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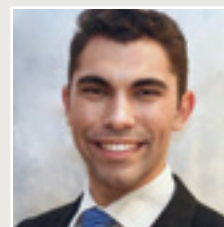
THE JEWISH JOURNAL

A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

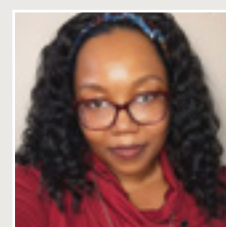
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JUNE 2021 | SIVAN-TAMMUZ 5781

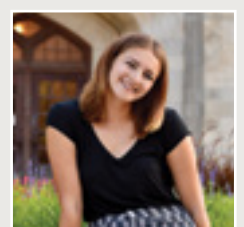
Celebrating
our
100th Issue!



INSIDE:
Gratitude
(12)



LOOK:
Spotlight
(15)



DON'T MISS:
Anti-Bullying
(20)



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June 2021

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Wow! 100 issues of *The Jewish Journal of WNY*. It feels like 100 years ago, and at the same time I remember working feverishly to get the first issue out in time to reach homes before March 1. I must note that the 100th issue really didn't become an issue for the first 7 years. I really only thought of the next month! What's on the cover? Which rabbi will write a message? Are there any Jewish or American holidays to pivot around? Which important events are happening? What's going on in Israel? Who is the next Federation president? Does my printer have enough ink for 4 proof copies?

And then came the first pandemic issue in May 2020, and the concern now became "given all the restrictions, how do we get a monthly newspaper put together, printed and delivered?" But we adjusted and worked together to create it with excellence.

And here we are—the 100th issue, and I am thrilled that we have arrived at this day—older, wiser, and more cohesive as a community. And really, no matter what the problem has been—pandemic, paper supply, finding fun food recipes to share, the U.S. Post Office, changes at Spree Publications or at Buffalo Jewish Federation, international travel and time differences, the solution has always been the same: together, we can get anything done.

And indeed we have. This newspaper has been a team effort between Spree Publications and the Buffalo Jewish Federation. Spree has been responsible for selling ads which enable the paper to exist, creating the systems which pull the entire printing and mailing enterprise together, and designing one gorgeous community newspaper for 100 consecutive months no matter the weather, pandemic or individual circumstances.

The Federation staff from top to bottom has enabled the creation of stories to be featured, personality profiles to be written, events to be promoted, photos to be snapped, graphics to be designed, ideas to be explored, manuscripts to be proofed, mailing lists to be created, fixed and improved, and so much more. It has taken a very talented, generous, patient, intelligent village to bring you *The Jewish Journal* every month. And I thank them all.

But I would like to specifically recognize Rob Goldberg, Miriam Abramovich, Jill Komm, and Joan Kwiatkowski from Federation for their time, effort and enthusiasm for this project, and Sharon Levite, Barbara Macks, Kim Miers, Cynthia Oppenheimer, Keren Green and the production staff from *Buffalo Spree* for their talent, good ideas and good humor. I would also like to thank my sister, Amy Goldstein, for proofreading every single one of the 100 issues for errors and typos. I would also like to thank the many, many members of our glorious community who have taken time and effort to send in stories, art, photographs and ideas which have kept this paper going.

And finally, a huge thank you to Larry Levite (z"l) for taking a chance on me with the new Spree/Federation joint publication in 2013. He gave me the opportunity of a lifetime. I can never repay

his kindness, wisdom and friendship. But I can endeavor to pass on his enormous love of the Jewish community through *The Jewish Journal of WNY*.

Ellen Goldstein

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

On The Cover



The Jewish Journal of WNY celebrates its 100th issue with glimpses of the past eight years. Cover Design by Kim Miers.

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President.....**Shelly Yellen**
Editor.....**Ellen S. Goldstein**



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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it "illegal to advertise "based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis.

Celebrating a Milestone!

Congratulations and thank you to Jewish Buffalo as we enjoy the 100th edition of *The Jewish Journal*. We are grateful to the many professionals and volunteers who have worked with passion and dedication to create our wonderful community paper.

The Jewish Journal has become a welcome read in our homes. It provides us with interesting articles about people, places, and current events. For me, I am always amazed at the variety of community programs and activities on the calendar, designed to appeal to a cross section of Jewish Buffalo. I want to recognize Ellen Goldstein and the entire *Jewish Journal* staff for putting together a wonderful newspaper that helps us all stay connected.

This 100th edition marks a special opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate a milestone in our community. As such, I want to share with you some thoughts on how the evolution of the Buffalo Jewish Federation (BJF) and the impact of our community partnership is reflected in *The Jewish Journal* since the first edition was published in March 2013.

As mentioned in past articles, the BJF has morphed from primarily a fund-raising organization to one focused on engagement. This has been an intentional shift in direction by leadership to provide services and



Shelly Yellen

opportunities aligned with the needs of the community. Evidence of this can be seen throughout *The Jewish Journal* as it is filled with programs and events that are “powered by the Buffalo Jewish Federation.”

In recent years, we have seen significant reshaping of the agencies and organizations that comprise Jewish Buffalo. Some of our synagogues have merged and relocated and others have been revitalized. The number of agencies has been reduced as The Bureau of Jewish Education and The Holocaust Resource Center are now part of the BJF umbrella. Many of the terrific articles

and stories you read about in *The Jewish Journal* reflect the enhanced services and support that can be offered as part of the BJF.

Collaboration has become an everyday part of planning as we have adopted the realization that by working together, our individual organizations are better and our community is stronger. Our professional leaders are finding innovative and creative ways to maximize resources and engage passionate and dedicated volunteers. These collaborative efforts play out in *The Jewish Journal* as you can see the variety of programs, celebrations, and services that are now being offered.

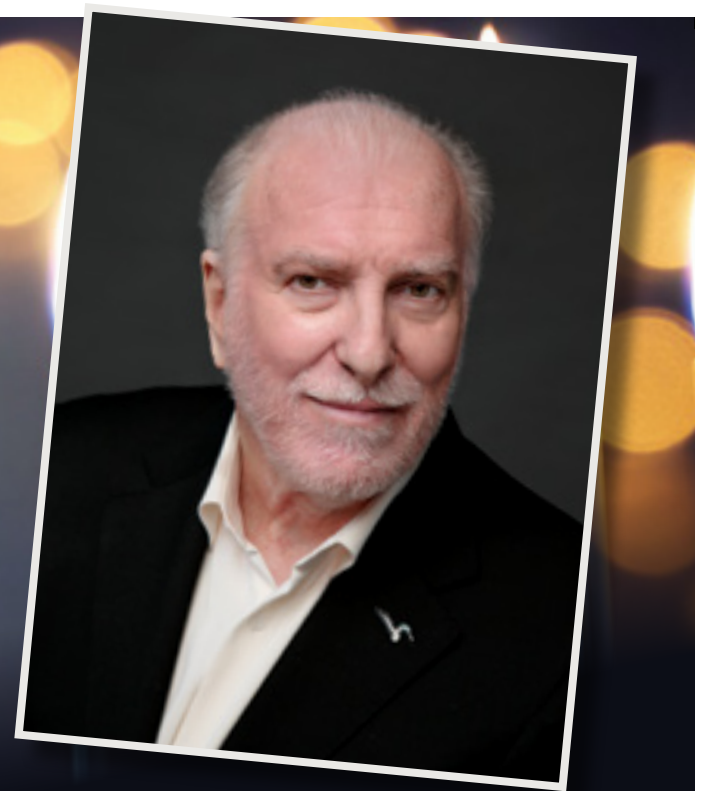
Priorities are shifting and activities now center on inclusion, engagement, belonging, social and racial justice, the environment, and security. Technology has evolved and now we are easily able to connect with others on local, national, and international levels. To this end, our P2G Partnership program, with Leslie Shuman Kramer now serving as the program’s national co-chair and Laurie Sadler as our local chair, along with a dedicated council, are leading the effort to create a meaningful program with partner communities in North America and Israel. *The Jewish Journal* provides the opportunity to share these changes with you, keep us informed, and provide opportunities for participation.

Fundraising has also changed. While the primacy of the Annual Campaign for Jewish Buffalo remains, we strive to engage donors in other meaningful and personal ways. As you may be aware, we recently joined in partnership with the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies to bring the Life and Legacy initiative to Jewish Buffalo. Led by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, Buffalo was determined to have the right professional and volunteer leadership in place to take advantage of their program. Designed around legacy giving, organizations in Jewish Buffalo that have elected to participate will design programs that will offer donors the benefits of providing for future generations. This program offers Jewish Buffalo another way for agencies, synagogues, and community organizations to collaborate and grow... and once again, be better together!

On another note, please join me in thanking the **Made In Buffalo** Committee for putting together a very creative and successful virtual event (see page 6). If you have not yet seen (over 8,000 views and counting), please type in the following link into your browser: <http://bit.ly/watchmadeinbflo>. Kudos to Chair Margie Bryen and committee including Joni Shatkin, Leslie Kramer, Nancy Sterman, Susan Grelick, Cheryl Stern, Tom Kochan, Miriam Abramovich, Jill Komm, and Rob Goldberg.

Please reach out to share your thoughts at syellen@buffalojewishfederation.org. Sending you much warmth and appreciation.

We Dedicate
this 100th issue of
The Jewish Journal of WNY
to our friend and mentor
Larry Levite (z”l)



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- Jewish Buffalo has had a partnership with 16 US communities, as well as Budapest, Hungary, that connects us to the Western Galilee region of Israel for the past 3 years
- Piloting the program *Tsfutsot Basalon: Partnership in Your Living Room* to facilitate dialogue between American and Israeli Jews

COMMEMORATION, CELEBRATION & CONVERSATION MICRO-GRANTS

- \$4,500 in grants were awarded to local partners to create engaging and fresh experiences/initiatives focusing on Yom Hashoah, Yom HaZikaron & Yom Ha'Atzmaut

OVERSEAS PARTNER GRANTS

- \$214,300 was awarded to The Jewish Agency for Israel, The American Joint Distribution Committee, and World ORT, as well as six new non-profit organizations in Israel

TASTE OF ISRAEL GOODY BAGS

- 252 students at The Park School received special treats to celebrate Israel's 73rd birthday

Caring for each other is what the Campaign for Jewish Buffalo makes possible, every minute of every day. And we've been doing this for over a century. Your support helps us continue the important work of Connecting to Israel and Global Jewry and so much more.

Please consider making your gift today: [BUFFALOJEWISHFEDERATION.ORG/DONATE](https://buffalojewishfederation.org/donate)

To Infinity and Beyond

BY RABBI ALEX LAZARUS-KLEIN

Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein of Congregation Shir Shalom contributed the very first Rabbi's Column for *The Jewish Journal*. We are excited to invite him back to write the column for the 100th issue.

In Pixar's *Toy Story* Buzz Lightyear famously exclaims, "To infinity and beyond!" But, what did he actually mean by those words?

Mathematicians at Harvard and MIT have actually debated the issue in an almost Talmudic fashion, proposing two separate theories. Medical reporter Dr. Simon Gupta represents the first alternative, suggesting that it refers to a "function which approaches a certain number and never actually reaches it." In other words, the saying implies Buzz Lightyear does not quite make his final destination no matter how much he tries.

"Not so fast," says Dr. Benjamin Hernandez, a California based MD, who suggests it is about being able to cross both the vertical and horizontal asymptotes, the line on a curve that approaches, but never actually touches the curve. In this case, Buzz Lightyear does the impossible, breaking the very laws of mathematics itself.

When the Buffalo Jewish Federation started publishing *The Jewish Journal* some eight years ago, the 100th issue seemed like a long, long way away, almost like going, "to infinity and beyond." The Hebrew equivalent would be the expression, *ad me'ah v'esrim*, "until one-hundred and twenty," the age of Moses when he died, an age still almost impossible to reach despite advances in technology and medicine.

Me'ah the Hebrew word for "one hundred" is amazing in its own right. In the book of *Bereshit* (*Genesis*), chapter 26, Isaac sowed his land "*me'ah sha'arim*," one hundred fold. This is the name given to one of the oldest neighborhoods in Jerusalem, a neighborhood that at one time had one hundred gates, another translation of the Hebrew word "*sha'arim*." The cool thing about the expression from the Torah is that according to Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) the letters in *me'ah sha'arim* add up to 666, a number the Vilna Gaon said in the 18th Century, "contains hidden within it exalted and lofty messianic potential." The rabbis believed there were six possible directions, thus the number 666 extended infinitely. The actual word



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein

for infinity in Hebrew is *Ein Sof*, without end, a mystical name for God.

Going back to the earlier debate between Harvard and MIT professors, our human attempts to get "to infinity and beyond" would, as Dr. Gupta suggests, always fall short. Therefore even approaching such a milestone should be a cause of celebration. In this spirit, a hearty *Mazel Tov* to the entire staff of our Federation for this important milestone. May you continue with your important work "to infinity and beyond!"

Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein is Rabbi of Congregation Shir Shalom and Rabbinic Consultant for Buffalo's JCRC.



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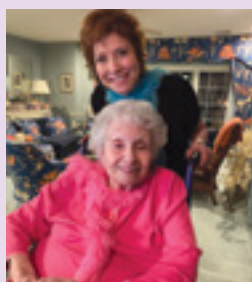
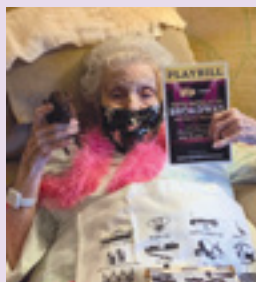
To Buffalo with Love

FROM CHERYL STERN

They say you can't go home again but thanks to the amazing team at the Buffalo Jewish Federation, I was welcomed home with so much love and joy that I can barely articulate how deeply grateful I am to have had this honor and opportunity to see so many old friends and make so many new ones. Truly feeling the Buffalolove!



We had so much fun dressing up at the pre-show meet and greet and Norma [my mother] got into the spirit and insisted on dressing in her new "preppy pink" sweater from Talbots to match her swag bag boa! Thank you to Rob Goldberg, Susan Goldberg Schwartz, Susan Grelick, Joni Schwartz Shatkin, Nancy Fernandez, the whole MIB team and our joyous, brilliant and fearless leader, Marjorie Godin Bryen!



FROM BUFFALO TO BROADWAY

WAITING IN THE WINGS

Joy to the Community

FROM CHAIR MARGIE GODIN BRYEN

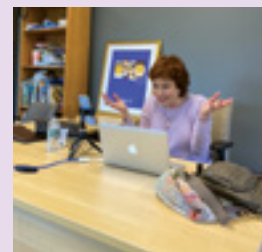
Everything went off in spectacular fashion from the incredible number of guests that registered (more than 400) to attend the live event, to the more than 7700 views (as of May 6) of the show, to the beautiful swag bags with such attention to detail and class with its contents, to the reach of the event – participants watching the live show from coast to coast (and UK and Israel too), to the donations we pulled in to establish a grant for local performer(s) to continue to work in the arts, to the impactful masterclass for the High School students that engaged with Cheryl, to of course the amazing performances themselves and the show production. Wow!! It's great to bring joy to the community.

If you missed the show, here you go!

<http://bit.ly/WATCHMADEINBFL>

Cheryl Giving Back

One day after her **Made in Buffalo** premiere of *From Buffalo to Broadway: Waiting in the Wings*, Buffalo born writer and actress Cheryl Stern, led a two-hour virtual "masterclass" with four outstanding High School students. Joining Cheryl via Zoom on Monday afternoon, April 26 were Adrianna Schreck, Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart; Parker Levin, Williamsville East HS; Rebekah Grande, Amherst Central HS; and Charlie Smith from Buffalo Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts. These students were selected from a pool of applicants to prepare a song or monologue for Cheryl to critique. Cheryl also spoke with the four about their future plans including the college audition process and working professionally in Theatre.



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Larry's Legacy

BY ELLEN GOLDSTEIN

We dedicate this 100th issue of *The Jewish Journal of WNY (JJWNY)* to Larry Levite, the late publisher of *Buffalo Spree*, former owner of WBEN Radio and Buffalo Broadcast Hall of Fame member.

Larry was pivotal in the creation of *JJWNY*. In 2012, when Mike Wise became Executive Director of the Federation, he and Larry had a few “newspaper” conversations and the *JJWNY* was born. The first issue debuted in March 2013, and it was Larry who created the foundation with which a Federation paper produced by *Spree Publications* could be possible.

First, in 2012, he and then Associate Publisher/Senior Vice President of Sales—now Publisher—Barbara Macks hired Cynthia Oppenheimer as *JJWNY* Sales Director and brought the production and design departments of *Spree* to work with me after I was named editor by Federation. And it all came together, enabling us to create 100 issues of *The Jewish Journal* through snow, sleet, Buffalo winters, Buffalo summers, moving offices, a changing cast of characters, world events and a pandemic that that wreaked havoc locally and worldwide.

Today, Rob Goldberg is Federation CEO and he and I work closely together to shape the paper, bringing our collective passion for community to the ever-inclusive, informative stories and features within the *Journal's* pages.

Barbara Macks is our amazing Publisher and has so deftly navigated the enormous undertaking of running the paper and all of the other publications produced by *Buffalo Spree*. Barbara saw to it that our monthly paper and all of the mailing system's problems caused by COVID didn't

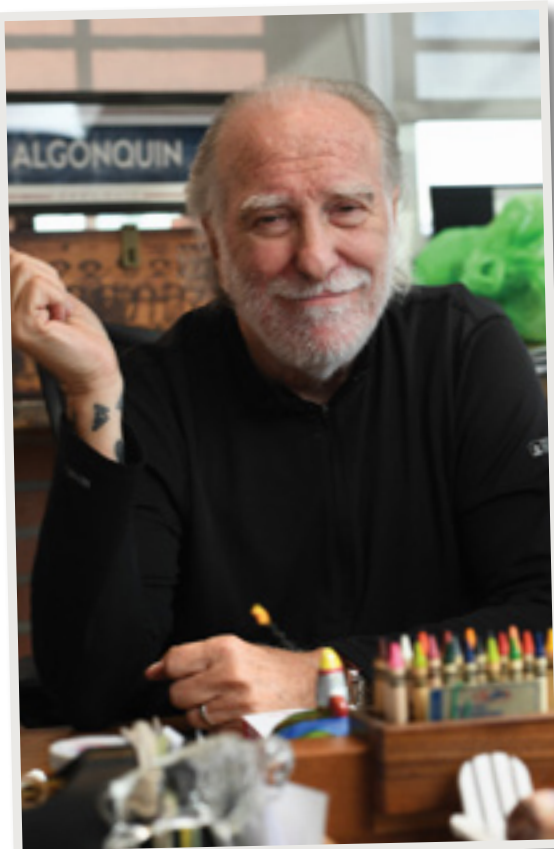
prevent us from ensuring the paper arrived in your homes on time.

Barbara served at Larry's side for 21 years and today oversees Larry's legacy as *Buffalo Spree* Publisher. “Without Larry and his vision there would have been no *Jewish Journal*. I'm so very proud to have my name at the top of the masthead. Larry and I worked endless hours on developing the details of *The Jewish Journal* and I couldn't be any prouder to have the opportunity to carry on his legacy and work so closely with his wife, Sharon Levite.”

Kim Miers, *The Journal's* talented lead designer, makes *The Jewish Journal* a gorgeous, easily readable publication each and every month. Cynthia Oppenheimer, our passionate Sales Director has worked tirelessly for the past eight years so that the paper has generated enough advertisers to support the high-quality mailed publication that it has been and continues to be. And adding delightful Keren Green to the sales force has only made it better!

Larry's love for the Jewish community, Israel, the Jewish People and Western New York continues to live on, each month, between the covers of *The Jewish Journal*. May his memory and his joy of life continue to be for a blessing to us all.

Ellen Goldstein is editor of The Jewish Journal.



Larry Levite (z"l) in his office at Buffalo Spree Publishing

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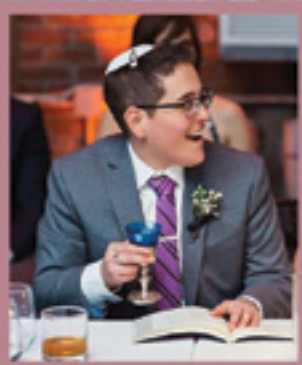
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RABBI BECKY SILVERSTEIN

Rabbi Becky identifies as a gender queer, trans Rabbi who uses both his birth name (Becky) and he/him/his pronouns. He believes in the power of community and Torah in transforming the world and encourages people to bring all of their identities to their Jewish practice. Rabbi Becky is the founder/rabbi of Beyn Kodesh I'Chol and board chair of the Jewish Studio Project and SVARA.



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The Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning's vision is for all Jews and people exploring Judaism to feel welcome to participate in Jewish living and learning experiences regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or ability.





Welcome back to the *Partnership 2Gether (P2G) Pinah* that highlights Buffalo's partnership with the Western Galilee as well as with the other communities in the Central Area Consortium (16 in the U.S. as well as Budapest, Hungary). This month, we are excited to highlight the Partnership's new language program, Café Olam!

Originally, Café Anglit was conceived by the program's developer, Jody Goldstein, as an opportunity for Israeli and Hungarian Partnership2Gether participants to practice their conversational English. The program has been so successful that it is now called "Café Olam" (meaning World Café) reflecting the global focus of the program as weekly conversational language classes are now offered in English, Hebrew, Hungarian, and Yiddish, with plans to add Arabic once

a volunteer facilitator is recruited. Over fifty participants are meeting weekly in eight different classes with new groups that began the first week of May. Through practice with guided conversation, program participants improve their language skills and (even more importantly) build relationships with other members of our Partnership2Gether communities.

For more information, feel free to contact Jody at jagoldstein827@gmail.com. What begins as a conversation may turn into a life-long partnership!

Be sure to come back and check out the *P2G Pinah* next month.

For more information or any questions, please contact Mandy Weiss at mandy@buffalojewishfederation.org.

Upcoming P2G Programs

**Sunday, June 13
@ 11 a.m.**

Women's Rosh Chodesh Gathering

**Thursday, June 17
@ 11 a.m.**

Nigun2Gether Concert

The highlight event of P2G's Virtual Musical Lessons' program, with talented musicians from the US and musical students from the Western Galilee.

For more information, visit <https://www.westerngalilee.org.il/>

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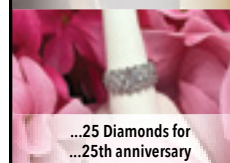


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**AFTER A YEAR OF VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES,
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SHABBAT IN THE PARK

The whole family is invited for Shabbat songs, stories, & prayer.

JUNE 18 | 5:30 PM | GLEN PARK (GLEN AVE ENTRANCE)
JULY 16 | 5:30 PM | BASSETT PARK IN WILLIAMSVILLE

MY GROWN UP AND ME

For young children (ages 4 and under) and the adults who love them! We will sing, move, create and read PJ Library stories.

JUNE 27 | 10 AM | ISLAND PARK IN WILLIAMSVILLE
AUGUST 8 | 10 AM | CANALSIDE NEAR CLINTON'S DISH

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 29
PJ LIBRARY/PJ OUR WAY
END OF SUMMER FAMILY PROGRAM

2021 CJEL Teen Leadership Fellows



Hadar Borden

her expertise to help the fellows gain a deeper understanding of the world around them and their personal potential to make an impact. CJEL is deeply grateful for Hadar's volunteer commitment to nurturing and inspiring the next generation of leaders in Jewish Buffalo.

Fellowship applications for the 2022 Teen Leadership Fellowship will be available in August.

Questions: mike@buffalojewishfederation.org



This month, six incredible teen leaders from across Jewish Buffalo will graduate from the 2021 Teen Leadership Fellowship, a project of the Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative at the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning (CJEL). The Teen Leadership Fellowship, facilitated by Hadar Borden, was a 9-month long leadership experience for teens in grades 10-12. Fellows met monthly to explore Buffalo and their connection to Judaism, while engaging with and enriching their community. The program gave teens the opportunity to develop practical leadership skills while also gaining awareness of local and global issues and personal potential all through the lens of applied Jewish wisdom.

The six fellows achieved success in a variety of areas, tackling leadership from many angles including individual strength assessments and designing programs for their community. Each fellow is highlighted in these two pages, sharing reflections on their time in the fellowship. *Kol Ha'Kavod* (all the honor) to 2021 Fellows Emily Steinberg, Syvonne Forgette, Josh Garson, Shaina Potash, Stephanie Newberger, and Karen Levy.

The Teen Leadership Fellowship has been stewarded by Hadar Borden from its inception in 2019 to today. As the Director of Blackstone LaunchPad & Techstars and the WNY Prosperity Fellowship Program at the University at Buffalo, Hadar has used



Syvonne Forgette

Grade 11, City Honors School

Extracurricular Activities:
Girl Scout Gold Award Recipient,
President/Co-Founder of City Honors
Environmental Club,
Student to Student Presenter

One of my favorite opportunities through the Fellowship was taking the Clifton Strengths for Students assessment, providing me with the top 5 of Gallup's 34 talent themes. My signature themes are: achiever, learner, activator, focus, and includer. Hadar and I spoke about how my themes provide a lens to help me better understand myself and what drives me every day, helping me become a better leader and team player.



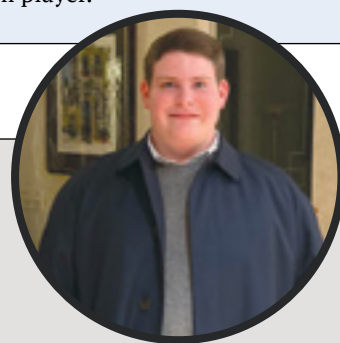
Emily Steinberg

Grade 11,

Sweet Home High School

Extracurricular Activities:
Probationary Firefighter
for Ellicott Creek Fire
Department and *Madrichah*
at Temple Beth Zion

My experience in the Fellowship program has been very successful. I have learned ways that I could be a better leader and what impact I could have on others. I also have discovered more about what I want to do as a job and for college. The program has had a great effect on me as a person and my perspective on how things work.



Josh Garson

Grade 11, Clarence High School

Extracurricular Activities:
section leader in the Wind Ensemble,
member of Model UN, Jazz Band,
Student to Student Presenter

My experience with the Teen Fellowship taught me important lessons about leadership and how to give back to the community. Our discussion about mental health left a big impact on me. As someone who has a loved one affected by mental illness, I know that simply picking up the phone and asking someone about their day can have a huge impact. Discussing this in-depth and exploring how to help those in the community really resonated with me. It was also great to practice our leadership skills by planning a mini golf event for my peers.

MYSTERY BUS TRIP!

OPEN TO TEENS IN GRADES 8-12

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TIME: 10 AM - 6 PM

COST: \$45

MEET AT: JCC IN GETZVILLE



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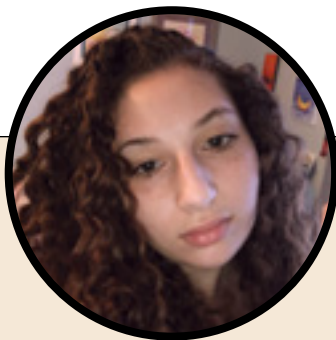


REGISTER:

[BIT.LY/MYSTERYBUSTRIP21](https://bit.ly/mysterybustrip21)

If cost is a barrier to participation contact
mike@buffalojewishfederation.org



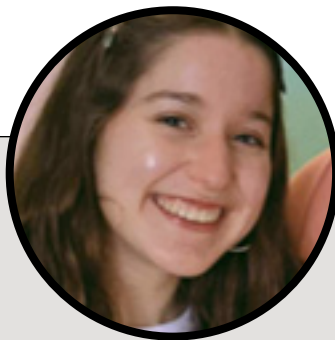


Shaina Potash

Grade: 10, The Park School of Buffalo

Extracurricular Activities: Student to Student Presenter, Volleyball, Theater

Through the Fellowship program I have had so many more opportunities that I never heard about before. Also, meeting with other teens my age to talk about what it means to be a Jewish teen helped me put things in perspective. It shows that I'm not alone in this world especially during these hard times. I have gained so much experience learning from others. Throughout this school year, I have learned what it is truly like to be a member of the Jewish community.



Stephanie Newberger

Grade 11, Williamsville North High School

Extracurricular Activities: Swim Team, Drama Club & Choir, National Honor Society, and Swim Instructor

My experience in the Teen Fellowship has led to many amazing opportunities, both big and small. Participating in the Fellowship has allowed me to connect with various community leaders and hear their inspiring stories of how they've grown to be who they are today. I have discovered the leadership qualities within myself, and have learned how to capitalize on them in order to be the best leader I can be. This, combined with the amazing network of people I've gotten to know, has made the experience very meaningful, and has definitely helped me to grow both as a leader, and as a member of a team.



Karen Levy

Grade 10, Clarence High School

Extracurricular Activities: Active participant in many CJEL programs

Through the Teen Leadership Fellowship program I have started to develop practical skills and gain awareness of community history, civic responsibility, race/diversity and personal potential, all while applying Jewish wisdom to these important skills. We met each month to talk about how we can help our community. Hadar made sure each session was energetic and informative. It was also a great opportunity to meet and get to know some of my peers better.

My goal is to work in healthcare, possibly in Radiology or Dentistry. Many of the lessons learned through this program will aid me throughout my career and life. The ability to build a team, to lead a team, and to inspire teamwork are always important. For me, the most important lesson was how to work as a member of a team. Together we can accomplish so much more than we can by working alone.

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What are you grateful for?

Reflections on NCJ

BY JOSH DEBEL

From time to time, I like to ask myself, “What am I grateful for”? An answer I have invariably given since the start of COVID is: “Nickel City Jews” (NCJ). Now that may seem like a heavy or even clichéd answer, but I truly believe it, and I’ll tell you why. NCJ has been a constant source of new experiences for me as a participant and has also provided me the opportunity to design experiences for others so they can get something similar out of NCJ as I have.

Three NCJ projects that have profoundly impacted me over the past 12 months: the NCJ Leadership Cohort, Virtual Speed Conversations, and Mussar. **The Leadership Cohort** is reflective of the new direction of Nickel City Jews. This approach is focused on incorporating more ideas and activities from the young



Josh Debel

adults who we want to engage instead of trying to anticipate what others may



want. I am fortunate enough to sit on the Leadership Cohort with several other leaders to discuss new ideas, events, and future plans. This group helps me feel like I’m a part of NCJ, not just someone who shows up to events. It also means that NCJ can be more flexible and better suited to creating connections for Jewish young adults in Buffalo.

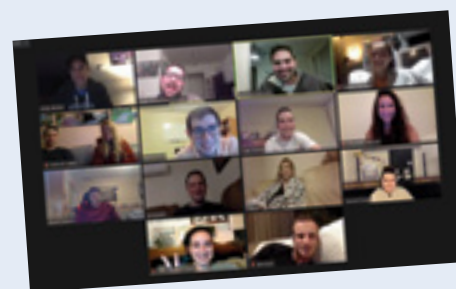
Virtual Speed Conversations is an event NCJ held over Zoom to connect Jewish young adults in new and interesting ways. During a Virtual Speed conversation, I, as the host, would ask questions that start as witty banter and progress to deep and personal topics. Surprisingly, we found it to be a good way to build new friendships and strengthen current ones. I became more connected to individuals who I met through Nickel City Jews through this event and I can’t wait for the opportunity to see them in person again.

The **NCJ Mussar** course was a chance to connect not only with Jews but also with Judaism. Every two weeks, we would seek to understand different aspects of Judaism through an exploration of text and conversation. Every class was eye-opening and there was always something new I learned that I didn’t expect. I also very much appreciated the time between classes when we would meet one-on-one with our partners in *chevruta* (paired study) to discuss the previous week’s lesson. Those sessions helped solidify the new teachings, practices, and mindsets that I want to incorporate into my life.

So, what am I grateful for? Among other things, definitely, Nickel City Jews. The past 12 months have been rough on all of us, but NCJ has made things a little easier.

Josh Debel is a member of the Nickel City Jews Leadership Council and is a Commercial Credit Analyst at M&T Bank.

For the last six years, Nickel City Jews (NCJ) has been Jewish Buffalo’s signature platform for engaging young Jewish adults through friendship, Jewish learning and leadership. Over these years, NCJ has been stewarded by incredible professional and volunteer leaders. These individuals have collectively shaped and pushed forward the scope of work and purpose, keeping Nickel City Jews relevant and meaningful to those who choose to engage either once or in a more on-going capacity.



Chinese Club Recognizes Deborah Goldman and Mara Koven-Gelman

On April 25, JCRC chair Deborah Goldman and director Mara Koven-Gelman were recognized by the Chinese Club of WNY for JCRC's support in helping them with their COVID-19 initiatives including mask/food giveaways. The following are highlights of the remarks Ms. Goldman made at the event that evening:

A year ago, my husband and I were asked to bring greetings from the Jewish community to the Chinese Club of WNY during a Chinese New Year dinner banquet. As you know, COVID-19 closed down that celebration and so many others. We then saw the painful rise of anti-Asian racism, as the COVID-19 virus began in Wuhan, China.

JCRC reached out immediately to our Chinese friends to share support - as Jews, we know what it feels like to be angrily targeted with hate. We were joined nationally with many may Jewish Communal and national organizations



offering supportive statements.

Not long after, the Chinese Club of WNY contacted the JCRC to offer donations of Chinese masks, when masks were hard to find. Your response to anti-Asian racism was to reach out with generosity including the distributions of masks, food and clothing to the broader community to hospitals, nursing homes, food banks and facilities serving homeless people, and donations of children's clothing from the Chinese community to newcomer children from the Congo (through Jewish Family Services).

It is all about building authentic friendships - you need to be a friend to have a friend. We look forward to continue working together, building on our friendships to create a more just and civil society. Finally, to quote Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (OBM), "*Acts of kindness never die. They linger in the memory, giving life to other acts in return.*"

Congressman Higgins supports National Holocaust Survivor Assistance Program

The Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council, Holocaust Resource Center, Jewish Family Services of WNY and The Jewish Federations of North America are profoundly grateful to Congressman Brian Higgins for his support of the Holocaust Survivor Assistance Program. Congressman Higgins became the 100th member of the US House of Representatives to join this bi-partisan worthy effort. Once passed, \$10 million will support programs that assist the thousands of survivors of the Nazi genocide who live in poverty in our country.

The sign-on letter to Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Committee on

Appropriations states, "This is a timely and necessary program that responds to an immediate bipartisan public policy priority to assist Holocaust survivors as well as address the emerging needs of other diverse aging populations impacted by trauma." There are approximately 80,000 Holocaust survivors living in the United States today - many are age 85 or older with an estimated one-third living in poverty. As a group, Holocaust survivors are subject to increased risk of depression, social isolation, and extremely poor outcomes associated with institutionalization, which can trigger the traumas of the forced institutionalizations and relocations experienced during the Holocaust.

Reflections on Our Recent ROOTS Gathering

BY SISTER MARGARET CARNEY, OSF

When our Federation's interfaith mission travelled to Israel in 2017, one component of our trip was the interaction with groups working to change the culture of animosity between Israelis and Palestinians. This spring, we were able to reconnect, via Zoom, to continue our dialogue.

ROOTS/Shorashim/Judar was the first such group to host us. As we gathered in their center on the outskirts of Jerusalem, one had the sense of being in the presence of people who dared to embrace a prophetic stance. They were willing to cross the divide of years of bitter conflict to establish "bridges" between peoples. Their work did not flow from a theory, but from the power of personal encounter and personal conversion of attitudes and beliefs.

Any opportunity to expand awareness of the work of ROOTS here in the U.S.A. is a powerful chance to become a friend to these brave architects of a new future for both



groups. By literally bringing these two leaders - No'or Awad and Rabbi Shaul Judelman -- into our living rooms through the power of Zoom, I hope that we opened some new doors—and hearts—to the hidden work of peace-making and justice-seeking that our ROOTS friends conduct day by day.

Hearing their stories of bridging the divides of "exclusivism" based on nationality and religion reminded me of the struggle in Northern Ireland. Seamus Heaney, a poet whose life unfolded in that context, wrote once that he wanted to be a citizen of the "Republic of Conscience." Surely, ROOTS might be included in the list of the "embassies" of that Republic where people strive for peace against the odds and seek to create informed consciences. It has been our privilege to meet them and to offer the hand of friendship to them.

Sr. Margaret Carney, OSF, is President Emerita of St. Bonaventure University



New Staff Join the JCC

BY MIKE RAWL

The JCC is pleased to share new additions to its team this spring.

Welcome to Jim Mahjoubian, the new Chief Communications and Technology Officer. Jim comes to Buffalo from Baltimore where he was part of the communications team for Baltimore City Public Schools producing all visual content, running internship programs, and managing a variety of platforms. He also taught documentary filmmaking at Johns Hopkins University in a program called Baltimore Youth Film Arts. Jim has a passion for telling stories using diverse types of media. He earned a Bachelor of Science from Ithaca College, where he studied Television, Radio, and Video Production, and was a member of the men's swim team. Jim also earned a Master of Education, with a focus on Communications from Cabrini College and taught for 6 years in West Chester, PA.

The JCC is also pleased to welcome new Chief Program Officer, Gon Erez who comes to the community via Youngstown, Ohio where he was their JCC's Program Director. In Youngstown, Gon oversaw the JCC's cultural arts, performing arts, camp, school age care, older adult, youth, Israel, and Jewish programming. Born and raised in Israel, Gon has a passion for Israel advocacy and community engagement. He enjoys using the skills he gained in the Israel Defense Forces as a lieutenant in the IDF Spokesperson's Unit. Gon graduated from Ben Gurion University of the Negev, where he studied psychology and economics. He is currently finishing a Master of Science in Non-profit



New JCC Staff members (from left) Gon Erez, Brittany Leo Filipski, Jim Mahjoubian, Nathan Doherty, Mike Rawl

Management degree at Gratz College.

Another new member of the senior leadership team is Nathan Doherty, new Executive Assistant working closely with me to provide administrative support, manage special projects, ensure the forward progress of committees, and provide general support to the board and senior team. Nathan is a Navy submarine veteran, has worked for The White House, National Security Council, and as Special Assistant to a congressional candidate, among other notable positions.

Lastly, welcome to Brittany Leo Filipski, a new member of the Accounting and Finance team. Brittany is originally from Binghamton, NY, attended the University at Buffalo and received her Master's in Leadership and Management from Western Governor's University. Brittany has worked in the HR field for 5 years and joins the team as HR Generalist.

JCC is also investing in programs; renewing the focus on youth and family engagement, Israel, performing arts, older adults, outdoor programs, and more. And, as the warm summer months approach, we are looking forward to seeing everyone at Camp Centerland, the premier summer camp for kids, as well as the opening of the outdoor pool.

Mike Rawl is CEO of the JCC of Greater Buffalo.

JCC Cultural Arts Classes

Art In The Style Of...

Mondays, July 12 – Aug 30

2:00 -3:00 p.m.

JCC Benderson Family Building

2640 North Forest Rd.

Join Jennifer Judelsohn in an a NEW 8-week workshop series presented by the JCC, *Art In The Style Of*, where participants will explore the life and artistic expression of several different Jewish Artists, who had an influence on the general art scene of their times. Each week will begin with looking at a different Jewish artist, and exploring their use of medium, form, color, and composition. The second half of each session will be hands-on as participants will have the opportunity to create their own art in the style of the each artist such as Pissaro, Modigliani, Rothko and more.

Judelsohn, who recently moved back to Buffalo, is an artist, psychotherapist, and author/illustrator of *Songs of Creation: Meditations on the Sacred Hebrew Alphabet*. Her artwork has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the metro-Washington, DC area and across the United States and is in several private and public collections worldwide. Jennifer works in several different media including colored pencil, acrylic paints, and mixed media collage. Her work is radiant and colorful, exploring and incorporating Judaic themes, holiday and cultural references, liturgy and texts.

Weather permitting this class will meet outside and is limited to 15 participants. Social distancing and CDC protocol will be followed. JCC members: \$100; non-members: \$135.

Indigo-Dyed Shibori Workshop

Saturday, June 26

1:00 -4:00 p.m.

JCC Holland Family Building

787 Delaware Ave.

Join Dawne Hoeg, Founder and Executive Director of Stitch Buffalo, for an in-person workshop in Shibori, dyeing techniques with indigo dye. All supplies will be provided, with option to dye a T-shirt or set-of-4 cloth napkins.



Stitch Buffalo is an inclusive space for refugee and immigrant women to create handcrafted goods and find economic empowerment. Additionally, Dawne teaches in the Textile and Fiber Arts Design Department at Buffalo State College. The class is limited to 10 participants and will be held outdoors, weather permitting. Social distancing and CDC protocol will be followed.

JCC members: \$75

JCC Non-Members: \$100

Registration required for classes at www.jccbuffalo.org. Questions? Please email Katie Wzontek, kwzontek@jccbuffalo.org.





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Spotlight: Michelle Lawson

We are delighted to cast a spotlight this month on Michelle Lawson, a relative newcomer to Buffalo. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Michelle moved to Buffalo via Birmingham, Alabama almost four years ago with her two children, Honey and Timothy, and her husband, Schuyler (who is pursuing a Doctorate in Public Health at UB). While living in Alabama, Michelle found her way to Judaism. She describes her first encounter with Jewish life at Temple Emanu-El: “Something felt so right, like I didn’t need to search anymore. I’ve been here all along.” After that day, she continued on through three years of rigorous study and converted with the *Beit Din* at Temple Emanu-El.

Since moving to Buffalo, Michelle and her family have felt the warm embrace of community. Whether it was at the JCC, Congregation Shir Shalom, Temple Beth Tzedek, or the Center for Jewish Engagement and Learning (CJEL) in Jewish Buffalo. “Everyone just embraced us, and essentially told us that ‘you are our people, come on down!’ We felt like



Michelle Lawson

we didn’t miss a step here.”

Coinciding with the Lawson family’s move to Buffalo was Michelle’s diagnosis with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a debilitating chronic disease that disrupts communication between the brain and the body. “When I moved here, it became very difficult to even walk or talk.” Michelle describes the process of finding the right physicians and treatment plan. “I am so thankful and grateful we moved here because it literally saved my life.”

After her health crisis, Michelle was hoping to go back to work as an ESL teacher, but unfortunately her MS prevented her from being able to commit to the physical rigors of the job. “I couldn’t work anymore so I started crocheting again. At first I made a Baby Yoda [Grogu] doll for my friend; she went crazy.” Requests for Michelle’s Amigurumi Dolls (Japanese for knitted or crocheted dolls) started pouring in. This type of work was a perfect fit for Michelle. Even when she is in too much pain to stand or sit up, she can lay down and crochet. Today, Michelle has a thriving Etsy business called Knitorious Knerd, LLC. She shares, “I like making dolls that are nerdy and quirky. I want all of the little details – making accessories, changing color patterns in an organic way – to be just right. It is so satisfying.”

In addition to her creative professional pursuits, Michelle is engaged in many different parts of Jewish Buffalo, including her participation in the CJEL Well Circle, which she hosted earlier this year for Rosh Chodesh Adar. She affirms that she and her family are committed to adding their love and energy to Jewish Buffalo, and would not have it any other way. “We are here to stay!”

Library on Wheels at the JCC

The **Library on Wheels** will be visiting the JCC Holland and Benderson Family Buildings this summer. The FREE family event will be fun for all ages. It features more than 3,000 books, movies, and music – with an emphasis on popular fiction and non-fiction – there will be something for everyone!

At the Library on Wheels, you can:

- check out books, movies, music, audiobooks
- use free WiFi
- use our laptops
- get a library card or update your account
- pickup holds and return items – just like at any library!
- have questions answered and be helped with a variety of needs
- attend a library program

Tuesday, June 29 from 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Holland Family Building

Monday, August 2 from 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Benderson Family Building

Registration is required.

For more information please contact Katie Wzontek at kwzontek@jccbuffalo.org.

JCC Art Gallery Show - Holland Building



The first exhibit in the JCC’s Levy and Daniel Families Art Gallery at the Holland Family Building since the Pandemic is on exhibit through the end of June and features **TABULA RASA, recent paintings by artist J. Tim Raymond**. Raymond has resided in Western New York since the early 1990s after starting his art career in Baltimore where he received an MFA from the Maryland Institute of Art. He moved on to New York where he was represented by the Jack Tilton Gallery, and later worked as an instructor at University of Texas in Austin. Along the way, he also worked at a museum worker in Washington DC and Manhattan, and an art specialist in Buffalo. He has been included in numerous local solo and group shows, most recently including Carnegie Art Center, Queen City Gallery, Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, and Artspace Buffalo Gallery.

“Because we did not know how this past year would be marked, it was like a blank slate. While we still do not know the best outcome of what we have experienced, these works continue my exploration of building textural surfaces along themes of planetary crisis and the bargains man has made with the future. I remain in wonder of it all,” said Raymond. All work is for sale and visitors can access the gallery by checking in at the member service desk during JCC hours, and masks are required.

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1» Celebrate “Pride Week” this year learning with Rabbi Becky Silverstein (he/him/his) and CJEL Thursday, June 3 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. **Register at bit.ly/rabbibecky. See the ad on page 8.**

2» Don't Miss the JCC's Annual Meeting (see page 19) June 10 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom and meet the new team (page 14). **Register at bit.ly/AnnualMeetingJCC21.**

3» PJ Library moves outdoors for summer after a virtual year. (See ad on page 9.) Check out events June 18 at 5:30 p.m. in Glen Park and June 27 at 10 a.m. in Island Park. **Contact Susan Goldberg Schwartz at susan@buffalojewishfederation.org.**

4» Make a gift to the Jewish Federation Cemetery Corporation in honor of your father or grandfather, or any other important man in your life for Father's Day June 20. The Cemetery Corporation maintains and repairs several Buffalo Jewish cemeteries and your help is greatly needed. **Go to www.buffalojewishfederation.org and click on “Donate” where you will find a button to click on for the Cemetery Corporation.**

5» Families in WNY are hungry and there are still food scarcities during this difficult time. **You can help by donating to Feedmore WNY,** which now encompasses Meals on Wheels and the Food Bank. **Go to feedmorewny.org to donate online, volunteer or learn more.**

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**The first 5 people
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*Last month, no one identified
this plaque somewhere in
Jewish Buffalo, which is why we
are running it again this month.*

Game Changers: Lauren Levy

BY KELSEY CHILDRESS

Lauren Levy is a junior at Buffalo Seminary and in 2019, competed in the Maccabi Games in Budapest, Hungary. The daughter of Cindy and Dr. Elad Levy, and granddaughter of Suzanne and Dr. Rubi Levy, Lauren is also the captain of Sem's swim team.

Levy started her swimming career at the age of six through the local YMCA. When she was nine, she joined the Tonawanda Titans Swim Club and it became her second home. "I just love the team. I love the atmosphere, with coach Scott and my other teammates. It's a great place to be," said Levy.

Some of Levy's favorite club swimming memories are from meets with her teammates. "It's really a place for you and your teammates to show everyone how much work you've put in," Levy said. "I love the sportsmanship. I love cheering for my teammates and supporting one another."

Although Levy said she enjoys most of the meets she participates in, the 2019 Summer European Maccabi Games was one of her favorites. This seven-day event took place in Budapest and athletes from around the globe partake in this meet. "The Maccabi Games are an opportunity for Jewish athletes to come together and compete on a world stage. It was an amazing, unforgettable experience and great to see different athletes from different sports all coming together for the meet," she added.

"The summer of 2019 presented me with an opportunity of a lifetime: the European Maccabi Games," said Lauren. "Not only was I able to build friendships with fellow Jewish athletes, but I was representing both my country and my religion through pursuing my passion of swimming. I connected with my culture on a global scale, joined my peers in competing halfway across the world, and toured the beautiful and historic city of Budapest. I have only fond memories of the trip, including the opening ceremony, where each participating country paraded with their flag while wearing the team uniforms, singers and dancers entertained the thousands of athletes, and bonding rapidly occurred between teammates. I miss each member of my junior team, and every day I work towards qualifying for the 2022 Games in Israel," she concluded.



Lauren Levy in Budapest, Hungary

Levy's high school season has been going exceptionally well, especially considering it was shortened due to COVID-19. "This year, I believe we have more swimmers than we've ever had

before, so it's great to come to practice with a bunch of people ready to get in the pool and ready to work hard."

Levy was impressed with the team's performance in the first meet, and she

said it was an incredible feeling to win alongside her teammates. "All together I could not be happier with my teammates. They all did so well, and the coaches were so happy. Club swimmers and non-club swimmers alike were there and showed so much growth from certain skills they worked on in practice."

Levy was selected as team captain this year, and she said it has been a very rewarding, cherished experience. "I love my teammates, and it's an honor to be their captain to bring spirit and motivation into each and every practice." She concluded, "I love the companionship and the team bonding that comes with swimming, and college swimming is just on another level. I think that each swim team is like a second family, so having that second family, those people I can rely on when away from home is something I would love to have."

Kelsey Childress is a senior Journalism, Communication, and Psychology major at Canisius College. She wrote a piece on Lauren Levy for the online magazine Buffalo Rising, from which portions of the article are reprinted with permission of the publication.



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Jewish Architects shaped the Beauty that is Buffalo

BY CHANA R. KOTZIN, PH.D.

Buffalo has long been identified as a place to visit among lovers of architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan, H.H. Richardson, Louise Blanchard Bethune, and Minoru Yamasaki to name a handful of the fifty significant designers of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture, have collectively made Buffalo a mecca for visitors and provided residents with a source of pride and inspiration.

This month we focus on some of the architects who were active in the creation of synagogues and buildings with a Jewish community function in Greater Buffalo from the 1920s to the 1960s. Some had local ties while others came to Buffalo as part of their commission work, and in some cases settled and remained in the city. Their creative energies shaped neighborhoods and internal spaces that continue to resonate through the buildings which remain, or the traces left in the historical record. I have already explored the mastery of Max Abramovitz's design for Temple Beth Zion in the January 2021 issue of *The Jewish Journal*. Much more has been written about his work and that of another mid-twentieth century Buffalo-born Jewish architect, Gordon Bunshaft, both of whom are featured at <https://jewishbuffalohistory.org>, but many other architectural practitioners were instrumental in creating a range of buildings which are part of Jewish communal life and memory.

Louis Greenstein created commercial, religious, civic and residential designs throughout his varied practice in Buffalo. Also known for his design of the Buffalo flag and the corporate municipal seal, Greenstein's oeuvre is a part of Buffalo's identity as a city. An early adopter of rehabilitation projects, he was light years ahead of the spate of recent building reuse projects. In the 1920s, he applied this forward-thinking approach to a building in Buffalo that became known as Temple Emanu-El at Colvin and Tacoma, but was originally designed as a church. Greenstein reworked its interior and created a magnificent bimah that formed the backdrop of many confirmation photographs. Born in Buffalo in 1886, he trained locally at McCreary, Wood & Bradney in Buffalo, followed by work as a draftsman at Green & Wicks. He moved to New York City and continued to work in architecture while also studying in the School of Architecture at Columbia University from 1909.

Upon returning to Buffalo in 1914 to set up his own prolific practice, he designed among other works, Temple



Temple Sinai designed by Milton Milstein. Photograph Created by Marty Wolpin, 2012. Courtesy of Congregation Shir Shalom.

Beth David on Humboldt Parkway and the Seeberg building at 121 Genesee Street in downtown Buffalo. You can search online for these structures at <https://jewishbuffalohistory.org>. In addition to his architectural interests, he was also the designer of local Masonic regalia. This unusual connection was part of his activities in a wide range of organizations, professional and fraternal, that he established, led or guided over many decades. Louis Greenstein died in 1972.

Milton Milstein was born in Brooklyn in 1911 and trained at the School of Architecture at Syracuse University. He moved to Buffalo where his most significant commissions include the Edward A. Rath County Office Building, a number of buildings at the University at Buffalo, North Campus, and Daemen College. His most well-known Jewish civic and religious structures include the Jewish Community Center on Delaware Avenue in late 1940, the Rosa Coplon Jewish Home and Infirmary at Symphony Circle completed in 1953 and Temple Sinai on Alberta Drive in Amherst in 1957.

His mid-twentieth century architectural style exuded a simple yet sophisticated design aesthetic. He



Temple Beth David designed by Louis Greenstein. Photograph created by IZON Productions-Don Dannecker, 2017. Courtesy of the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies.

formed Milton Milstein Associates in his early career, and later expanded his firm with a new name of Milstein, Wittek, Davis & Hamilton in 1966 and was made a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Like Louis Greenstein, he was very active in professional organizations as well as civic lay leadership, most notably at Daemen College. He died in 1993 at the age of 82.

The final spotlight in this article goes to another architect whose work we know through two very distinctive synagogues in North Buffalo. Jack Kushin was active in the 1950s and his first vernacular synagogue design was created for Ahavas Achim-Lubavitz on Tacoma Avenue, creating a single building for two former East Side synagogues. His second building with similar styling was built at 1235-1237 Hertel Avenue for the



Brith Israel Anshe Ames designed by Jack Kushin. Photograph created by Dr. Joseph Manch, undated. Courtesy of the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies.

merged congregation that became Brith Israel-Anshe Ames (also two former East Side congregations) and was fully completed in 1955. Both buildings represent a post-WWII mid-century Jewish religious building style. If you have further biographical information about Jack Kushin, please contact us, so we can place his work in its broader context.

You can see examples of these architects' work in entries for synagogues and agencies on the website at <https://jewishbuffalohistory.org>.

Many of the images were drawn from local historical archives including the Buffalo History Museum or created by the institutions themselves, as well as survey photographs carried out by the former Jewish Buffalo Archives Project. But architectural creativity is not just a part of our Jewish past. It continues to inspire our gaze in our own times.

In a design by Moe Finegold, that incorporates inspiration from the wooden synagogues of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, to more recent American trends in architectural ideas and the inclusion of nature in design, Temple Beth Tzedek's new building in Getzville joins a long Greater Buffalo tradition. Both spacious and intimate, familiar and new, it uplifts all those who enter the sanctuary, confirming that beautiful design has the power to elevate our experience of living and being.

As well as welcoming more materials including portrait images about the individuals featured in this article, we are searching for information about other male and female architects. If you have information, please contact us at chana@buffalojewishfederation.org as several companion pieces to this article are planned.

Chana Revell Kotzin, Ph.D. is the coordinator of the Jewish Buffalo History Center website, which you can find at <https://jewishbuffalohistory.org/>

Israel Experience through FJP

For nearly 40 years, the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies (FJP) has been providing financial assistance for local high school and college students for Israel travel and study. Each year the Foundation's Israel Scholarship Committee, chaired by Catherine Shuman Miller, oversees the process to determine how best to support each student's educational endeavors in Israel. The current travel period runs from summer 2021- May 2022.

Sadly, all travel was canceled last summer, and the program most popular with our students was canceled for this upcoming year as well. However, one applicant was signed up for a different program, which still plans on sending students to Israel this summer.

The Israel Scholarship Fund was established to help young Jewish people "experience Israel."



Catherine Shuman Miller

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies has proudly supported that vision. The Foundation gratefully recognizes and thanks those generous donors that established permanently endowed funds for this special purpose. **The Foundation administers the**

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We also want to thank our Committee chair Cathy Shuman Miller and committee members: Barbara Chasen, Beth Joseph, Jill Komm, Michele Pozarny, Nancy Schiller, Mike Steklof, Dana Stoffman, Toby Ticktin Back and Elinor Weiss. Finally, we want to thank those ambitious students who want to experience Israel and took the time to complete the application. We hope that you are able travel to Israel next year and we encourage you to apply again.

If you would like to contribute to support scholarships to Israel, discover other causes that fulfill your philanthropic mission, or preserve your legacy, please visit our newly redesigned website at www.jewishphilanthropies.org or contact Irv Levy, Executive Director at Irv@JewishPhilanthropies.org or call 716-204-1133.

Correction.

In the May issue of the *Jewish Journal*, we left out a photo credit for Michael Sanders photo on page 4. Joan Elizabeth Seamons, of Short Street Photographers is responsible for the beautiful photo of Michael.

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This Is What Happens When a School Takes Antisemitic Bullying Seriously

I am beyond grateful that my middle school in Nebraska did the right thing, leading me down a path to better embrace Judaism later in life.

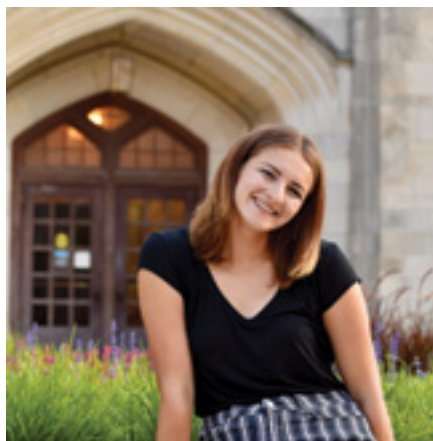
BY MACIE CLAWSON

Growing up with no religious observance, I remember the feeling of uneasy surprise the first time I was bullied for being Jewish in fifth grade. I grew up in Hastings, Nebraska, which has a population around 26,000 people who are predominantly white and Christian.

At first, it was name-calling. Kids called me “stupid Jew” or publicly announced me as “the Jew” when I’d enter the classroom. Once, at a middle school basketball game, a classmate asked me very publicly for my number. I went to grab my phone, confused by the question and his tone when suddenly, he grabbed my arm and mused, “No Macie, I meant your number,” twisting my arm over as if I too might have a number tattooed on my arm like a victim of the Holocaust.

I was hesitant to let the school know at first out of fear of social repercussion. I feared turning my bullies in would just turn into an entangled he said/she said dilemma and would result in socially distancing myself even more when all I wanted was to fit in.

As the jabs continued to expand in their frequency and sting, I decided this whole religion thing seemed to be causing me more harm than joy and proclaimed myself an atheist who



Macie Clawson

hated religion. But even when I told my classmates I didn’t practice Judaism and didn’t consider myself Jewish, they still taunted me.

Today I find it amusing that those 12-year-old boys grasped what I couldn’t then: that anti-Judaism is hating Judaism but antisemitism is hating Jewish people. That no matter what I did or did not practice or believe, I was Jewish. And that by pure virtue of who I was, I was deemed the sole Jew in the school and the target for antisemitic jokes and comments.

The breaking point came in the spring of eighth grade when, during an outdoor demonstration involving practicing branding pieces of wood, a classmate chased me around with the hot iron, taunting that I needed to be branded “like my kind.” Humiliated, sad, and angry, I finally told the Hastings Middle School administration about the on-going antisemitic bullying from my classmates.

Stories of school administrations handling bullying all too often seem to end with little to no action. Thankfully that’s not what happened at Hastings Middle School back in 2011.

The next time I walked into school, the dean of students asked me to write down a list of every kid who had ever directed an antisemitic comment at me. Then, one by one, the dean brought them into the room with me and took time to try to understand the bullying. I remember the dean, a big muscly guy known for his booming voice, looking at the kid who had asked for my “number” and softening his voice to ask him, “What made you think something like that would ever be funny?”

In that moment, I felt a gratifying shock of validation. Up until that point, every comment and “joke” left me feeling so confused. Why didn’t I think it was funny? Why was everybody else laughing? Hearing the dean’s tone and the look of mortification on the bully’s face told me I was right. It wasn’t funny. The next day the eighth grade social studies department dedicated a whole day to talk and teach about hate crimes and discrimination and the role they have played in society.

Those kids never bothered me again about being Jewish. Though the bullying stopped, the damage it had done to my religious identity was deep. I found myself feeling alienated and separated from any religion, let alone Judaism. That part of me was left untouched until I entered college.

It took a Jewish community to bring

me back to my faith. I found Hillel at a club fair during my first week of school at the University of Kansas. I fell in love with Judaism and its overarching call to seek justice and to understand the “other.” I went on Birthright to Israel and then went back to Tel Aviv for a semester and ended up graduating with a double major in Political Science and Jewish Studies.

Once I got involved with the Jewish community, and especially after I went to Israel, I saw the implications of antisemitism more clearly. I walked through Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, feeling horrified as I read and heard of what happened during the genocide of my own people. I listened to classmates tell the story of their grandparents who had managed to live through unspeakable horrors. And I was surprised when I found myself thinking about my experience in middle school.

Those kids didn’t know any Jewish people and didn’t quite grasp the magnitude of what they were joking at. They were 12. Ultimately, I blame them for being bullies, not for being antisemites. And it proved to me just how important education is, from an early age, when it comes to confronting this kind of ignorance.

Looking at that experience in the larger scope of how my life has played out, I can’t help but almost feel a sense of gratitude. Now, as I work with Hillel to help build programs, recruit Jewish students, and provide Jewish life for college students, I get the privilege every day to create the space for students that got me started on my own Jewish journey.

My time at Hastings Middle School taught me that sometimes the adult in the room does the right thing. Because of my school’s response, I felt comfortable enough to take a leap in college and find my faith — and my life has been irrevocably changed for the better since.

Macie Clawson (she/hers) is a Springboard Innovation Fellow at Hillel of Buffalo. Beyond reflecting on her middle school experience, she loves to run, cook food for people she loves, and pet dogs.



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Temple Beth Tzedek: New Opportunities and New Horizons

The warm weather and the arrival of summer are marking a new chapter for TBT as we move forward from the limitation of in-person activities. The Reopening Task Force has laid the groundwork for safely and gradually reopening for services.

Please join us for a range of new programs as we safely reconnect with each other and our sacred heritage.

- **COVID-19 Update:** Temple Beth Tzedek is honored to virtually welcome Erie County Health Commissioner Gale R. Burstein, MD, MPH at 8:00 p.m. on June 3 to discuss the challenge and opportunity presented by COVID-19.
- **Services at Camp Centerland:** Please join the Congregation on June 19 for an alternative adult service, junior congregation and Tot Shabbat on the grounds of Camp Centerland. TBT held very successful High Holy Day youth services last fall at Centerland and we are excited to welcome the community back to the camp grounds for age-appropriate services in a safe and spiritually nourishing setting.
- **Shabbat Learners' Services:** Rabbi Rosenbaum recently began a monthly service that will explore the liturgy page by page. The next session will be on June 19 at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom. Please visit btzbuffalo.org to learn more.

Beyond Buffalo

- Temple Beth Tzedek Women's Network recently hosted the International Northeast Region's annual conference. The International Northeast spans synagogues across Toronto, Montreal, and Upstate New York. The virtual gathering, co-chaired by TBT's own Linda Steinhorn and Iris "Rusty" Zackheim, attracted over 100



Dr. Gale Burstein

women and involved many hours of planning. The day culminated with the announcement of new regional level roles for three dedicated leaders of our chapter, President Linda Steinhorn as VP of Support Services, Rusty Zackheim as Parliamentarian, and Linda Boxer as VP of the Torah Fund. The Women's League Torah Fund is a sacred initiative supporting Conservative/Masorti Judaism's five seminaries: Jewish Theological Seminary (New York), Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies (Los Angeles), Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem), Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano (Buenos Aires,

Argentina), and Zacharias Frankel College (Potsdam, Germany).

- TBT Brotherhood is planning in-person events for the coming months. Recently, Brotherhood President Jonathan Epstein was appointed president-elect of the Tri-State Region of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs (FJMC), which spans Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, and Western New York. The FJMC will be holding its annual convention virtually – "A Taste of FJMC" – beginning on June 6 and featuring a range of programming, including keynotes from Rabbi Sharon Brous, founding rabbi of IKAR, author Micah Goodman, and Israeli basketball legend Tal Brody. **For more information of the convention, visit www.fjmconvention2021.org.**

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Temple Beth Zion Craft Fair

Members of the TBZ community gathered for lunch and an outdoor craft fair April 25 in the Broder parking lot.



Hadassah Buffalo Planning Art Auction

BY PHYLLIS STEINBERG

Each year Hadassah Buffalo has organized two fundraisers which were always well attended. But plans are now being made to adapt a program that had been planned for last September in a slightly different format.

A fabulous Art Auction event will be taking place in late summer or early fall. So many people have spent the last 15 months looking at their same walls and their same art work and with our auction they will have a great opportunity to add some new art to their walls. The collection of art that will be auctioned off includes original oil paintings, signed and numbered lithographs from an Israeli artist, beautiful watercolors by a local artist, several paintings from Hadassah artists, and much more. All the pieces in the auction have been accepted by a panel of judges and our auctioneer is anxious to talk about each piece.

Stay tuned for further details in *The Jewish Journal* and in *My Jewish Buffalo* as well as emails and Facebook. You can also contact the program chairs for more information: mseller@buffalo.edu, or mkatzel@me.com.

Finally, monthly book club meetings continue to take place via Zoom on the 3rd Monday of each month. **For more information on book club, email phyllismksteinberg@gmail.com. If you are interested in becoming a Hadassah member contact ecapell@roadrunner.com.**



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Kadimah Scholars at Park Perform Israeli Pop Hit

Last fall, nearly 40 Israeli pop artists teamed up for a music video to perform the song *Ze Katan Aleinu* (We Got This). At the time, it was a tribute and inspiration to Israelis, Jews, and the entire world to keep up the fight against COVID-19. The video featuring artists like Noa Kirel, Eden Hason, Agam Buhbut and rappers Stephane Leger and Peled, went viral.

With the support of the Buffalo Jewish Federation micro-grant earlier this spring, the Kadimah Scholars at Park School faculty recreated this song with a mix of Park students and teachers. One teacher highlighted at the end of the video, Caitlin Littlefield (5th & 6th Math and Science), thoroughly enjoyed participating and listening to all the students practicing. “Projects like this are the main reason that I wanted to work at Park. I was happy to participate so that I could not only support my students, but also because I wanted to model the collaborative and creative process. It also shows the Kadimah Scholars that their teachers see them, their



work, and that they have something to teach and share!” Littlefield admitted she was a bit self-conscious about singing in Hebrew, since the sounds are very different from the languages she knows, however, the students helped coach her through the pronunciation.

One of the Kadimah Scholars students at Park, and featured rapper in the video, Gabe Epstein '27, explained, “While making the video, we had to restart a few times because I messed

up the extremely hard words, but we did figure it out.” Gabe and his peers were thrilled and proud to see the final product of what the Park community was able to create when they worked together.

“When Ms. Lewis, our Hebrew teacher, began shooting the video with Kadimah Scholars, other students came to see what was going on and asked if

they could join as a way of supporting their friends” shared Lisa Conrad, Principal and Interim Head of School at Park. Therefore, the video is a mix of students and teachers from across the Park community. Conrad added, “The whole concept of diversity encompasses respect and inclusivity, and that is what we are showing in this video, as well as resilience throughout a very challenging time.”

“The production is a beautiful mix of students and teachers of different ages and faiths coming together to inspire the community,” an investment the Buffalo Jewish Federation was proud to make, shared Mandy Weiss, Director of Planning and Overseas for Federation and a proud Park Parent. “We are grateful to Michal Shmuel-Lewis (Hebrew teacher) for coordinating this effort and bringing everyone together at The Park School to make this vision a reality.”

To view the Kadimah Scholars at Park School version of *Ze Katan Aleinu*, visit the Jewish Buffalo YouTube Channel at youtube.com/c/jewishbuffalo.

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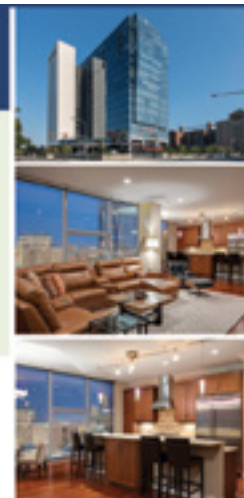


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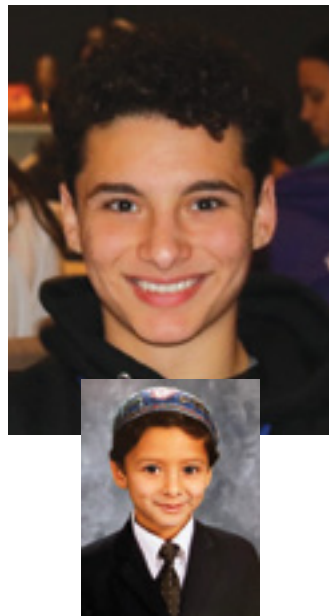




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Upcoming B'nei Mitzvahs

Hazel Curran
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Ariella Zalen
 June 26, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Tristen Peck
 July 10, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.

Rayne Klein
 July 24, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.

Jacob Abramowitz
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Robin's Recipe: Larry Levite's Birthday Brownies



BY ROBIN KURSS

Ellen Goldstein asked me to share a recipe that was one of Larry Levite's favorites. I am hoping that he enjoyed these brownies that I made for him for his birthday every year as much as I loved baking them for him.

Larry's Birthday Brownies



These treats made by Robin were decorated with a cartoon (by Josh Flanigan) of Larry Levite for his birthday in 2016.

INGREDIENTS

2 sticks unsalted butter
17 oz chocolate chips
3 eggs
2 Tbsp espresso powder
1 T vanilla
1 c sugar
1/2 c flour plus 2T flour
1 1/2 t baking powder
Pinch salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350
Butter 9 x 12" pan
Melt butter and 11 oz of chips till combined...cool.
In a bowl, stir together eggs, espresso, vanilla and sugar.
Stir in chocolate mixture.
In separate bowl, mix flour, baking powder, remaining chips and salt...add to chocolate mix above.
Pour into pan and bake for 35 minutes.



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Hyman Shuman: 1926-2021

Ken and Dan Shuman, two of Hyman Shuman's nephews, contributed to this remembrance. In addition, portions were borrowed from a story about Shuman family members written by Howard Rosenhoch and appearing in the February 2019 issue of *The Jewish Journal of WNY*.

Hyman "Hy" Shuman, the co-founder of material supplier Shuman Plastics, Inc., died March 25 at the age of 94. Born in Buffalo in 1926 to Philip ("Peretz") and Ida ("Chaika") Shuman, Hy was stricken with polio as a child, was treated in an iron lung and recovered, attended high school and joined the U.S. Army. After being wounded in Okinawa during World War II, Shuman returned to Buffalo and joined his father, Philip, in the family scrap business.

Soon after, Hy was joined by his brother, Charlie, and in 1955, they



Hyman Shuman

bought their father's one third interest in the scrap business. It was right around this time that Charlie and Hy turned a chance meeting with a stranger at Crystal Beach, Ontario into a business opportunity. A fellow driving a truck asking directions happened on Charlie and Hy. The stranger was carrying a load of scrap plastic. This prompted Hy, who Charlie refers to as the smart one, to suggest they talk to their friend, Cecil Green, a pioneer in the plastic scrap business in Toronto. One thing led to another, and Shuman Plastics, now a producer and seller of specialty recycled plastics and plastic processing machinery cleaners, was born.

Hy Shuman retired in 1995, and the business continues to be owned and managed by his nephews, Ken and Dan Shuman. Today, the company is a supplier of virgin and recycled resins, provides toll processing and compounding services, and in 1982, launched the Dyna-Purge brand of plastic purging compounds.

Hy was a visionary, taking the risk to leave commodities such as metals, rags, paper and glass behind and pursue a new untested group of materials known as plastics. He traveled extensively, worldwide, eventually establishing businesses for raw material and scrap trading in Toronto/Canada, Amsterdam/Europe and Hong Kong/Asia. Keen to explore opportunities, he led the company into early exportation and importation of materials from these markets, as well as from South America. He expanded into

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Hy Shuman was self-educated, curious, well read, well-travelled, and cultured. Some of his many interests included collecting handmade rugs, rare books, wines, coins and stamps. Always finely dressed, he enjoyed good conversation, a well-told story or joke, a fine cigar and good scotch whiskey. Mostly, he enjoyed family, friends and the company of those he cherished. A lover of dogs, bigger lover of people, he never said no when asked for help. Quietly and anonymously, he philanthropically supported numerous causes and individuals in need, without hesitation.

Hy was the beloved longtime companion of Nancy Runfola; devoted father of Miriam Shuman and Aviva Shuman; loving grandfather of Oliver; brother of Charles (Penelope) Shuman, the late Irving Shuman, and the late Fay Dankner; brother-in-law of Marilyn Shuman; beloved ex-husband of the late Yvonne Velleman; also survived by nieces and nephews. Services were held at the convenience of the family due to COVID restrictions.



Morton D. Brooks,

a longtime resident of Williamsville, NY, passed away at the age of 95 on March 24, 2021. He was residing in Pompano Beach, Florida. He was a past president of the Western New York Psychological Association and of the Buffalo Jewish Education Association and was an active member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation and a past member of Temple Sinai.

Morton was with the American Army during WWII and an ex-POW held at Bergha in Germany. He was highly decorated and received many honors such as the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star and the French Foreign Legion award. He went on to practice psychology in North Tonawanda Schools and at the Beeman Clinic in Niagara Falls.

Mort will be remembered for his kindness, generosity and beautiful smile. He is survived by his daughters, Audrey Brooks of Katonah, NY and Ruth Brooks Katten of Plainview, NY. He will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Donations may be made in his memory to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

To contact Audrey or Ruth:
audreyhbrooks@gmail.com or
rkatten9@gmail.com

In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from April 19- May 16, 2021*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.



- Dr. Sidney Anthone**
- Paula Blitz**
- Richard F. Brummer**
- Dr. Madeline Davis**
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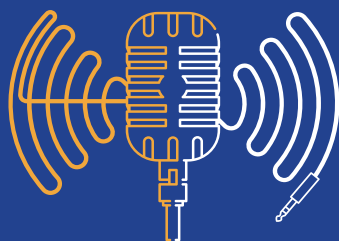
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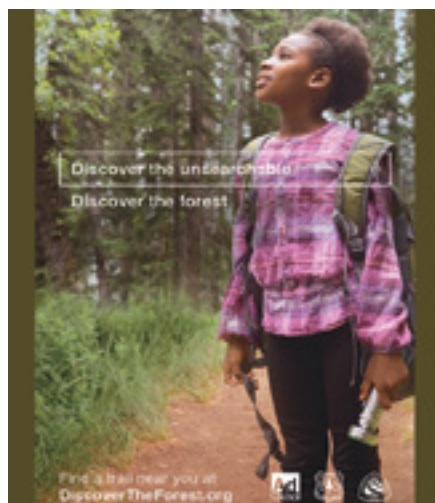


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What WE LOVE about Jewish Buffalo

BY ROB GOLDBERG, CEO BUFFALO JEWISH FEDERATION

For the inaugural edition of *The Jewish Journal*, several leaders in the community were invited to share their perspective on Jewish Buffalo. **Alex Lazarus-Klein**, Rabbi of Congregation Shir Shalom, said that “Buffalo is a great place to live as a Jew; there is a real sense of community here.” **Margery Nobel** highlighted the quality of Jewish programming: “For a smaller community, the programming here is excellent and something for which we are to be commended.” **Andy Shaevel**, a past President of the JCC and current member of Federation’s Executive Committee, added: “Jewish Buffalo is a warm and welcoming community that is more like a big family.”

Now 8 years later, while Buffalo continues to adapt to the realities of our changing demographics and Jewish world, the notion of “Buffalove” for the Jewish community is as strong as it has always been. For this, our 100th issue, we went back into the community and reached out to a variety of individuals and asked “What do you love about Jewish Buffalo?”

Friendship and diversity were a concurrent theme from those with whom we spoke. **Evie Weinstein**, former Director of the Bureau of Jewish Education and Mussar instructor, told us that she loves the diversity among her Jewish friends “and that so many of the programs in Jewish Buffalo are accessible no matter one’s denomination or affiliation.” “For me it’s about the friendships and shared experiences that I had with so many who, like me, grew up in Buffalo,” reflected **Ken Polk**, Board member of Temple Beth Zion. “I have such strong memories from camp, youth group and even religious school and I keep in touch with a lot of friends from that era.”

Gabe Epstein, a 6th grade Kadimah Scholar at the Park School and member of Pre-USY at Temple Beth Tzedek remarked: “What I love is that there is something for everyone, whatever your age. Kids have their own programs and adults have theirs. I also love that the kids who participate in events with me are very engaged with the program and with each other.” **Lou Wallen**, a Buffalo Boomerang and member of



Even though mask-wearing may soon be a thing of the past, this “Jewish Buffalove” mask is symbolic of our community’s pandemic experience.

Young Israel noted, “For a community of our size, we have a variety of programs and synagogues. And even though we are small, we have easy access to larger Jewish communities like those in Toronto, Pittsburgh and Cleveland.” Snowbird **Fern Bernstein** added: “Jewish Buffalo makes us feel at home because everybody is so interconnected. Even though Steve and I spend nearly 4 months in Del Ray, Florida, Buffalo is not only our home, but it’s a place where we feel very comfortable and safe.”

For Buffalo transplant **Sheldon Soman**, it’s the ability of the community to pivot during COVID. “Deb and I love how so many organizations that we are connected with, like Congregation Beth Abraham and the Jewish Discovery Center, helped us to stay engaged during the pandemic with so many opportunities delivered via Zoom. And of course, we loved our time in Israel when we went on the Buffalo Israel Experience trip in 2018.”

Katie Wzontek, Cultural Arts Director at the JCC, has found Jewish Buffalo to be both engaging and inclusive. “I have been referred to as *Jewish adjacent* and take that as a compliment! In my role at the JCC, I am constantly relying on community members to educate, inspire, and teach me about Jewish life. When people talk about a holiday or tradition or share a family story with me, they do

it with such pride and passion. There is a true commitment to respecting and remembering the past and growing in the future.”

For some of the newer members of Jewish Buffalo like **Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum** and Hillel’s Springboard Innovation Fellow **Macie Clawson**, this community has captured their love. “The moniker of *City of Good Neighbors* is absolutely true and is borne out in the Jewish community,” said Rabbi Rosenbaum. “I love our spirit of collaboration and how there is an appreciation of our rich history and also great pride in adapting to tomorrow!” Macie moved to Buffalo in the middle of COVID and found the community so inclusive and welcoming. “There’s one word that speaks to my experience with Jewish Buffalo: connection. From the second I moved here, there were people who connected me to others either my age or with similar interests and it has definitely made my time in Buffalo so much more enriching.”

“Buffalove” is a term of endearment that underscores our civic pride. And, in the case of Buffalove for the Jewish community, it bespeaks our passion for the places and the stories of Jewish Buffalo.

Rob Goldberg has served as CEO of the Buffalo Jewish Federation since 2015.



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