

The Award Winning

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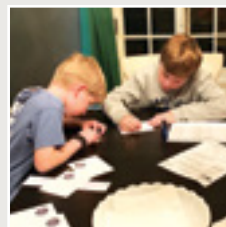
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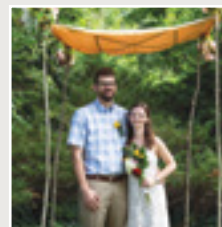
NOVEMBER 2020 | HESHVAN- KISLEV 5781



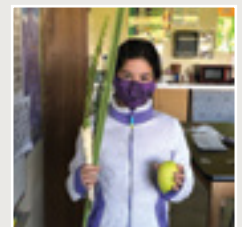
Gathering
and Belonging
in 2020



INSIDE:
GET OUT
THE VOTE
(8-9)



LOOK:
A PERFECT
WEDDING
(10)



DON'T MISS:
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(14)



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Mon Nov 2, 7pm

John Morris Russell, conductor
Amy Glidden, violin

Autumnal favorites, including a narrated *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre*, and the iconic theme from 'Alfred Hitchcock Presents' weave together an evening of eerie enchantment.



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A BRASS ACT

Tue Nov 17, 7pm

Bradley Thachuk, conductor

Your BPO Brass perform a jamboree of styles in popular classics, from splendid fanfares and marches to Ragtime and Jazz.



BPO CLASSICS

A STRING SERENADE

Tue Nov 10, 7pm

JoAnn Falletta, conductor
Madeline Olson, harp

An inspirational program featuring George Walker's profound *Lyric for Strings*, Handel's sixth harp concerto, Elgar's brilliant *Introduction and Allegro*, and a celestial Bach suite featuring the familiar *Air*.



BPO CLASSICS

BACH, BEETHOVEN & BEYOND

Tue Nov 24, 7pm

JoAnn Falletta, conductor

Beethoven's lighthearted Septet is paired with Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, which inspired Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks*. Baroque-era Italian works influenced Respighi's *Ancient Airs and Dances* suite.



BPO CLASSICS

BAROQUE FIREWORKS

Tue Dec 8, 7pm

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

Bach's intimate sixth Brandenburg composition, Handel's lavish score commemorating a peace treaty, and Marcello's inventive oboe concerto combine with Wagner's delicate musical love letter to his new wife on her Christmas birthday.



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT

New Executive Director, Michael Rowl



Michael Rowl started in the financial world until discovering his love for communal work. His tenure at the JCC in Youngstown has brought several new community initiatives, including Beyachad, which is a Hebrew word meaning "come together" and has re-centered the JCC's focus on families.

Michael contributes most of his success to the support of his wife, Adrienne, who is a Preschool Intervention Specialist, the love of his life as well as the hardest worker he has ever met. The two have five beautiful children who are looking forward to moving to Western New York. Say hi to Mike when you see him around the building starting mid-November!



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.

Highlighted events:

John Grisham
A Time for Mercy

Wednesday, November 11, 3:00pm



Michael J. Fox
No Time Like The Future

Thursday, November 19, 8:00pm



Ina Garten
Modern Comfort Food

Wednesday, December 2, 7:30pm



For more information, to purchase tickets and full list of events, visit www.jccbuffalo.org.

Happy Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 26

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Friday, November 27

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November 2020

Editor's Note




Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Gathering and belonging in 2020. That's what the front cover of this month's issue of *The Jewish Journal* captures through an image of teens coming together for a retreat, and what many of the stories on the inside of the paper convey. It's November 2020. The COVID-19 crisis has been part of our lives since March. We've weathered the fear and chaos, Passover and schools closing in the spring; made the best of our beautiful WNY summer, creatively celebrated and shared the High Holy Days together, and now we look towards Thanksgiving and the coming winter. And it seems clear that gathering and belonging—to each other, to our community, to the Jewish People, to Buffalo, to our country—is what matters most.

And that is why you will find a piece about the CJEL's Jewish Teen Initiative on page 5 so joyous. Jewish teens getting together to share friendship and their love of Judaism in these days fraught with roadblocks and loneliness. On pages 8 and 9, you'll find that the JCRC has not let a little thing like a worldwide pandemic slow down its focus on a more civil and caring community in WNY through various Get Out The Vote (GOTV) projects. This month, you'll meet Mike Rawl, the new Executive Director of the JCC who talks about his family, his passions, work and vision for the Jewish people (page 17). You're invited to a virtual Kristallnacht commemoration through the Holocaust Resource Center November 9 (page 20), and you can learn what became of at least one of the Torahs from Europe that was confiscated during the Nazi terror that was the Holocaust (page 24).

We begin looking forward towards Federation's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony December 3 by introducing you this month to Brenda Feldstein and Alon Kupferman, the event co-chairs and Emerging Leader award winners on page 4. And we close this issue by saying farewell to a Woman of Valor, a Jewish heroine, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, through pieces by native Buffalonian and NYC-based author Nancy Davidoff Kelton, and Genesis Foundation Chair Stan Polovitz on pages 30-31.

Wishing you a warm and satisfying Thanksgiving holiday. And don't forget to VOTE!


Ellen Goldstein - Editor

On The Cover



Gathering and Belonging in 2020

Teens participating in CJEL's Jewish Teen Initiative came together in the fall around a cozy fire during a retreat at Camp Centerland. *Photo by Mike Steklaf.*

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What's Jewish Engagement All About?

Five years ago I attended my first GA (General Assembly) of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) along with a lively group of professionals and volunteers representing the Buffalo Jewish Federation (BJF). At one of the breakout sessions, entitled "Talking About My Generation," the featured panel of three 20-something Jewish entrepreneurs talked about the place Judaism and the Jewish community held in their lives. One was the President of the University of Michigan Hillel, one started a bike club for young Jewish professionals in Boston, and the last was a computer whiz/tech entrepreneur in NYC. They talked about how the Jewish community should bend toward their needs and desires. They talked about not being understood and not being listened to by the Jewish community establishment. They shared their feelings about connecting to Jewish life in ways that felt selfish and self-centered to many in the audience. They weren't interested in attending synagogue services like their parents; they didn't want to join their local JCCs.

They were creating their own groups with whom to get together, eschewing the "Young Professional" groups their local Federations had established. There was a lot of eye-rolling in the audience, and people muttered under their breath things like "such a self-centered generation!" and "this is really the ME generation, isn't it?!"

I was fascinated, watching this scene unfold, trying for myself to figure out this group of dynamic and passionate but largely disconnected young Jews. Sure, there was the kid from Hillel representing a more engaged group, but what about the others? What would we do about them? They are our future, we all thought.

Then the Q&A started, and someone asked them why they feel unheard. And the whiz kid from NYC gave an example. When the panel of young adults was asked to give a name to this very session, they offered one they felt appropriately represented the discussion. However, when arriving at the conference they saw in the program that the organizers had changed the name of their session to "Talking About My Generation." To me and the other participants, that title was immediately recognizable as lyrics in the beloved rock song we all grew up with: *My Generation* by The Who. "Yeah," said the young man, "that's **your** song. We didn't even know what it was." And, zing! Suddenly I understood them. We were trying to fit them into OUR mold. They needed to create their own Jewish



Leslie Kramer

experience and they were already doing so! But we were still stuck in our old ways, with our own perspectives. This was my "aha!" moment when I began to understand what community engagement is all about.

A few months later I was in a meeting with one of our Jewish Buffalo professional leaders, and we were talking about how to engage "the younger generation." We were musing over certain programming that one might have thought would appeal to this age group, but the number of participants indicated to the contrary. This professional just couldn't attract these younger community members. Sighing, this professional lamented that "the younger kids just don't care about Judaism" and being Jewish.

"I disagree," I said in response "I think these younger people care very much. However, some of our community programs that appeal to older people, no matter how inexpensive we make them, and no matter how much we advertise, just don't resonate with them." We talked about the panoply of activities and obligations young adults have pulling at them, vying for every second of their time, from work, to family obligations, to social opportunities. We discussed the fact that those in this generation are typically not "joiners" of agencies and organizations as their older counterparts have been. We discussed that they generally, as a rule (there are many exceptions) don't join gyms as we might have done at their age, but rather they pick and choose where their loyalties and interests lie. For instance, rather than join a gym, one might attend classes at Orange Theory

or CrossFit, join a community group of runners or cyclists, do yoga at a neighborhood studio, or buy a Peloton bike to keep in the apartment.

Our job as Jewish communal leaders, we agreed, is to find a way to make the Jewish community relevant to their lives. Not to fit them into the format of life that works for us.

And that has been the philosophy put into practice at the Buffalo Jewish Federation for the last five years. Meet community members where they are, connect to them where they are physically, emotionally, spiritually. We can't just invite them to attend and partake in our world, lower the cost of admission, and hope they show up. They simply won't. Research shows that they are motivated by passion, interest, and a personal connection to the cause or organization they are supporting, not by a sense of obligation or guilt.

And moreover, give them ownership. It is not for us to create for them, but rather for us to support their ability and desire to create for themselves. Some voices from community elders expressed dismay and concern over whether these young adults would contribute to the community.

Our job is to find a way to make the Jewish community relevant to their lives. Not to fit them into the format of life that works for us.

Past issues of this newspaper have featured articles about numerous Federation initiatives that seek to provide substantive programming to traditionally difficult-to-engage cohorts. Among them, we have featured Nickel City Jews (NCJ), a platform for engaging with young adults, helping them to build networks and connect Jewishly with their peers, and to experience Jewish community in terms that resonate with them. We have also featured stories about the Momentum program and trip to Israel last December, where 15 mothers of school-aged children traveled, learned and grew together over a year long process of connecting Jewishly to each other, to Israel, to our community and to themselves.

As with all of these program opportunities, the focus is to engage the participants and invest in them so that they can create their own experiences. We know they won't stick with us out of obligation. We know that in order to engage them, we must make them a part of the conversation and empower them to create experiences that are meaningful to them. Only then will they feel a part of our community.

In September, the Buffalo Jewish Federation kicked off the 2021 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo. Unlike other years, this campaign kickoff was

not at the Hyatt hotel, but was viewed, now by over 1000 people, both on the day of the event and later by watching it on YouTube. We highlighted both NCJ and the Momentum trip, PJLibrary (another engagement opportunity for those with young families) and many other programs we offer to the community. There was even a magician who performed a card trick that seems to work every time!

But the true magic of this campaign year for me was when I learned that AFTER the kickoff event was viewed, a group of NCJ participants gathered to discuss their philanthropy. On their own, this group decided they wanted to learn about giving back with their dollars, not just their time. At the end of their meeting, the group raised nine first time gifts to the campaign. And, a few of those giving had either lost their jobs or their salaries had been significantly reduced. These new gifts were an act of love and commitment to our community.

The Momentum group of moms also made a powerful statement with their money. They pooled together and raised

\$2,500 to give to organizations in Israel, many of which are in the Western Galilee, our partnership region. Among this group, most had not contributed to the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo prior to their Momentum experience.

It's not the amount that matters, it's the act of giving that moved me so much. I know that each of these new gifts come directly from the heart, made by thoughtful people who find connection and community with the BJF. They've had meaningful experiences, and now they are committing to taking responsibility for, and ownership of the very community that provides them with so much meaning.

I hope you too have found meaning and a sense of community. If you have contributed to the 2021 Campaign for Jewish Buffalo, I thank you. If you have yet to do so, I thank you in advance. Raising money is not our goal, but it is how we fund all the powerful experiences we provide for you, our community. Please consider making your 2021 gift today. For every generation and every passion, we are in it together.

Federation 117th Annual Meeting Set for December 3

Virtual Gathering to Celebrate Leadership in Jewish Buffalo

The Buffalo Jewish Federation's 117th Annual Meeting and award celebration will take place virtually Thursday, December 3 from 6-6:30 pm. This year's unique gathering will be hosted by 2020 Emerging Leadership Awardees Brenda Feldstein and Alon Kupferman. In addition to recognizing Brenda and Alon for their inspired leadership, Federation will install the 2021 Board of Governors and present the Judith & Daniel Kantor Professional Service Award and the Ann Holland Cohn Community Impact Award.

Meeting co-host Alon Kupferman is the Ann and Meyer Riwehchun Leadership Awardee for 2020. For decades, the Federation has presented annual awards to an emerging male and female community leader. "We are very excited to bestow this year's men's award to Alon," said Federation President Leslie Shuman Kramer. "The award provides an opportunity each year for us to recognize and invest in an emerging leader who demonstrates a commitment to the growth and sustainability of our vibrant and caring Buffalo Jewish community. Alon's dedication to Jewish Buffalo and his passion for community

building is so befitting of this honor." A Buffalo transplant, Alon earned his MBA in Marketing & Strategy from the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. He joined M&T Bank as part of their Executive Associate Program in 2007 and has held multiple positions at M&T and is currently the Head of Wealth Management Digital at Wilmington Trust, a subsidiary of M&T.

Prior to joining the M&T, Alon served as a Legislative Assistant to the White House, Assistant Legislative Director of AJC, Director of Policy and Communication for the US House of Representatives



Annual meeting co-chairs Brenda Feldstein and Alon Kupferman

and Founding Chair of Digital Channels Committee Consumer Bankers Associations. Alon is currently President of the Jewish Community Center, stewarding the organization through the COVID-19 Pandemic and the transition to new CEO Mike Rawl. (Read about Mike on page 17.)

The other meeting co-host, Brenda Feldstein, is the Ruth and Milton Kahn Women's Leadership Awardee for 2020. Born in Brazil and the granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, Brenda has an undergraduate degree in communications and an MBA from the University of Buffalo. She worked for several years as a video field reporter, producer, and television host for a national television/video production company in Brazil before moving to the United States. Brenda founded and leads her own video production company called "A Special Story" and has been featured

in the national edition of *Yahoo News*. Brenda is actively involved in several Jewish communal organizations, and last December joined 14 other moms in the Momentum trip to Israel. "Brenda's positivity, skills and passion for Jewish Buffalo make her an ideal Kahn awardee," commented Federation's CEO Rob Goldberg. "One example was her tireless work during the pandemic to help our Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning experiment with how best to engage children and Jewish families."

Details on how you can participate in the Annual Meeting and Award Celebration on December 3 will be featured in the Federation's weekly e-mail My Jewish Buffalo in the coming weeks. If you would like more information, please contact Joan Kwiatkowski at the Federation by emailing her: joan@buffalojewishfederation.org.



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Teen Retreat at Camp Centerland

BY ADAM BEITER

On Saturday September 24th, I had the pleasure of helping to lead a wonderful event put together by the Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative and the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning. Along with fellow teen leaders Elliott Borden, Anya Weinrieb, Julia Maxick, and Kennedy Henry, I helped to plan and carry out a Teen Retreat for Jewish teens in grades 8-12 at the Jewish Community Center's Camp Centerland.



Participants seen here at the retreat included Asher Weinrieb, Max Weinrieb, Sofia Reisman, Jordan Levine, Anya Zions, Syvonne Forgette, Angelica Levy, Karen Levy, Shaina Potash, Stephanie Newberger, Max Steinberg, Emily Steinberg, Adam Beiter, Julia Maxick, Anya Weinrieb, Shir Paz, Kennedy Henry, Jonas Borden, Aaron Herman, Charlie Herman, Joshua Garson, Zelda Abramovich, and Elliott Borden.



We began the retreat by checking people in using COVID protocols, and from there the fun and friendship began! Some of the highlights of the day's activities and programs included a morning Shabbat gratitude service, Color War field games, a mock presentation from our Student to Student group, a Havdalah service, and discussion programs on the subjects of "The Jewish Question" and "Challenging Yourself and Challenging God."

I was overjoyed to lead the Color War and *Shalosh Seudos*, a traditional "third meal" between lunch and Havdalah in which participants sing songs and tell stories. I learned a lot from leading and meeting new people at the retreat and

also discovered that sometimes leading doesn't go as planned, but improvising and focusing on fun was the key to success in this case.

The day ended on an extremely positive note, with a Havdalah singalong and campfire, and a movie, *Black Panther*, screened at the nearby Camp Centerland amphitheater. I will never forget the amazing and memorable experience that I had at this event. Taking part in Jewish Buffalo events always makes me feel accepted and proud, and this retreat was a blast!

Adam is a senior at Hamburg High School and a participant in the Federation's CJEL Student to Student Program

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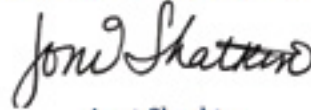
CAMPAIGN for JEWISH BUFFALO

NOVEMBER 2020 | QUARTERLY IMPACT REPORT

We are excited to share with you our **Campaign for Jewish Buffalo Quarterly Impact Report** for November 2020. So much has changed in the age of Covid-19, yet our Jewish Federation, partner agencies and overseas colleagues have all adapted to provide support and inspiration for our local community and around the world. With your investment, the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo enables us to provide for immediate needs, while preparing for the future. We are here for you and our entire community. Please feel free to reach out to any of us with questions regarding the Federation and the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo.



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OUR FEDERATION

A STAR STUDDED KICK OFF

Buffalo's 1st ever Virtual Campaign Event:

- **562** individuals registered for the event
- **146** registrants had *NEVER* attended a kick off event before
- **331** goody bags were delivered to local homes
- **1003** views on YouTube since it first aired (as of October 8)



WANT TO SEE IT AGAIN??

Watch here: bit.ly/starstuddedkickoff

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- This semester, **112** Jewish undergrad students participated in the High Holidays, To-Go Bagel Brunches & Shabbat Meals
- **30** students are part of HERD COMMUNITY - a new initiative that safely builds community & promotes holistic wellness
- **18** new students are participating in a virtual Jewish Learning Fellowship



JEWISH LIFE AROUND THE WORLD

NGOs IN ISRAEL (Israeli non-profits)

Alma: Pre-Military Academy for Female Leadership **\$5,000** to empower young women

Ethiopian National Project: **\$2,500** to advance integration of Ethiopian-Israelis

Hand in Hand: **\$5,000** for bilingual, integrated Arab & Jewish schools and communities

Krembo Wings: **\$2,500** for children & adults with special needs

One Family: **\$2,500** to empower victims of terror

Western Galilee Medical Center: **\$5,000** to provide critical medical equipment



The Overseas Allocations Task Force and the women of Momentum recommended allocations totaling **\$22,500** for **6** new NGOs in Israel.

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Community Religious School to Launch in 2021

During Yom Kippur services, Bruce Corris, Marcia Goldstein and David Goldberg – the presidents of Congregation Shir Shalom, Temple Beth Tzedek and Temple Beth Zion, respectively – informed each of their communities that together they are taking bold steps toward the creation of a new community religious school beginning in September 2021.

“This is a unique moment for us at Shir Shalom and our partners at Temple Beth Tzedek and Temple Beth Zion,” said Corris. “As the pandemic has continued – and the depth of its impact on our lives has become more acutely felt – leaders from all three of our congregations have embraced this unique opportunity to work together to fashion ONE school for families across Jewish Buffalo – a school dedicated to helping children become Jewishly engaged, confident and inquisitive.”

“Our Temple Beth Zion voice has been loud and clear,” Dave Goldberg told his congregants. “The task force leading the effort is chaired by our members and respected educators Gretchen Gross and Evie Weinstein, and Cantor Penny Myers and our current school principal Beth Steinberg have also been a part of conversations about what a new school could look like.”

Marcia Goldstein from Temple Beth Tzedek noted that “the collaborative spirit of the task force is animating creativity and fueling energy to create a dynamic school that impacts every school-aged child in our three communities.”

While the new school is a work in progress and the logistics of the new enterprise are yet to be determined, the Presidents underscored that in this time of uncertainty, the three congregations are coming together as one community to build for the future: to mold and experiment and create a new and engaging community school. Watch for more information in the months to come.



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Get Out The Vote— Thank you Jewish Buffalo!

BY MARA KOVEN-GELMAN, JCRC Director

Here is a familiar and humorous story told about Jewish immigrants. “My parents took me to polling sites for every election. They voted for every level of government – even the dog catcher!” This is a common post-war story of Jewish civic pride and engagement for many who came from totalitarian countries.

The process of choosing governing leadership is part of Jewish teachings. We learn that in the Talmud that, “One may only appoint a leader over a community only if one consults with the community. The people must choose who will rule over them,” says Rabbi Yitzak.

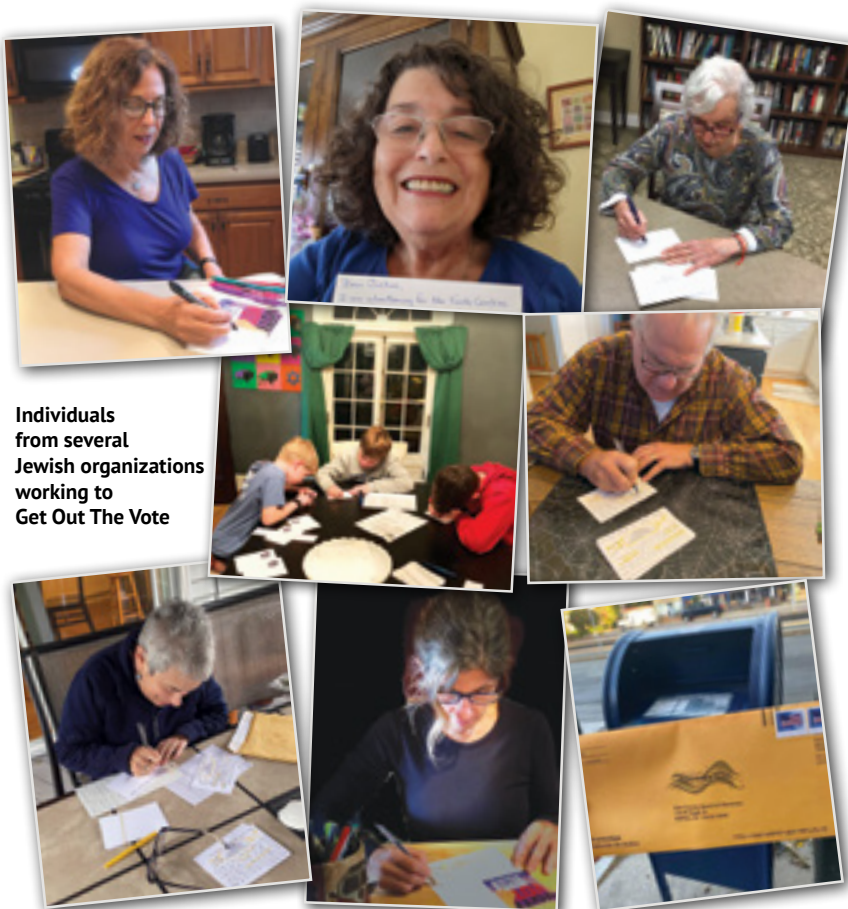
Thus, we know that civic engagement is also a core American Jewish value and practice – religious and civic. Jewish voter turnout rates are generally 60-75 percent, according to demographer Dr. Steven Windmueller.

As the 2020 election nears, JCRC is taking a moment to reflect and share gratitude for the Buffalo Jewish community’s strong volunteer voter engagement efforts. More than 80 people (of all ages, and branches of Judaism) hand-wrote and sent postcards as part of the national “Reclaim Our Vote” (ROV) initiative. Deborah Cohen, a Congregation Shir Shalom member spearheaded this initiative with Renee’ Stith. Active volunteers included Marta Herzburn of Amherst Community Church, Shelly Kerker at Congregation Beth Abraham and Judith Fales from Temple Beth Zion.

Nationwide, ROV organizers reported over 6.3 million postcards were mailed, with 25% of people who received them registering to vote. Other Buffalo community members participated in phone banking, serving as poll workers on voting day, canvassing low voter areas with non-partisan “Get Out The Vote (GOTV) messages and encouraging their out-of-state children and grandparents to vote safely.

Federation’s JCRC created a “Safe Voting in Erie County 2020” website and distributed early voting postcards with partners and friends including the Chinese Club of WNY, Hispanic Women’s League, League of Women Voters, NAACP, NFJC and NRC, and VOICE Buffalo. Additionally, JCRC created a candidates’ forum (see opposite page) for the NYS Assembly District 146 and NYS Senate District 61 races.

Nina Lukin, JCRC co-chair said in early October, “I have not visited a friend



Individuals from several Jewish organizations working to Get Out The Vote

or family member’s home or been to the supermarket in seven months, but today, I was trained and declared an official poll inspector for the Erie County Board of Elections. Why? Well, as Edward Everett Hale, an active member of the Chautauqua adult-education program, said in the mid-19th century: “I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything; but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

Reclaim Our Vote Buffalo Initiative

The following graph details the groups working together for the Buffalo Jewish Community’s “Reclaim Our Vote” postcard initiative, which was aimed at individuals dropped from voting roles in key states.

Lead	Location	Writers	# of Postcards
Renee Stith	Various	40	2000/week
Deborah Cohen	CSS	80	1000/week
Marta Herzburn	Amherst Community Church	41	485/week
Shelly Kerker	Congregation Beth Abraham	22	300/week
Judith Fales	TBZ	20	205/week

Get Out The Vote at Hillel of Buffalo

Hillel of Buffalo has been engaging students using **MitzVote**, a non-partisan Get-Out-The-Vote campaign that provides students education and resources to mobilize and vote. This initiative was created by Hillel International and led in Buffalo by Hillel’s new Springboard Fellow Macie Clawson. It encourages students to register to vote, ask questions, learn more about local and state races, and participate in activities relating to voter registration and engagement. Every Tuesday Macie has been posting a **MitzVote** video to Hillel’s Instagram page, followed by many students.

Students also had a recent virtual DIY campaign poster party with poster-making materials pre-delivered to students. They spent a night making their own campaign posters for their rooms. With Gen Z and Millennials being the largest bloc of



Hillel of Buffalo working to Get Out The Vote

eligible voters in this upcoming election, **MitzVote** at Hillel of Buffalo is excited to continue programming to engage students and demonstrate that they play a vital role in the upcoming election.

Volunteer efforts ensure we participate in one of the best American values- the ability to have a voice and choice in who leads all levels of government – town, city, county, state and federal. *Kol Hakavod* – all the respect – to an effort well done!

Buffalo JCRC Candidates' Forum

Inspired by core Jewish values, the Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) seeks to sustain a more civil and caring community in Western New York and around the world. The JCRC invited four candidates—Jacqualine Berger and Edward A. Rath III who are running for the New York State Senate District 61 seat, and Karen McMahon and Robin L. Wolfgang, who are running for the New York State Assembly District 146 seat—to offer their views on three questions:

Based on the JCRC mission, and given your experience and background, how would you address the following as a NYS Legislator?

- 1) The increase of hate crimes and antisemitism?
- 2) What are your top four priorities?
- 3) What are the steps you will take to help our region's COVID-19 recovery?

* For voters who want to learn more, what are your website and social media addresses?



Jacqualine Berger

Candidate for NYS Senate
District 61 (Democrat)

1) We need to acknowledge the prevalence of hate crimes and antisemitism, then engage and educate our communities. I will continue to work for racial, social and economic justice and institute programs and support for all communities. I would require the infusion of anti-bias and social justice materials in schools so children are active participants in a diverse society.

2) Fully fund and support public education

Grow the economy for everyone including middle-class and working families

Preserve the environment for future generations

Expand access to health care and reduce medical costs

3) I would work to provide financial assistance to municipalities enabling them to provide services. I would work with each community in the district to create working groups such as economic development, the faith community, small business, and community life, to identify challenges and then work to address them.

www.BergerForSenate.com
[facebook/ BergerForSenate](https://www.facebook.com/BergerForSenate)
info@BergerForSenate.com



Legislator Edward A. Rath III

Candidate for NYS Senate
District 61 (Republican,
Conservative Party,
Independence Party, Serve
America Movement Party)

1) The increase in hate crimes is extremely troubling. I believe we not only need to increase penalties for these heinous acts but also must do our part to engage in constructive dialog and create a more accepting community.

2) Working to make NY more affordable through regulatory reform and lower taxes.

Keeping our community safe by ensuring our justice system is fair, while holding people who violate the law accountable.

Standing up for our region and ensuring we get our fair share.

Increasing accountability and transparency in State government.

3) We must make the process of reopening more transparent, so residents and businesses have clear, workable guidelines. As a legislator, I am working to develop programs to assist small businesses dealing with COVID-19. If elected as NY State Senator, I will continue this same advocacy and leadership.

Edrathforsenate.com
[fb.com/EdRath](https://www.facebook.com/EdRath)
Instagram - @EdRath
Twitter - @EdRath



Karen McMahon

Candidate for NYS Assembly
District 146 (Democrat and
Working Family Party)

1) I'll continue to fight for legislation that addresses antisemitism, like the "Hate Crimes Domestic Terrorism Act," and amendments to bail reform that classify the hate crimes of assault and arson as bail eligible. I'll also continue to sign statements condemning antisemitism and budget requests supporting security measures in non-public schools.

2) Having spent my legal career administering justice, upholding the rule of law, and advocating for the under-represented, my priorities include quality public education, affordable health care, job growth in Western New York, and initiatives to protect the environment and combat climate change.

3) In response to the pandemic, I've assisted hundreds of constituents obtain unemployment insurance benefits and passed legislation to support essential workers, small businesses, renters and homeowners. I'll continue to advocate to get people back to work and kids back to school as safely and responsibly as possible.

www.McMahonforassembly.com
social media: @
McMahonforNYS



Robin L. Wolfgang

Candidate for NYS Assembly
District 146 (Republican,
Conservative, Independence Party)

1) As a Jewish woman, I have experienced this form of hate, and my family has fought antisemitism for generations. One way to combat hate crimes is to ensure funding exists for schools to be mandated to teach about the Holocaust and serve as an effective deterrent to future acts of hate.

2) My legislative priorities start with fully funding our educational system. We must also aid our economic recovery with a solid plan to help workers and small business owners. We need to designate broadband access an essential service. Fourth, we must fix reforms to the criminal justice system to fight crime while protecting victims.

3) COVID recovery starts with Albany rectifying past mistakes that created the worst business climate in the nation. Make New York more affordable by reducing property tax burdens and help families reduce energy costs. Support regional parity for improving infrastructure. Expand broadband access to meet COVID era needs of telehealth and remote working.

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Our Perfectly “Us” Wedding

BY ANGELA GOLDBERG

When my now-husband Dana Billings and I got engaged last June, we knew that wedding planning was going to be stressful. We knew that we would need to figure out a guest list, find a venue, create and stay within a budget, all while creating a meaningful day that reflected who we were. We were not expecting that a global pandemic would make us rethink all of our planning just a few months before the wedding.

We planned to get married on August 22 at Becker Farms with all of our friends and family present to celebrate with us. In March, as news of COVID-19 spreading across the US started to emerge, we held out hope that things would improve. However, as time went on, it became evident that the wedding we had been planning was not going to be possible. With deposit deadlines and the date to send out our invitations looming closer, we sat down together and made the difficult decision to postpone everything



Dana Billings and Angela Goldberg under the chuppah

until July 2021. Our top priority was the safety and comfort of our guests and there seemed to be no way to guarantee that as businesses closed, physically greeting

one another became dangerous, and face masks were added to our checklist of things we needed to have whenever leaving the house.

After making our decision, I immediately felt a wave of relief. We had done the hard part: We'd made the decision. However, as August 22 got closer, we both felt a sense of loss. After a lot of consideration, we emailed our officiant, Susan Goldberg Schwartz, towards the end of June asking if she would be willing to do a small ceremony for us on our original date in August. Susan was an integral part of our ideal wedding plans from the very beginning. We'd met when we participated in a Mussar program for interfaith couples the previous year, and the attention and care she put into that program and all of her

perfectly reflected us as individuals and the traditions we are bringing together in our marriage.

On August 22, the sun shone through the leaves and we were married by Susan in front of our immediate families in the backyard of my husband's grandfather. The spot where we were married is the exact spot where his parents were married, as well as his sister and brother-in-law, so we were the third couple in his family married there. We were married underneath a pink and gold chuppah held up with branches. That chuppah has been in my family for generations, and is the same one that my great-grandparents and my parents used. We wrote our own vows and each of our living grandparents spoke and offered us their own special blessings.

When initially planning our wedding after we got engaged, we knew that whatever we did needed to represent the two traditions that we were bringing



Dana and Angela with wedding officiant Susan Goldberg Schwartz

communication with us was something that deeply resonated. We were so pleased when Susan not only agreed to our brand-new plan at the last moment, but was so excited to help us officially get married in spite of all of the challenges that had been thrown at us.

Perspective is everything. At first, postponing our wedding seemed like a terrible loss, and a small ceremony felt like a placeholder. It seemed like a means to an end or something to tide us over until we could properly celebrate the way we had originally wanted to. However, when all was said and done, the wedding we had this summer will always be our “real” wedding, not only because of the paperwork we signed, but because of how beautifully it represented the relationship that my husband and I have built together over the 8 years of our relationship. It

together. It was important for us to highlight our families, the communities that have raised us, and the unique things that we individually bring to our relationship. We always wanted our wedding to feel undoubtedly like us. The silver lining of needing to postpone and re-plan our wedding due to COVID-19 was that we got exactly that and more. By stripping down what our original “traditional” wedding plans looked like, we were able to have the most meaningful and most perfectly “us” wedding ceremony that we will never forget.

Angela Goldberg is a Buffalo native with a strong passion for local arts and music. She grew up studying the violin, writes poetry and is also an avid photographer. Angela is the Managing Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, where she has been working since 2015.

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Jewish Changemakers Fellowship

BY SARAH DROZDA

This past summer, I had the honor of participating in the JFNA (Jewish Federations of North America) Changemakers Fellowship alongside fellow Buffalonians Seth Blum and Changemaker Coach Shiri Kester.



I am sure that I am not the only person that felt like this, but this past summer and the few months leading up to it was a really overwhelming time for me. There was so much happening both



Sarah Drozda

personally and globally, and I felt like there was no way for me to keep up! I wanted to help, but I didn't know where to start. I had a voice, but I didn't know how to use it. Even if I knew where to begin, I lacked the confidence I needed to make a difference.

When I received the news I had been chosen for the Fellowship, I was automatically ready to go – I didn't want to wait another few weeks to begin. Each day of the Fellowship would start off with a podcast and a daily challenge that Fellows were able to do on their own time. Some of the challenges focused on personal growth, while others encouraged direct action, such as signing up to volunteer for an organization that one may have been putting off. The Fellowship involved a required core session followed by electives that Fellows could choose from. Most days I had a hard time choosing because there were so many great ones to attend!

The Fellowship sessions opened the door to engage in difficult discussions that we may normally stray from but are

so imperative in order to make progress. There were two really important lessons I learned that I want to share with everyone – the first by Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz, who said to find one or two causes that you are passionate about and put all your energy into those efforts. You will make more of a difference doing that than trying to fix *everything*. Personally, I could present a huge list of causes I care about, but if I tried to do them all, my impact might actually be less.

The second was given by Rabbi Sandra Lawson, and her message was to take the time for self-care, especially on Shabbat. We cannot put our best into repairing the world if we do not take the time to take care of ourselves as well. After participating in this Fellowship, I now have the confidence to make a difference, and won't hesitate to use my voice and stand up for what's right.

Sarah Drozda is a graduate student in Museum Studies at Buffalo State and actively involved with Nickel City Jews.



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Swoon: Seven Contemplations was made possible through the generosity of Jock and Betsy Mitchell. Community Spirit Programming is made possible by an anonymous donor in honor of those who have been touched by addiction and in memory of those who have died from the disease. Additional support provided by Sarah M. Fallon and Dr. John R. Fudyma, C-2 Paint, and Red Disk. The Albright-Knox's exhibition program is generously supported by The Seymour H. Knox Foundation, Inc.



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Honoring Mike Silverman for leading BIJFF since 2004

When Michael Silverman volunteered to chair the Buffalo International Jewish Film Festival in 2004, he was excited by the opportunity to offer high quality foreign films that wouldn't have normally been seen in the area for the enjoyment of film aficionados of all ages and cultures. Chairing such a committee is a time-consuming responsibility that requires hundreds of hours of screening films, managing committee responsibilities and schedules, and even running the popcorn machine on many occasions. Sixteen years and more than 200 film screenings later, Silverman is "retiring" from his role with much gratitude and appreciation from the Jewish Community Center, of which the Film Festival has been a successful community program for 35 years.

The Buffalo International Jewish Film Festival is the 3rd longest running Jewish Film Festival in the country. Under Silverman's leadership the Festival has grown significantly, continuing to present award-winning films that fulfill the Festival's mission: *to provide an educational and entertaining cultural experience for communities of Western New York through the power of exceptional world-class cinema, aspiring to convey the diversity of Jewish experience, while recognizing the commonality of Jewish values.*

Silverman's continued passion and pride for high quality international film and his commitment to building the Festival earned him the prestigious Ralph Kushner Volunteer Service Award in 2014. The award, established in 1998 and named after the late Ralph Kushner, a longtime community volunteer coordinator, is given annually to a community member who demonstrates exemplary volunteer community leadership and is the JCC's highest honor.

Additionally, Silverman helped bring the Festival to the Amherst Dipson Theatre at 3500 Main Street in Buffalo, building a new, broader-based audience. When the 35th Festival season was postponed due to the pandemic, he guided the transition to designing a virtual Film Festival, which resulted in audience members joining even from locales far beyond Buffalo.



Retiring BIJFF Chair Mike Silverman at last year's Film Festival at the Amherst Dipson Theatre

"Michael Silverman has been an amazing asset to the Buffalo International Jewish Film Festival," said Katie Wzontek, Cultural Arts Director at the JCC. "His keen sense of what makes a film great, constant hard work and dedication as a volunteer Chair to the committee is truly valued. As a not-for-profit agency, the JCC depends on volunteers to help grow and expand many programs. Mike has gone above and beyond with the time and energy he has invested as Chair. He leaves us with a strong legacy and an impressive position from which to continue bringing our unique film festival to our many communities."

How I Learned to Enjoy Life in Different Ways (at age 6 1/2)

BY SOPHIE MIRIAM HART GREEN

One day in March, my parents told me about the Coronavirus and that I wouldn't be able to see any of my cousins or aunts and uncles or grandparents anytime soon that lived in lots of places around the world. I didn't know how long it would be before I would see them again. I was used to going every few weeks to Toronto to see my grandparents.



In the first few months, my grandparents and I felt so sad, especially my Bubbie. She wanted to see me even more than eating five chocolate chip cookies (even big giant ones)! Over that same time, my mom was also pregnant with my now baby brother Solomon Isaac. Not being able to see each other while my mom was

pregnant made things even more frustrating. Luckily, after my brother was born, my parents were able to find a way for most of my grandparents to cross the border with a letter from the hospital asking permission. But when they left after a few days, I felt sad again and started crying.

A couple weeks later, around Rosh Hashanah, I realized that I just needed to enjoy the things in life. I called my grandparents and told them the same things that I thought in my head.

Like, even if you're having a hard time, you just need to look around and do whatever you can do to get your mind off of your sad feelings. I've been keeping my mind off of my sad feelings by going to school, sending mail to my family, drawing pictures of them, video chatting and playing games with my family over the computer. Playing board games with my parents, and snuggling with my brothers has helped me feel better and also calms me down. Sometimes we just need to be a bit patient and change the way we do things, and then those moments of feeling happy will happen.

Sophie Miriam Hart Green is a 2nd grade student at Ohr Temimim School, and a regular correspondent for The Jewish Journal.



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The Newest Park Pioneers

BY MANDY AND EVERETT WEISS

Every family has their nighttime routines. For our 10-year old daughter, Maddie, each day culminates with an introspective recollection of the three best parts of our day. Without fail, every weeknight since her first day of school, she lists “school” as one of her three. It has undoubtedly been a long haul since the beginning of this pandemic. Last spring, the loss of school as we knew it was traumatic for everyone in our family.

Both Maddie and our 7 year-old son Avery lamented having to sit through online video conferencing, even though it was for only thirty or sixty minutes at a clip a few times a week. Peers talking over one another or distracted by something else interesting in the home notwithstanding, teachers having technical difficulties with video, wireless bandwidth, or “*why can’t I mute all?*” All of this contributed to a real disdain to the start of each weekday.

Yes, we are fortunate. Our kids love school. Looking back, we have taken for



Everett, Maddie, Avery and Mandy Weiss

granted the *gift* that each of our children’s schools have given to them. We *teach* our children plenty; but attending school is so much more than merely *teaching* students. Attending school is an *experience* - and one

that cannot be replicated in the home.

As summer break - if it can even be considered as such - came to a close, it became increasingly clear to us that our public school district would be unable

to meet our expectations in delivering high quality education. Without a doubt, a subjective assessment and a personal decision, but a grave realization at best. We first sat down to identify what was most important to us: in-person education, demonstrated safe operational protocols and procedures (documented policies and procedures alone would not suffice), a demonstrated high-quality curriculum, and a successfully executed remote learning plan should the school be forced to close due to high local community viral load.

We immediately began to evaluate the school options available to us. The Park School checked all of our boxes and offered even more value with their partnership with the Kadimah Scholars program. Together, our children would benefit from high-quality, in-person progressive education with thoughtful COVID-19 precautions and a strong supplemental Jewish education - offering Judaic studies and Hebrew classes a few times each week.

And so, today, we are very proud Park Pioneer and Kadimah Scholars parents. At 2:15pm every weekday, our children get in the car, remove their masks smiling ear to ear, and talk over one another about what they learned or did that day. They’re exhausted too! Likely the effect of outdoor classrooms, fresh air, and lots of activities.

On Kadimah school days, they come home singing holiday songs and the *alef-bet*, and cannot wait to show us their Hebrew letters and script or their homemade Sukkah. Their enthusiasm is unbridled, and we are thrilled that they are as excited to share with us their Judaic learnings as much as their math, science, and arts. We take little offense, and maybe exude a little pride, that our children want to call their out-of-state grandparents if only to share what they learned at school each day.

We feel fortunate to have the Park School in our community and are grateful to the Park School leadership for their extraordinary efforts during this exceedingly difficult time. After a difficult summer, the Park School and the Kadimah Scholars program have brought joy back to our children’s childhood. And for that, we are most grateful.

Dr. Everett and Mandy Weiss are the parents of two school-age children, Avery, 7, and Madison, 10. Mandy is the Director of Planning and Overseas at the Buffalo Jewish Federation. Everett is the Associate Chief Health Informatics Officer at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and serves on the Board of Directors for Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo.

Park School by the numbers

At a recent Zoom meeting with parents, Lisa Conrad, Interim Head of School at Park, announced that the school has increased student enrollment by 58% from 160 students in May 2020 to 253 students, of which 82 are new to Park School. And while enrollment interest continues, all but three grades have wait lists. She also shared that while proper physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic requires reduced class size, Park can grow to accommodate even more students in a non-pandemic school year.

The Kadimah Scholars program at Park has also grown dramatically. This fall there are a total of 35 Scholars, an increase of 84% from last year, including a new Kadimah Scholars Pre-K program. Marnie Cerrato, Director of Enrollment Management at Park captured the enthusiasm among Park Leadership: “We are excited at the success of Kadimah Scholars at Park. The combination of Hebrew and Judaic studies with Park’s progressive education results in an engaging, joyful, and challenging learning environment.” Gretchen Gross, a veteran leader in the Jewish community who recently joined the Park Board of Directors, added: “Our Board is very



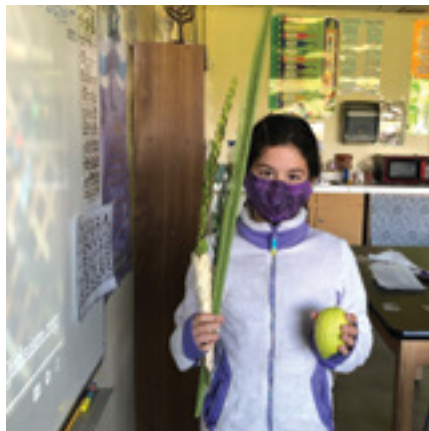
Avery with his Sukkah

pleased with the growth in both programs and the introduction of an early childhood component. This is a very exciting time to be a part of the Park community.”

For Brenda Feldstein, a mother of a new 5th grader and someone who received a Jewish Day School education in Brazil, said that Park feels like home: “Acres and acres of nature, small size classrooms, the culture of fostering independence, love for exploring and community awareness, Park embraces so many values that are important to our family. We are very pleased that Kadimah Scholars is part of the curriculum. Hebrew and Judaic Studies are beautifully taught by Michal Schmuell-Lewis and Nirit Weiner, two very caring

and skilled teachers.”

Debbie and Andre Kallus, parents of another 5th grader agree: “Now that Hebrew and Jewish studies are part of our daughter’s weekly curriculum, I think this opportunity will expand her connection to our very diverse Jewish history, and we are excited for her to have this experience with the Kadimah program.” Hallie Netiv Keren, Park School parent and President of Kadimah Scholars is also pleased to welcome so many new families like the Kallus, Feldstein and Weiss families: “Our mission remains to make quality Jewish education accessible to all Jewish families in WNY. And we look forward to expanding the Kadimah Scholars program at Park in the future.”



Maddie with her lulav and etrog

Book Learning

BY RABBI ADAM ROSENBAUM

Groucho Marx once said, “Outside of a dog, a book is a man’s best friend. Inside of a dog, it’s too dark to read.”

Books are certainly some of the best friends to those of us in the Jewish community. From the centrality of the Torah to the wealth of wisdom passed on by the rabbis in the Talmud and Midrash, from the intense detail of Jewish law codes to the rich characters and language found in Jewish literature and poetry, a thoughtful Jewish life is filled with books.

In our tradition, reading books is not merely a pastime; it is an activity that often asks for intense concentration, and often leads to great reward. Even though Jews were given the moniker “The People of the Book” as a back-handed compliment, we have turned it into a point of pride.

The month of November is designated as Jewish Book Month. Whereas all months could easily qualify for this title, now is as good a time as ever to remind



ourselves of the eternal value of the books in our tradition.

And remembering that might be more important than ever this year, as we are spending more and more time indoors due to the continuing pandemic and the approach of winter. Thankfully, getting

books is easier than ever, thanks to online stores, e-readers, audiobook services, and public libraries that make titles available both physically and virtually.

In that spirit, I’d like to share some thoughts of a few of the Jewish books that have made a great impact on me (in no particular order).

**In our tradition,
reading books is not
merely a pastime;
it is an activity that
often asks for intense
concentration,
and often leads
to great reward.**

The Chosen by Chaim Potok: It is a novel about two thoughtful boys, brought together by love of tradition and friendship, while simultaneously torn apart by politics and familial rivalry. Potok’s prose is both powerful and sensitive.

The Beginnings of Desire by Aviva Gottlieb Zornberg: This is a commentary on the book of Genesis that weaves the thoughts of the great medieval Torah commentators with Zornberg’s careful literary and sociological analysis of the Torah text. Each page is riveting.

When All You’ve Ever Wanted Isn’t Enough by Rabbi Harold Kushner: Arguably the greatest sermon-writer of his generation, Rabbi Kushner’s most impressive skill might be his ability to address grandiose subjects – life’s “big questions” – in a down-to-earth manner.

Words That Hurt, Words That Heal by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin: The Jewish rules about proper speech is one of the favorite subjects for this best-selling author, and he deftly explores how language can move mountains, in both negative and positive ways.

If any of these books sound interesting to you, or if the above descriptions inspires you to pick up a different book you’ve always wanted to start, I hope that November can be a month when you can begin.

Adam Rosenbaum is rabbi at Temple Beth Tzedek.


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1» VOTE! Election Day is Tuesday, November 3. You can vote early, until Sunday, November 1 in Erie County. Or vote at your regular polling place on Election Day. *For more info go to elections.erie.gov.*

2» November 9th marks Kristallnacht, or The Night of Broken Glass, a pogrom which took place in Germany during 1938. The Holocaust Resource Center will remember this event November 9 at 7:00 p.m. with a virtual event featuring Julie Kohner, CEO of Voices of the Generations. *To view this program, RSVP to Elizabeth Schram at Elizabeth@hrcbuffalo.org.*

3» November 11 is Veteran's Day. And that day at the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens, all Vets and Active Duty Service members can enter for free from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 2655 South Park in South Buffalo. *Go to info@buffalogardens.com or call 716-827-1584.*

4» Help Temple Beth Zion and Congregation Shir Shalom give Thanksgiving meals to needy families. Drop off your financial donations at either congregation by November 20. *For more information, contact Chris Cohan from CSS at 430-6029 or Sharron Frommann from TBZ at 634-3495.*

5» Buffalo's famous Turkey Trot is Thanksgiving Day, November 26. And this year, it's mostly virtual. You can still participate, virtually, from November 26-29 in the 125th Annual YMCA Buffalo Niagara Turkey Trot. \$35 fee for virtual walk/run. *Go to runsignup.com/race/NY/Buffalo/YMCATurkeyTrot.*

WHERE IN JBFLO ?



Where is this found in Jewish Buffalo?

The first 5 people to correctly identify the location will be mentioned in next month's *Jewish Journal* because the JCC's Buffalo Kosher Gourmet at the Myers Family Tel Aviv Café is closed due to COVID-19.

E-mail your answers to ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org

Last month Peter Vogt, Joshua Sackman, Cheryl Tobias, Michael Pulka, Andrea Caleca and Ezra Rich correctly identified the outdoor Menorah and Sukkah at Chabad of Buffalo on North Forest Rd.

Community Builder and Family Man

Getting to know new JCC CEO Mike Rawl

The Jewish Journal staff had an opportunity to speak with incoming JCC CEO Mike Rawl who begins his new role later this month.

Mike, first and foremost, Mazal Tov on your new appointment. If you would, please introduce us to your family.

Thank you. I'm excited to join the JCC this month and our family is looking forward to relocating in 2021. I'm so proud of my family. My wife Adrienne is an early childhood educator who works with special needs children. She grew up the Youngstown, Ohio area and is incredibly passionate about her work. She's the hardest working person I know and every day is an inspiration for me.

We are the proud parents of 5 incredible children. Our oldest, Violet, who is named for my grandmother, turns 15 in December. She is currently a freshman in High School and is actively involved in BBYO. Our second child is 12 year-old Ivy who is preparing to become a Bat Mitzvah next April. Our third born and first son is Thomas who just turned 11. Thomas is named for my grandfather's nephew who was killed in Auschwitz when, ironically, he was just 10. Growing up, my grandfather could never utter Thomas' name without being overwhelmed with emotion. It was particularly meaningful for us to keep the name Thomas alive and to honor our family's legacy. And now, to see our Thomas so full of life is really special. Our fourth child and second son is Lawren, named for my grandfather Lawrence, and he turns 5 in January. Finally, our youngest is Juniper, the sweetest little girl, who turns 3 on November 1st. We are so incredibly fortunate to have healthy and happy children. We also have two hounds, Elsa and Bella, and ten chickens.

What do you do for fun?

"Free" time of course with this kind of work is limited but at the same time I've been able to integrate family in my work and feel very lucky about that. I like reading and playing music, which is to say, I attempt to play the piano! As a family, we spend a lot of time in the outdoors, and enjoy swimming, hiking and backpacking. I also love to build things. At home, I've created and manage a garden and built an



Right to Left - Adrienne, Bella, Elsa, Mike, Ivy, Lawren, Juniper, Thomas, Violet.

aquaponics community in my basement. I'm fascinated by how systems work.

I know that you are a volunteer leader in your Temple in Youngstown, tell us a bit about your connections to Judaism.

I believe that Judaism is both a birthright but also a choice particularly in how one integrates Jewish values and practice into daily living. One of my fondest early Jewish memories is sitting on the bima with the Rabbi and being able to ask him questions that probably, in retrospect, would have been considered blasphemy in other religions. So early on, I knew that Judaism encouraged the asking of "big" questions and I really connected with that mindset. I also grew up in a house with a Holocaust survivor and that had a profound influence on how I relate to justice in the world. I also learned about the power and potential of community from having moved so many times as a kid. In every instance, the Jewish community was the constant for me. Because of moving so much, there were large stretches in my childhood when I had few friends and despite my parents making sure I was involved in sports and other activities, it was lonely and the Jewish community was always there with open arms. As I got older I came to really appreciate the depth of Judaism when it comes to the ability for an individual to find their own personal connections. I found my spiritual path in Judaism in unexpected

places becoming more conscious of it in High School when I read Jewish authors, many of whom like the poet Alan Ginsburg, who while disconnected organizationally to Judaism spoke with a poignant Jewish voice. In college I took a lot of religious studies courses and they helped me to understand my own unique Jewish experience.

What excites you most about moving to Buffalo?

Adrienne and I like to change things up; we believe that the most effective way to create personal change is to change one's environment. So while I love my work at the JCC in Youngstown, the opportunity to build community and impact people's lives in a bigger platform excites and motivates me. I have lived all over the Midwest and Buffalo is one of the most welcoming communities I've experienced. And the community's size, at least for our family, provides so many more opportunities for us and our children.

What are you most proud of in your professional career?

During my time at the JCC in Youngstown, we established numerous innovative community partnerships that helped grow operations by nearly 70%. We completely turned around the organization from one that was struggling both financially and in terms of identity to one that is vibrant and fiscally sound. And this year – as we know among the most challenging – we

are on pace to end 2020 with the most successful financial year in our JCC's history. While many JCCs have been shuttering programs, laying off staff, and taking pay cuts, we have actually grown significantly. I'm so proud that we had built an infrastructure that was able to respond to the pandemic so efficiently and actually quite naturally. And that is my legacy and what gives me the most pride: that the systems and structure I built will continue to be strong, viable and healthy when I'm no longer at the helm.

Thank you so much, Mike. Our last question is about the state of the Jewish community. Please share with us your perspective and the role that the JCC plays in shaping the Jewish community in the future.

We're in a golden age of the Jewish people. Think of the miracle of Israel since 1948 and the miracles happening in Israel since then in terms of technology. The global Jewish population has grown to a level close to that before the Holocaust and our connections to Jews around the world abounds. In fact, one could argue that Covid has underscored the power and ease in which we connect which other Jews. And for the first time, experiential programs like overnight camp and Israel travel through Birthright is accessible to all who want to engage. At the same time, there are real challenges that we must confront, in particular increasing polarization in the Jewish community that is reflective of the polarization in our society. Questions about who is a Jew and support of Israel have created fractures in our American Jewish communities. The future of the Jewish world certainly rests on our ability to appreciate and see ourselves as *Klal Yisrael* – one Jewish people. That is part and parcel of the vision I have of the JCC; that on one level we are a physical place where all Jews are welcome, but we are also a place that interfaces with the outside world and builds community for both. So despite the polarization within Judaism and all around us, the JCC provides a platform where we can dialogue, celebrate together, and become more unified.

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COMMUNITY



The Foundation celebrating at 109: Giving. Growing. Together.

BY IRV LEVY

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies has survived two World Wars, several smaller wars, the Great Depression, numerous recessions, the Spanish Flu, and several smaller pandemics. COVID-19 has taken a lot of things away from us, BUT it has also given us many new things. Some of us are enjoying a slower paced life, more time with family, a way to honor our religious commitments without benefit of traditional synagogue gatherings, and the opportunity to see people more frequently, albeit virtually. COVID has given the Foundation the opportunity to re-think how we connect with the community and how we could so in a virtual format.

On October 13th, the Foundation looked back on its past, celebrated some wonderful families, and looked forward to the next 100 years. We did this virtually, with a record number of our community members looking on, and we had a wonderful time. We joined in the community's largest virtual toast, to the next 100 years: "May the Foundation and Jewish Buffalo remain strong, L'Chaim."

The Katz and the Weiss/Awner families shared beautiful stories of lessons passed through the generations, the power of philanthropy and commitment to community service. We spoke about our new website which will be launched early next year where, among other enhancements, the stories of the Katz and Weiss/ Awner families, along with the other members of the Foundation's



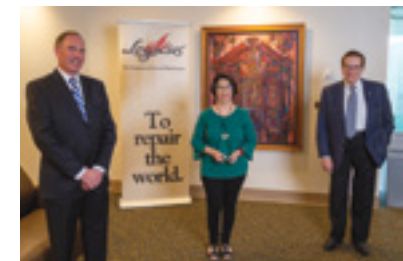
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FJP Executive Director Irv Levy, retiring
CFO Teresa David and Past President
Donald Kohnstamm



New FJP President Jonathan Schechter

Legacy Society, will be permanently preserved. We shared the Foundation's goals for the future, introducing our new logo which is futuristic in design but draws meaning from the spiritual Tree of Life. The Chairs of our event, Gretchen Gross and Kim Yonaty brought together a talented and committed group of volunteers and professionals who had a great time thinking outside of the "box" including delivery of a festive goody "bag" so that we could all celebrate together.

*If you missed the event, you
can see it here at: <https://bit.ly/watchfjpmeeting>.*

*Irv Levy is Executive Director of the
Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies.*



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Join the JCC November 23 for an Evening of Jewish Poetry

Cultural Arts at the JCC presents an evening of Jewish Poetry, Monday, November 23 at 7 p.m. This free virtual event will be streamed on YouTube live making it easily accessible to anyone with a device and Wi-Fi connection. Participating poets include Yehoshua November – a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award, Alicia Ostriker- the current New York State Poet Laureate, Philip Terman- co-founder of the Chautauqua Writers' Festival, and Eleanor Wilner-recipient of the Frost Medal for distinguished lifetime achievement in poetry. More information can be found on the JCC website, www.jccbuffalo.org, including biographies and event details. Registration is required. Please email pquinn@jccbuffalo.org.

The following is an interview by local poet and community member Susan Nusbaum with Philip Terman, one of the poets who also helped to coordinate the event.

Susan Nusbaum: You write so lovingly about your connection to your Jewish heritage. What is it about your childhood and background that instilled this deep sense of appreciation for Jewish liturgy and culture?

Philip Terman: I was raised in a Conservative Jewish home. We kept kosher, celebrated the lighting of the Shabbat candles, and went to Hebrew school, JCC clubs, and Jewish camps in the summer. My immigrant grandmother lived with us after my grandfather passed away, and brought in the Eastern European Yiddish experience. This Jewish background greatly inspired my love for writing—and gave me a multitude of subjects to write about.

Susan Nusbaum: Through detailed stories about real people—family members and neighbors—you are able to explore the joys and dilemmas experienced by ordinary people. How has Judaism influenced the way you tell these stories?

Philip Terman: Jewish culture is filled with stories, starting with the Hebrew Bible. These stories, along with the Biblical injunction to “care for the stranger,” teach empathy, are qualities good writing also teaches us. These stories help inspire me to be attentive to the stories of people I encounter.

Susan Nusbaum: Nature is also a

CULTURAL ARTS AT THE JCC PRESENTS An Evening of Jewish Poetry



Eleanor Wilner



Alicia Ostriker



Yehoshua November



Philip Terman

theme woven into your poems, reflecting on both garden and universe. How has your love for Judaism impacted your appreciation of the natural world?

Philip Terman: A key theme in Judaism is the story of the Garden of Eden, how it represents a paradise. That means we are to honor (and preserve) the natural world and the sacredness of nature. Many poets, such as Walt Whitman, share that theme. Articulating that celebration in poetry is one form of *Tikkun Olam*.

Susan Nusbaum: You have referred to numerous Jewish writers in your poems—Halevi, Spinoza, Maimonides, Kafka, as well as Biblical stories and psalms. How has reading these “scribes” influenced your own writing?

Philip Terman: Much of the inspiration for my writing derives from my reading. That includes reading a spectrum of Jewish writers in that what they write touches the deepest chords. They seem to be torches that spark my small candle.

Susan Nusbaum: You have recently developed a friendship with the Syrian writer, Saleh Razzouk, who has translated some of your poems into Arabic. Can you tell us more about that connection?

Philip Terman: My friendship with Saleh has been most significant. He lives in Aleppo, was raised in a Moslem home, and he experienced the devastating war. His son is one of the many young men who has been missing. He is a writer and translator, and he emailed me because he wished to translate a poem I wrote into Arabic about Franz Kafka. That began our friendship, and a selection of my poems in Arabic! Our interfaith and international friendship has been a fruitful friendship indeed.

Susan Nusbaum: Please tell us about the new Buffalo Jewish Poetry Festival at the JCC you are organizing. Can you divulge any plans?

Philip Terman: In these challenging times, it's important to hear from a plethora of voices. Jewish poets have always played a significant role in our cultural life. The JCC Buffalo Jewish Poetry Series tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2021 will feature poets of national and regional interest that represent poetry's enormous richness and variety. We hope to present a monthly reading and also include an occasional “open mic” event.

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Holocaust Resource Center (HRC) Hosts Kever Avot V'lemahot Ceremony



Before Yom Kippur started on the evening of September 27th, community members gathered at the Holocaust Memorial in Old B'rith Shalom Cemetery to honor the lives of the Six Million Jewish victims of the Holocaust. HRC leaders Wendy Weisbrot, Jeff Blum and Vilona Trachtenberg read names of those who perished and reflected on the lives of those who survived. The ceremony was led by Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum of Temple Beth Tzedek with participation by HRC leaders.

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As we look back on the past year, we're more **grateful** for you than ever. Your support put us in the best position to tackle the challenges of 2020. And while many things are uncertain, you can continue to count on us to care for you and your family.

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Tabouli Salad

Appetizer from Almaza Grill



Ingredients:

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup extra-fine bulgur wheat
2 bunches parsley about 2 cups chopped
1 vine-ripe firm tomatoes
1/2 onion finely chopped and seasoned
with allspice seasoning
Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Parsley – It's a parsley salad so this is the star of the recipe. Make sure to wash the parsley with cold water so it doesn't wilt and dry it thoroughly.

Tomatoes – Get some fresh and ripe tomatoes, and if they are too juicy, you can remove their core before dicing.

Onions – You'll chop it very small. Add a pinch of allspice seasoning to it and mix well. This will give it a subtle taste of onions while blending well with the parsley.

Bulgur – Use *fine* bulgur – the smallest you can find! Bulgur is sold in four numbered grind sizes. You want to look for #1 which is the smallest grind. There is no need to cook this bulgur. It simply needs to be soaked in liquid to become tender.

Lemon Juice – Freshly squeezed, please.

Olive Oil – Go for high quality extra virgin olive oil. You'll notice the taste difference!

Tips to make the best Tabouli: Fine Chopping: Show off your chopping skills here by finely chopping all the vegetables. It's tedious, but the presentation is everything!! Avoid using a food processor, especially for the parsley, which can wilt the parsley and ruin the texture of the salad.

How do you serve Tabouli: You can enjoy this on its own with a side of protein as a meal, or eat it as an appetizer with a side of pita. We like to add a large scoop of the salad into a lettuce leaf and eat it with our hands.

Pumpkin Timbales

BY ROBIN KURSS

These are a delightful side or main served with a salad...a different pumpkin recipe for this time of year! The recipe makes 12 timbales.

1 (28 oz) can pumpkin
2 eggs
1/2 cup sun dried tomatoes, chopped
1 cup roasted red peppers, chopped
3/4 cup cream cheese, room temp and soft
1/4 cup chives, chopped
1/2 cup grated Parmesan
1/2 cup breadcrumbs



Preheat oven to 375. Spray 2 muffin tins with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add pumpkin, chives, sun dried tomatoes, red pepper and cream cheese, Parmesan, bread crumbs, 1 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp pepper and mix well, till combined. Pour into muffin tins and bake for 30 minutes or until firm. Cool for 5-8 minutes before unmolding. Happy Thanksgiving!

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Walking Off Hunger at Congregation Shir Shalom

This year, Walk Off Hunger returned to its roots. The fundraiser for FeedMore WNY couldn't be held in its usual way due to COVID-19, so the organizers came up with a solution that featured a piece of the past.

Instead of one large event, Walk Off Hunger Week was held from October 3-10, featuring meet-up walks at locations throughout Western New York, including Congregation Shir Shalom, where the walk originated in 2008. Walkers gathered there and walked the original route through the neighborhood near the temple. It turned out to be a popular choice, attracting one of the largest gatherings both meet-up days.




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School Days at Ohr Temimim

Ohr Temimim School is a busy, active center of education, despite the rules and regulations of the pandemic. Most of the pre-school and elementary school's students attend weekday classes at the Audubon Parkway site, though some students attend virtually from home. On the day these photos were taken, students were in their classes, in the gym, all socially distant and masked, but attending to their studies and the business of learning, just the same.





Happy Thanksgiving!



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November 21st, 10:30 AM
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TBZ's Holocaust Memorial Torah

BY RALPH HALPERN

Have you ever wondered why one of the Torahs in the Temple Beth Zion Ark is unadorned with a plain cover and no breast plate or crown even on the High Holidays? Here is the story:

That Torah was received by the Temple at the request of then Rabbi Martin L. Goldberg in 1968. It is on permanent loan from Memorial Scrolls Trust based in London, England. The Torah is from a synagogue in the town of Trebic in the Vysocina Region of the Czech Republic destroyed by the Nazis.

Our Torah is one of 1,564 Czech Memorial Torahs which formed part of the treasure which were saved by being collected in Prague during the Nazi occupation 1939-1945 from the desolated Jewish communities of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. These Scrolls were acquired by the London Westminster Synagogue in 1964. These scrolls were then distributed to synagogues throughout the world to be memorials to the Jewish tragedy and a reminder to future generations of that tragedy.

The conditions of the loan include leaving the Scroll unadorned. Thus, the Scroll has no breast plate, finials or crown. Its mantle or cover is plain. It must be retained in the Temple Ark and must be read at least once each year. TBZ has complied with these conditions over the years by leaving the Scroll unadorned and reading from it on Yom Kippur.

The Memorial Scrolls Trust has provided the following history of our Memorial Torah which is identified as MST Scroll #1527. The history of this Scroll begins in Trebic and travels through Prague to London and then to Buffalo.

Prague

The Jewish Museum in Prague was created in 1906. At the time the Nazis occupied the Bohemia and Moravia portions of Czechoslovakia. In March 1939, the collection contained some 760 items. Although the German authorities immediately began to enforce racial anti-Jewish laws the day the Protectorate was established, the Jewish Museum in Prague continued to exist. In September 1941, the Nazis banned the holding of Jewish services and in December 1941 the Museum became a storehouse for items taken from the empty Prague synagogues.

Orders from the Nazi regime in 1942 required all communities in Bohemia and



The Holocaust Torah is the scroll in the middle of the top row, unadorned by a breast plate.

Moravia to send their "historically valuable" items to the Jewish Museum in Prague. Some members of Prague's Jewish community persuaded the Nazis to allow them to bring other religious treasures from the deserted communities and destroyed synagogues to the comparative safety of Prague. More than 212,000 artifacts were brought to the Museum. Among them were about 1,800 Torah scrolls. Each item was meticulously recorded, labelled and entered on a card index by the Museum's staff with a description and the place it had come from.

The Nazis' interest in the museum most probably developed from a number of practical problems that had to be resolved. The main reason is clear - the museum enabled the Nazis to gain in a short period of time in-depth knowledge about confiscated Jewish objects that were of particular value. It is clear that the Nazis had no experts for such specialist work as the registration and evaluation of confiscated Jewish artifacts or their artistic or historical value. It is possible that the Nazis saw the museum as a special department for the collection, documentation, storage and evaluation of confiscated Jewish property. What the Nazis had in mind was a museum to show the artifacts of a people that, according to their plans, would no longer exist.

After the War

After World War II, some fifty Jewish congregations re-established themselves in what then was Czechoslovakia and were provided with religious artifacts, not necessarily from their own communities. When the Communists took over the government of the

country in 1948, Jewish communal life was again stifled and most synagogues were closed. Their possessions went to the newly re-founded Jewish Museum of Prague. The scrolls were transferred and warehoused in the ruined synagogue at Michle outside Prague, where they remained until they came to London in 1964

London

In 1963, the Czech Communist government approached an art dealer to ask if he was interested in buying some Torahs and other scrolls. He approached a client, Ralph Yablon, who discussed the situation with Harold Reinhart, the Rabbi of the London Westminster Synagogue. It was decided to ask a Professor of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College, London to examine the scrolls in Prague and report on their authenticity and condition. On receipt of the report, Ralph Yablon generously agreed to fund the purchase of the 1,564 scrolls that arrived in London in February 1964.

The Memorial Scrolls Trust, a charity, was set up by Westminster Synagogue and the scrolls have subsequently been loaned to communities and organizations around the world, including Buffalo. The scrolls are never sold or donated, but are on permanent loan. Synagogues that close or merge are obliged to return their scroll to the Trust.

The full story of how the scrolls came to London can be found in the book *Out of the Midst of the Fire* by Philippa Bernard, available at the Memorial Scrolls Trust store in London.

Trebic

Trebic is a town in the Vysocina Region of the Czech Republic located in southwest Moravia, 19 miles southeast of Jihlava and 34 miles west of Brno. The Jewish Quarter of Trebic still exists in its historical layout and was listed in 2003 in the UNESCO World Heritage List along with the Jewish cemetery.

It is one of the best preserved European Jewish ghettos and includes 123 houses and two synagogues. Because there are no longer any Jews remaining in Trebic, these buildings which also includes the Town Hall, the rabbi's house, the poorhouse, the school and the Jewish hospital, are no

longer used for their original purposes.

The Jewish community of Trebic was one of the oldest in Moravia. An unconfirmed oral tradition claimed that a synagogue was built in the town in 938. There are other, similarly unconfirmed Moravian chronicles that attest to existence of a Jewish community in Trebic during the 11th century.

The first documentary evidence of the community dates to 1410 and concerns an attack on the Jews and a robbery. Later, Jewish issues were included in the municipal regulations of 1583. In 1604 the majority of the merchants in Trebic were Jews. The synagogue was built in 1639 and renovated in 1757 as well as on a number of other occasions. It was still standing in 1938. Another synagogue was built in 1707 but was sold in the 1920s. Beginning in 1727, Jews were forced to live separately from their Christian neighbors in a Jewish ghetto.

It was not until 1848 that Jews throughout the Austrian Empire, which then included Czechoslovakia, were emancipated with residence and economic restrictions removed. Trebic Jews were then permitted to live where they chose. As a result of this new freedom of movement, however, the Jewish population of Trebic began to decline as Jews left for Vienna, Brno, Jihlava and other large cities. Whereas in 1799 there were 1,770 Jews living in the Jewish quarter of Trebic, in 1850 the community numbered 1,605 and by 1890 the Jewish population dropped to 987.

Trebic's Jewish population continued to drop during the 20th century. In 1900 there were 756 Jews living in the town, in 1921 there were 362 and in 1930 only 300. Among the notable natives of Trebic were Wolfgang Wessely (1801-1870), the first Jewish university professor in Austria; Adolf Kurrein (1846-1919), one of the first Zionist rabbis in Austria; and Sigmund Taussig (1840-1910), a pioneer in the field of hydro-engineering.

In May 1942, 1,370 Jews from the Jihlava Province were assembled in Trebic and deported to the Terezin Ghetto. From there they were sent to concentration and death camps. 35 Jews from Trebic survived the War.

Ten Jews from Trebic who survived the War re-established a small synagogue in the town in 1945. In 1957 a memorial tablet for the victims of the Holocaust was dedicated. Today there are no Jews living in Trebic. More information can be viewed on the website of the Trust www.memorialscrollstrust.org.

Attorney Ralph Halpern is a past President of Temple Beth Zion.

Temple Beth Tzedek enters 5781 celebrating community and health

It has been an active few months at TBT as Rabbi Rosenbaum and President Marcia Goldstein have worked with Cantor Spindler, Temple staff and a dedicated cadre of members to create safe services, learning and programming. Recent highlights included a unique High Holy Day season, new classes by Rabbi Rosenbaum, Men's Club events, youth services at Camp Centerland, drive-thru flu shots, and Pizza in the Hut for Sukkot, and more.



Jewish Repertory Theatre presents Bar Mitzvah Boy

The Jewish Repertory Theatre is proud to present a filmed Staged Reading of *Bar Mitzvah Boy*, by Mark Leiren-Young, available for digital download, November 5-25, 2020. This is the first selection in a series of Five Staged Readings, performed on the JRT stage and seen, through the magic of video, wherever audiences choose to enjoy.

Bar Mitzvah Boy tells the story of a non-observant Jewish grandfather/successful divorce attorney who decides he needs to have a Bar Mitzvah ASAP and finds his faith during study with a rabbi who seems to be losing hers. This heartfelt comedy/drama explores faith, religion, and what it means to be part of a community. This production stars Artie Award winning Buffalo actors Peter Palmisano and Diane Di Bernardo and is directed by JRT Artistic Director Saul Elkin.

Mark Leiren-Young is a Victoria, British Columbia based Canadian playwright, author, journalist, screenwriter, filmmaker and performer. He won the 2017 Writers Guild of Canada Award for Best Documentary for "The Hundred-Year-Old Whale," and is recipient of a Bron Iris Award, Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour, National Magazine award and Western Magazine Awards. In 2017 *Bar Mitzvah Boy* was the winner of the Jewish Playwriting Contest of the Jewish Plays Project.

Bar Mitzvah Boy will be filmed and edited



Mark Leiren-Young as a Bar Mitzvah boy

by Full Circle Studios, a Buffalo video production company that specializes in making on screen arts experiences engaging and exciting.

The Jewish Repertory Theatre of Western New York is a program of the JCC of Greater Buffalo. Five play season subscription is \$80 and individual tickets are \$20. Each of the five plays will be available for 21 days, November 2020 – March 2021. Unique links to the online video performances will be sent to subscribers and ticket holders shortly before the opening nights.

For more information on JRT, productions, dates and tickets, visit www.jewishrepertorytheatre.com. Tickets also at JRT Box Office: 716-650-7626.

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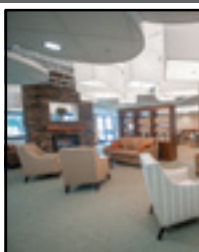
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If you plan to be away from your permanent address this winter and will have your first class mail forwarded to your temporary address and would like to continue to receive *The Jewish Journal*, please call Joan Kwiatkowski at 716-204-2242 to give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

Holiday Reflections from Hillel of Buffalo Students

Each year during the High Holidays, students involved with Hillel are asked to speak about what being Jewish means to them. This annual tradition gives these students a platform to share stories that are unique to their lives, and yet echo the feelings and experiences of so many of their peers. Here are some excerpts from this year's student speakers:



Chloe

Chloe Komorowski
Junior, Rochester

Growing up in a town with one of the largest Jewish populations in Rochester, I was always surrounded by people who shared the same values as I did. We even got off for the Jewish holidays. I thought this was pretty normal until coming to college, where I didn't get the Jewish holidays off and had to miss class. I felt like an outsider coming to UB at first and didn't want to bring up my religion at all, not knowing how people would react. I feel as though there is always something circulating the internet bashing the Jewish faith and the people and it can be very scary sometimes, but I've been told to stay true to myself.

I did exactly that my freshman year when I found Jewish Student Union, Chabad, and Hillel of Buffalo at UB. All three of these places really opened my eyes and I didn't feel as though I should hide that I was Jewish anymore. I really opened up about my religion, and this past year even had an internship through Hillel of Buffalo. Through the internship, I grew even more with my Jewish values and was proud to be Jewish at UB. I proudly wear my Hillel shirt, sweatshirt, sweatpants, and even stickers on my laptop.

I think being Jewish has given me the chance to be open with people and learn about other people's values/beliefs while they learn about mine. Not everyone knew about my Jewish beliefs or values and I didn't know theirs either, no matter what religion. I think being Jewish on such a big college campus has also given me the opportunity to branch out and meet

other people, as well as experience and appreciate our differences. No matter where we grew up or how, we are all people, and are all at college for a similar reason, to better ourselves and get ready for a career to better our future.



Blake in Israel

Blake Lobel
Senior, New Jersey

When asked the question "what does it mean to be Jewish" I have one response: community. Being Jewish when I was young was quite honestly confusing. I was one of 3 kids in my grade who practiced Judaism and I was always the "go-to" about anything Jewish.

One of my favorite memories as a kid was calling my mom after eating a MASSIVE ice cream sundae at a Junior youth group sleep over with the Senior youth group. The kids running this program were all high schoolers and I wasn't, so I thought they were *sooo* old. Fast forward a few years to my freshman year of high school when I was first able to be on the Senior youth group board. I started as the freshman rep and I was finally able to join the community of kids I looked up to for so long. When the curtain pulled back, I learned that these kids were just that – kids. I learned a very valuable lesson: these kids have the ability to be so much more than themselves, because they became a community.

Hillel has been and will stay my community on campus. The staff have been there for me. Rabbi Sara Rich sat down with me when I was going through tough times and offered me words of wisdom. Logan King has been there for me for the good the bad, and now Macie Clawson has been a shining face to see recently. Judaism through my life has been about the community. Judaism is not something that should be practiced alone. We need a minyan. We need a community to pray with, to connect with and honestly, to grow and learn with. I am so lucky to speak here today in front of you and I hope you find your community here in Buffalo, or wherever it may be.


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<i>May you be sincere</i>	<i>May you be strong</i>	
<i>May you be open minded</i>	<i>May you be at peace</i>	
<i>May you be honest</i>	<i>May you be at harmony</i>	
<i>May you be easy going</i>	<i>May you be vibrant</i>	



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Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

1933-2020

Everything Ruth Bader Ginsburg

BY NANCY DAVIDOFF KELTON

Ruth Bader Ginsburg died on Rosh Hashanah, which was also my birthday. My husband, Jonathan, and I found out on 'breaking news' on our cellphones minutes after I blew out my candle, made a long wish, and ate my cookie and homemade ice cream at Gramercy Tavern in the middle of Manhattan's 20th Street at our socially distant table. No, no! We reached for each other's hands. And cried.

Our waitress had told us that Hallie Meyer, owner Danny Meyer's daughter, made the delicious ice cream and owns a café on Irving Place called Caffé Panna. Wanting to offer praise and share kind words, rather than go home to watch CNN, we walked to Caffé Panna, introduced ourselves, told Hallie we just ate her delicious ice cream at Gramercy, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg died. Her mother already called her with the news.

Hallie gave us a pint to take home. Just like that. I am a longtime fan of Danny Meyer's restaurants and kindness. He majored in emotional intelligence.

Which brings me to Ruth Bader Ginsburg, her emotional intelligence, Her Everything. I have never grieved for someone who is not a family member as I have been for her. What I am about to say does not compare in depth and breadth to those who have been writing about her, but I want to share some thoughts:

1. How lucky we are to have had this super heroic amazing woman change our worlds.
2. How terrifying our country has become.
3. How terrifying to think of our future Supreme Court.
4. I pray we all carry RBG inside us in big and small ways.
5. I have already listened to Glenn Gould play Bach's *Goldberg Variations* twice. My mother took me to a Glenn Gould piano concert in 1955 at which he played it. In a recent *NY Times* op-ed piece, a writer wrote how much Ruth and Marty loved the piece with Gould playing it.
6. Marty.
7. Her husband, greatest fan, great love, and true partner, was a mensch among mensches.
8. I pray more men get in touch with their inner Martys.
9. My husband is a Marty.
10. My champion. My partner. My love.
11. His cooking and kindness fill our home.
12. He deserves more than these few items on this list.



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (z"l)

13. And more than my repeatedly telling him I love and appreciate him.
14. I appreciate my mother, gone now 20 years, more than ever.
15. And not just because she introduced me to Glenn Gould.
16. I regret not showing her more appreciation and love.
17. In interviews, RBG often spoke of her mother's influence, early death, and how much she missed her.
18. I am missing my family in California every day and in every way. They occupy the core of my heart.
19. I am so grateful for them, our Facetimes, and their love.

20. I have watched the movie, *On the Basis of Sex*, many times and am awed by how Ruth Bader Ginsburg spoke, got in the last word, and brilliantly and quietly made her points.
21. Brilliantly, I cannot do.
22. I am working on quietly.
23. And staying focused, engaged, kind, and available to my family, friends, students, readers, country, and myself.
24. Ruth Bader Ginsburg is the best, most influential role model we have ever had.
25. I am grateful for all she did, all she was, and all she means to us. May her memory be a blessing.
26. I revere her.

Nancy Davidoff Kelton, raised in Buffalo and now living in New York City, is the author of 7 books, including *Writing from Personal Experience*, and her memoir, *Finding Mr. Rightstein*, which she adapted into a play with the same title. The staged reading at the Jewish Repertory Theatre of Western New York of *Finding Mr. Rightstein*, which had been scheduled for June 8, 2020, was postponed and will be presented by the JRT and the JCC in the future. Nancy's essays have been published in *The Buffalo News*, *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *AARP*, *Next Avenue*, *Parents*, and elsewhere.

This essay first appeared October 1 in *The Forward*. It is reprinted by permission of the author.

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A remembrance of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

BY STAN POLOVETS

As Rosh Hashanah began on Friday evening, September 18, we all learned the sad news of the passing of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. America lost a judicial pioneer; the world, a champion for the rights of women, minorities and the disadvantaged; the Jewish community, one of its proudest daughters. And our Foundation has lost a dear friend.



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and with Genesis Foundation Chair Stan Polovets at the Kotel in 2018.

Two years ago, Justice Ginsburg was selected unanimously by all previous Genesis Prize Laureates to be honored with the inaugural Genesis Lifetime Achievement Award. She enthusiastically traveled to Israel in July 2018 to receive the award from former President of the Israeli Supreme Court Aharon Barak in the presence of every member of the Israeli Supreme Court and other dignitaries. In bestowing the award, President Barak said, “Without a doubt, Justice Ginsburg is one of the great legal minds of our time; an outstanding Jewish jurist, whose fearless pursuit of human rights, equality and justice for all stems from her Jewish values.”

While in Israel, Justice Ginsburg met with leaders of Israeli women’s organizations and hundreds of activists—Jews, Arabs, Christians, Druze, and Bedouin – to learn more about women’s empowerment issues in Israel and to encourage their work to improve the lives of women and girls. In Justice Ginsburg’s honor, and in partnership with Israeli philanthropist Morris Kahn and other funders, The Genesis Prize Foundation granted \$3.5 million to fifty women’s organizations in Israel and the United States to support gender equality,

There is a Jewish teaching that those who die just before Rosh Hashanah are the ones God has held back until the last moment because they were needed most and were the most righteous. May her memory be for a blessing.

empowerment to resist violence and socio-economic opportunity for women.

Over the Holy Day weekend, even in the midst of the Rosh Hashanah holiday, Israeli television and press dedicated significant time and space covering her passing and highlighting her 2018 visit to Israel. On a personal note, it was the honor of a lifetime to have spent significant and meaningful time with Justice Ginsburg. While frail, she held my hand in a strong grip as we visited the Western Wall during her first visit to Israel in almost a quarter of a century. And, as we both knew then, probably her last one...

Stan Polovets is Chairman & Co-Founder of the The Genesis Prize Foundation, which awarded Justice Ginsburg its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018.

In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from September 22-October 20*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

Raymond L. Fales

Myra N. Falk

Neil Goodman

Michele Harnick

Merle Sue Kramer

William Mahaney III

Jay Rosenthal

Dr. Eli Ruckenstein

David William Schwartz

Phyllis Siegel

Linda Snitzer

Sally Fink Teibel

Sanford J. Zeman



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



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Celebrating the Jewish New Year at a Drive-In: Another COVID-19 First

BY VICKIE RUBIN

The English year is 2020. The new Jewish Year, 5781, started in late September. 2020 or 5780 has been weird, horrific, and unforgettable. But, the year has also achieved some positives.

I am Jewish, and turned 63 on October 1st. I like to think upper-middle-age, but I know it is in fact lower-old-age. Yet, even after all these years, I still needed to look up the definition of the Jewish calendar for this essay. Why is it year 5781? Wikipedia says, in part, *the lunisolar calendar is used today predominantly for Jewish religious observances.*

Next, I asked my Rabbi to explain and he replied, “The standard calendar dates to the birth of Jesus. The Jewish one is meant to go back all the way to Adam and Eve, using the dates in scripture as reference points (I.e.



Vickie Rubin

seven days of Creation, plus forty days of the Flood, and so on and so forth). And, unlike our normal calendar, the starting point is September.

I was glad to say bye-bye to 5780 (2019-2020) and hello to 5781 (2020-2021). I was excited that we got to celebrate a New Year earlier than January 1st.

I was hoping for a bright new beginning, a change in something, or perhaps a miracle cure to end the virus. A girl can dream, right?

wheelchair (my older daughter Jessica always attends Temple with us and due to COVID-19 and her vulnerability, she was unable to join us this year), your hair is now blonde (yes, it was dark brown last year), and you are wearing a mask!” Ok, so I was not recognizable.

We looked to the snack bar building, and



Photo by Bruce Corris

Day one of 5781 started great! Our Temple, Congregation Shir Shalom, hosted the service at the drive-in theater. My daughter Carly and I planned to attend. How do you dress for a drive-in holy ceremony? We had no idea what to expect. Typically, we “dress up” for the holidays, but nothing about this year was customary. We decided to wear casual office attire, although neither of us works in an office. Nothing too fancy, yet we were not in sweat pants, which have been my traditional COVID-19 outfit.

As soon as we arrived at the drive-in, we were greeted by masked Temple members who were directing traffic. Yes, traffic! There were a lot of people attending! As we drove into the lot, we were surprised by all the cars, and more were coming! Carly and I were guided to our parking spot by another volunteer and quickly took out our lawn chairs and gazed at the crowd. It was hard to recognize people because of the masks and vastness of the parking lot. We said, “Hi!” to some members and appreciated the normalcy of greeting fellow congregants on Rosh Hashanah, even though we were all covered up and at a distance.

To my surprise, nobody recognized me! My daughter summed it up quickly. “Mom, people are used to seeing you push Jessica’s

high on the roof was our beloved Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein and Cantor Arlene Frank. I felt like it was the last Beatles on the rooftop concert! We all set our radios to station 87.9 to hear our clergy, and the beautiful service began. We participated! We sang! We prayed! We celebrated! We blew our car horns instead of raising our hands!

It struck me about the wonder of human nature and how we can take all the difficulty of this past year and create a meaningful celebration to welcome the New Year! I was proud of our Temple, our clergy, our congregants, and our spirit of hope for the future. I wish you a happy, healthy, and sweet year that includes a cure for COVID-19. Amen!

Vickie Rubin has been married to Mitch Rubin for more than 40 years. They have three children and three grandchildren. She started writing her blog Vickie’s Views (<https://vickierubin.com/>) in March 2020, about the same time we were all told, “DON’T LEAVE THE HOUSE!” Her book, Raising Jess: A Story of Hope has a planned publication date of early 2021.

This story first appeared in The Buffalo News as a “My View” column September 29, 2020. It is reprinted by permission of the author.

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