby gifts, decorative pieces and blankets.

Rabbi Lazarus-Klein expects that Shir Shalom's new chuppah will be used about a dozen times a year. The old one will be kept as a back-up.

*Peter Simon is a retired Buffalo News reporter and past president of Congregation Shir Shalom.*



Ellen Zucker, of  
Williamsville, announces the  
marriage of her daughter,

**Rachel Michelle  
Zucker**

to

**Erich Josef  
Burroughs,**

son of Rose and Karl  
Burroughs of Hamlin, NY.  
The wedding ceremony  
took place September 6th in  
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immediate family.



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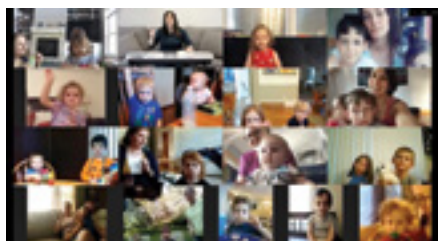
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## KOT Welcomes 5781

Kehillat Ohr Tzion brought in 5781 at the Clearfield Community Center where members could daven safely, led by visiting Cantor Jeffrey Braverman. A great variety of masks were worn and President Jeff Schapiro blew the shofar just outside the backdoor of the Center. For the last month KOT members have been collecting needed grocery items for the recently opened food pantry at the Lincoln Memorial Methodist Church. The collection will continue until after Sukkot. **For information on the many opportunities for Zoom learning contact Rabbi Ori Bergman at [oribergman@gmail.com](mailto:oribergman@gmail.com).**



## Rosh Hashanah Music with Miss Rivky



A large group of moms and children enjoyed Rivky Greenberg's exciting Pre-Rosh Hashanah Music Class on Zoom. The children sang and learned about the Shofar and its origin, about apples dipped in honey, the custom of round challah filled with raisins for the holiday and much more. They used instruments and props, listened to Rabbi Levi Greenberg blow the real shofar and had so much fun-all from the comfort of their own homes. The next day, they attended a special Drive-By Parade, where each child received a Holiday Gift Bag with a honey cake, challah and apple juice for a sweet New Year. The children also made Rosh Hashanah pictures, to be entered into a raffle and win Miss Rivky's big round Challah for Rosh Hashanah!

"Music with Rivky" is a program of the Jewish Discovery Center and due to COVID, is currently held virtually via Zoom. **For more information about upcoming music classes, please log on to [www.musicwithrivky.com](http://www.musicwithrivky.com) to sign up for the mailing list or contact Rivky at [rivky@musicwithrivky.com](mailto:rivky@musicwithrivky.com) or (716) 906-8890.**

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### Center for Jewish Engagement & Learning

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Chani Labkovski - Director

### Department of Jewish Thought

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Buffalo, NY 14260  
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[jewish-studies@buffalo.edu](mailto:jewish-studies@buffalo.edu)  
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831 Maple Road  
Williamsville, NY 14221 (office)  
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Rabbi Heschel Greenberg  
Rabbi Laizer Labkovski  
[www.jewishdiscovery.org](http://www.jewishdiscovery.org)

### Jewish Family Service Of Buffalo And Erie County

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www.congregationbethabraham.net

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## Attention Snowbirds!

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 this winter and will have your first class mail forwarded to your temporary address and would like to continue to receive *The Jewish Journal*, please call Joan Kwiatkowski at 716-204-2242 to give us your "temporary" address. Thank you!



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### Abigail Unger, LCAT, MT-BC

Vice President,  
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Abigail Unger has been promoted to Vice President of Psychosocial Services, a newly created position at Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo unifying Social Work, Spiritual Care and Expressive Therapies, as well as Bereavement and Community Grief Support programs. Unger started at Hospice as a music therapist in 2004, and in a few short years established one of the most comprehensive, hospice-based Expressive Therapies team in the nation. In addition, she leads specialty programs supporting children and young families while expanding community-based services.

Unger states, *"Our commitment to the depth and breadth of psychosocial care is central to our mission to provide whole-person care to our patients, their loved ones, and our community. I look forward to unifying and promoting our psychosocial efforts while enhancing our community partnerships and rededicating the Mary & Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Support Center for its intended purpose."*




## IN LOVING MEMORY

# Remembering Paul Friedman 1927-2020

*This obituary was put together by Paul's sons, Kenneth Friedman and Danny Friedman, with assistance from Paul's wife Gloria.*

Paul Friedman was the founder of KENNY CARPETS, the local well-known floor covering business. Paul and his beloved wife, Gloria, of close to 71 years, lived a truly remarkable life. Each were children of parents who came with nothing to the United States from Eastern Europe to escape the issues facing Jews. They settled in Buffalo and both, coincidentally, lived on either end of Commonwealth Ave in North Buffalo. Paul and Gloria attended Bennett High School and they met when Gloria was 15. Gloria reminisced that they talked to each other nearly every day since. Paul, throughout his life, even in his last days, used to look at Gloria with a sparkle in his eye and remark to the people he was with, "isn't she beautiful."




Paul enlisted in the Navy during World War II and received his undergraduate degree in Psychology and Master of Education degree from the University of Buffalo.

When the time came for Paul to ask for Gloria's hand in marriage, Gloria's father told Paul to come back when he had a job. So Paul became a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher of children with special needs in Waverly, NY, and then they were married. Although the Friedmans had very little money, Gloria said the times in Waverly were some of the best of their lives. She recalls

Paul was genuinely respected as an astute businessman with the highest integrity who was honest, kind and caring.


their small apartment where she made do with what little they had, including making curtains out of paper. They took regular trips back to Buffalo to get needed food from her




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parents' small fruit and vegetable stand on Hertel and Starin Aves.

A teacher's salary made it difficult for Paul to provide for his family. In 1954, rather than moving to California in search of greater opportunity, Paul and an old friend, Ben Wesoke, decided to open a specialty carpet business in Niagara Falls, NY. Since there were no specialty carpet stores in those days, the opportunity seemed exciting and challenging. After all, what was there to lose? With help from friends and family, they were able to scrape together enough money to open the store and, perhaps, survive for 2 weeks. Fortunately, business did well. With a great deal of pride, Paul paid back every dollar of the financial assistance provided to him. Ken recalls his dad showing him a bank passbook with checkmarks next to each book entry of repayments, sometimes \$1 at a time.

In 1959, Paul moved back to Buffalo to open Kenny Carpets. The rest, as they say, is "history." The business is now in its 63rd year and is run by the next generation, Danny, and Jeff Balsom, the son of Paul's longtime friend and later business partner, Harry Balsom. Danny and Jeff have grown the business significantly. Danny recalls with pride and a sense of humor his dad always asking him, even in the last few weeks of failing health, "how's business?" As always, Danny's response was, "business is very good" and, as always, Paul would smile with a little pump of the fist.

Paul was genuinely respected as an astute businessman with the highest integrity who was honest, kind and caring. He prided himself on the human aspect of the business, was personally involved in its daily operations, and introduced many to the industry who developed long and successful careers.

Paul and Gloria's best times, where they made everlasting friendships, were skiing at Holimont in Ellicottville. Gloria discovered skiing in the early 1960s and introduced it to Paul. Some of Paul's friends at Holimont used to call him their "idol." Aside from being such a nice guy, they marveled that Paul was able to do absolutely nothing around the house, with Gloria doing everything. It became a ritual when they greeted him, bellowing that their "idol" had arrived and asking, "how is my idol today?"

With friends and family, Paul and Gloria loved their ski trips to Vermont, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Austria and France. They regularly talked about how skiing together came up in their

dreams. Paul always asked Gloria what ski clothes she was wearing and in what colors when she was dreaming.

After retirement, Paul and Gloria traveled between Florida and Buffalo. Their children and grandchildren always visited even as they got older. Being with their "Nonnie and Papa" was more than visiting grandparents - they were hanging out with friends. To Paul, his beloved wife Gloria and family were all that mattered. Each child and grandchild had their own special relationship.

Paul had a gift of making each person he met feel uniquely special, each believing they were the most important person in the world. It was a gift that made him an exceptional teacher, businessman, father, grandfather, husband, brother, role model and friend.

Paul is survived by his wife, Gloria; son Kenny and his wife, Amy; son Danny and his wife, Stacey; and grandchildren Allie (Chris) Fedele, Kyle (Justin) Harnett, Luke, Jessica (Jen) Friedman, Victoria and Jillian; Paul's deceased brother Milton's son, Joel, and his wife, Kathy.

The family will hold a celebration of Paul's life in the future.

# In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from August 22- September 22\*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

George T. Bauer

Dr. Melvin G. Block

Grace Bluestone

Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Bertha Frank

Paul Friedman

Richard S. Moschel

Joyce Siegel

Clarice "Cis" Snitzer

Ydawn Wolfsohn



If we inadvertently missed printing the listing of your loved one, please write to [ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org) and we will include the name next month.



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## Saying Good Bye after A Dynamic Decade at the JCC

BY RICK ZAKALIK

In the fall of 2010 I knew nothing about running a gym. Ten years later I know a little bit about athletic programming, fitness, aquatics, personal training, group fitness and other activities that promote wellness. Fortunately, the JCC is privileged to have a large, talented and experienced staff that knows what they are doing. After selling FWS in 2010, a company that offered home furnishings, floor coverings and fabrics I was recruited to lead the JCC. My world was about to expand greatly.

Shortly after the Board of Trustees of the JCC reversed a decision to close the Benderson Family Building and restructure the agency in 2008, a group of donors and leaders convinced me that I was the right person to help the



Rick Zakalik at the JCC's 70th anniversary

agency recover from years of disastrous financial performance. After agreeing to take on the challenge we (the leadership team of the agency and me) began to

implement a plan to right-size the Benderson Family Building, sell our camps, restructure staff and reimagine the JCC.

Building on the path begun by Lew Stolzenberg, Interim Executive Director, we continued with a construction project that eliminated 20% of our suburban space and completely overhauled the building. A renovation project at the Holland Family Building had been completed a little more than a year before. The suburban project which began in 2010, and which lasted for about 13 months, transformed the building with brightness, efficiency, elegance and style. Offices were created for the Buffalo Jewish Federation and the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies. The Nathan Benderson Community Boardroom was completed, establishing the Benderson Family Building as the center of organized Jewish Buffalo.

With space vacated at the Holland Family Building we created an enlarged and state-of-the-art Early Childhood Education facility. Other rooms were renovated which facilitated the growth of the Kids' Place After-School program. The Tree of Life Playground was moved and expanded. Membership more than doubled in a short period of time. As the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus came into being we continued to grow. Camp Lakeland was sold and Camp Centerland followed shortly after in 2012. A new, spectacular Camp Centerland began to take shape in 2013 on land adjacent to the Benderson Family Building. A third and very comprehensive renovation project transformed the Holland Family Building into a busy, thriving center of activity housing more than 300 children, aged 6 weeks to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The fitness center was refurbished, new windows were installed throughout the building, new HVAC, lighting, electrical and plumbing were added and significant financial operating surpluses began to be reported.

In short, a hard-working, creative staff implemented facilities and programs that attracted thousands of new members and the JCC became a true center of communities. In August

2018 our community celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a festive event at the newly-renovated Holland Family Building. By 2020, an invigorated board, enthusiastic membership and talented staff restored the former glory to an agency that had almost been doomed to failure.

On a personal level, I have been very fortunate to have been recruited to lead this amazing transformation. During my tenure we endured a bomb threat, witnessed dramatic renewal, revived established and implemented new programs and invested more than \$10,000,000 in our facilities. Funding came from JCC families, New York State grants, local community Foundations and a small group of extraordinary major donors. We even endured a pandemic.

My upcoming retirement follows a decade of incremental successes, wonderful friendships and meaningful experiences. Reflecting upon our amazing Jewish Cultural Arts and theatre programs, thriving Fitness and Aquatics programs, first-rate Camp Centerland, top-ranked Early Childhood Education and Kids' Place After-School, Adult offerings and the amazing virtual JCC membership programs, I am proud, fulfilled and grateful for the opportunity to have led a great institution.

No doubt, the JCC will continue to thrive as its current and future leaders guide it through the coming decades. What will be most needed for the JCC to remain and thrive as a center of communities with a Jewish core is philanthropy. Future decades will present demands for renewed buildings. Equipment will need replacing. Parking lots will need repaving, roofs will leak and pools will need retiling. Past generations have provided examples of bequests and other gifting plans and families that enjoyed the JCC have supported programs and capital projects. The need for generosity and support will exist as long as the JCC exists.

*Rick Zakalik will retire as Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo, Inc. in November.*

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A campaign advertisement for Ed Rath for State Senate. It features a photo of Ed Rath in a white shirt and blue tie, sitting at a desk. To his right is a quote from Steven Sanders, an Amherst Councilman, praising Ed's leadership. Below the quote is the text "ED RATH FOR STATE SENATE" in large, bold letters, with a star over the 'A' in RATH. To the left of this text are the words "HONEST, ACCOUNTABLE, LEADERSHIP, YOU CAN TRUST." in red. At the bottom is a photo of Ed Rath in a red and blue checkered shirt, smiling. The bottom of the ad includes the website "Learn more at EdRathforSenate.com or fb.com/EdRathforSenate".

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