

The Award Winning

THE JEWISH JOURNAL

A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

Happy Pesach!

BUFFALO, ISRAEL & THE JEWISH WORLD | BUFFALOJEWISHFEDERATION.ORG

APRIL 2022 | ADAR II - NISSAN 5782

belonging conference

Sunday, April 24

1:30 - 9:00PM

Northland Workforce Training Center
683 Northland Ave, Buffalo, NY 14211



Monday, April 25

8:00AM - 12:00PM

Temple Beth Tzedek
1641 N Forest Rd, Williamsville, NY 14221

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Jewish Buffalo
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April 2022

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

April marks the third Passover season since COVID disguised itself as Elijah and entered the doors of our homes, offices, synagogues, schools—in short—our lives. This unprecedented plague for most of us changed the landscape of our personal, religious and civic lives. While our community of active, vibrant learners, doers, scholars, students, volunteers—everyday Jewish Buffalo had to adjust to a changing landscape—we, like many others around the world, discovered Zoom and learned how to study, worship, go to school, hold meetings, exercise, share meals and simchas, connect with friends and family, attend family, high school and college reunions, and so much more.

Jewish Buffalo didn't give up and we didn't give in to despair, dysfunction and dislocation. In fact, we kept on conducting communal, synagogue, organization and family business and getting from there—March 2020—to here—April 2022. Individually and together, we have shared tragic deaths (please read the eulogies for past Federation President Leslie Kramer (z"l) on pages 34 and 35), painful losses and deep disappointment. But Jewish Buffalo is still here, and we're coming back, stronger than ever.

As we welcome Passover this spring, some of us are still Zooming our Seders, but others are holding in-person gatherings. This year, the theme of freedom rings louder and clearer than past holidays for many of us. We are celebrating freedom from illness, freedom from loneliness, freedom from ignorance, freedom from our preoccupation with ourselves. We are also celebrating freedom to share Shabbat services and Passover Seders together, freedom to travel and see friends and family, freedom to get together in a restaurant for a meal, freedom to stop worrying that every personal encounter will lead to illness.

So, it is fitting that the LiNK Belonging Conference (see cover and page 2) takes place this month April 24 and 25 where we will celebrate all Jews for who they are and what they bring to our communal table. And we can help provide hope with our dollars to those individuals and families displaced by the horror that is daily life in Ukraine by supporting the Jewish Federations of North America's Campaign, seen at the bottom of page 1.

Wishing you a *Chag Pesach Sameach*, a safe, joyful, happy and healthy Passover.

Ellen
Ellen Goldstein - Editor

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Belonging Conference.
Cover graphic design by Jessica Wittman

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Leslie's Legacy

BY SHELLY YELLEN

As I reflect on my time working together with Leslie Shuman Kramer as volunteers for the Buffalo Jewish Federation (BJF), I think about her positive impact on so many in our community and her contributions to Jewish life in Buffalo.

Over the years, I have been very fortunate to have participated in many Federation meetings, programs, and events with Leslie. I always enjoyed listening to her because there was so much to be learned. We worked together on many tasks and shared common goals of making an impact and enhancing Jewish life in Buffalo. At times, we approached the Federation from different angles. Typically, my focus was searching for ways to help blend the Federation priorities with solid financial plans while Leslie focused on education, Israel, advocacy, and creating opportunities for individuals to find their Jewish voice. We shared a common bond in fund and friend raising, knowing that donor support is the life-blood of the organization. I always admired her ability to connect with people and make sure her message was heard.

I realize now that Leslie's passion, strength, and positive approach were fundamental to her success and offered so much appeal to me as a volunteer. These qualities were apparent in her many writings and speeches at events, including the Federation Kick-Off Dinner each fall, Annual Meetings, and messaging in *The Jewish Journal*.

We are very saddened by the loss of Leslie, and while her commitment and dedication to our community will be missed, the results of her work will be with us for the long term. We often use the term "Better Together" to reflect our belief that we are a stronger and better community by working shoulder to shoulder. Leslie was all about striving



Shelly Yellen

for ways to bring people together to enrich our lives. Her influence lives on in our purpose. Many of you may know that Federation strives each day to create a caring, vibrant and engaged community throughout Jewish Buffalo. We do this by strengthening our organizational and agency partners, creating space for innovation and experimentation, developing and growing sources of funding, and nurturing human capital.

It does not go without notice that the day of Leslie's funeral was also the inaugural Buffalo Day of Jewish Learning. This was the first public project of the Home/Hub Partnership between the Buffalo Jewish Community and UB's College of Arts and Sciences... another example of Leslie's priorities in collaboration, education, and bringing us together.

It is my sincere hope that we all carry on from Leslie's example to engage, find our voice, show tolerance, stand up against hate, and strive for a vibrant and caring Jewish Buffalo.

On the topic of engagement, I was fortunate to be able to travel with Federation and Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies staff to meet with donors in Sarasota, Florida last month. I was able to attend a terrific luncheon hosted

at the home of David Feuerstein. This was a great opportunity to interact with current and former Buffalonians, each of whom demonstrate passion and commitment to our community. Due to the COVID pandemic, this type of event was last held in year 2020. This year, participants were very happy to be gathering in person and connect on the latest news from the Buffalo Jewish Community, including lots of information on the Life & Legacy initiative. As expected, there was much interest in the actions being taken by the Jewish Federation of North America (JFNA) and the BJF to help with the urgent needs of our Jewish brothers and sisters in Ukraine.

The Israeli Government and The Jewish Agency for Israel have established transit camps in countries bordering Ukraine, and Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption says that up to 10,000 Ukrainian Jews are expected to make Aliyah in the coming weeks.

Federations are planning to allocate millions of dollars to partner agencies on the ground, in support of relief efforts for the Ukrainian Jewish community. Immediate and short-term needs already total in excess of \$20 million. As a result, JFNA authorized an initial \$20 million campaign. Funds continue to be raised and will be allocated through Jewish Federations' core partners, The Jewish Agency for Israel, The Joint Distribution Committee and World ORT, and others who are on the ground in Ukraine, and will provide critical welfare where it is needed most and support to protect and safeguard Ukraine's Jewish community as well as Jews in neighboring countries. A JFNA subcommittee has been established to oversee this process and to ensure that funds can be directed as quickly as possible towards the immediate needs on the ground.

As you know from watching or reading the news, the situation continues to

be volatile. For up-to-date information on the situation in Ukraine, as well the activities of Federation's core partners on the ground, JFNA has been holding regular on-line briefings. The BJF is sharing Information on the dates and times of these briefings. ***If you are not aware of these on-line events and want to participate, please contact Randi Morkisz, Assistant Executive Director, at 716-463-5051 or randi@buffalojewishfederation.org.***

Beyond getting informed, what can you do to help? There are three important areas to take action, the first two involve raising your voices on (1) the need for supplemental funding for the Ukraine crisis in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act and (2) Urging Congress to extend the Lautenberg provision now. Over thirty years ago, the North American Jewish community stood with Senator Lautenberg when he passed landmark legislation that allowed 400,000 Jews and others fleeing religious persecution in the Soviet Union to reunite with families in the United States. Now is the moment to ensure that Jewish and other Ukrainians fleeing the Russian attack can find safety, including by resettling in the United States. To take action, please visit the JFNA website at **jewishfederations.org**. Scroll down the home page and click on "Act Now under Crisis in Ukraine."

A third way to take action is by donating funds (information is on our website: buffalojewishfederation.org) to the JFNA campaign to support Ukrainian Jewry (see below).

Finally, with so much going on I do not want to overlook the upcoming Passover holiday. Take time to enjoy family, friends and happy moments. On behalf of the entire BJF Board of Governors, we pray for peace and the hope Jews around the world will be able to celebrate as we do... *Chag Pesach Sameach*.



2022 Belonging Conference: A Passover Season of *Belonging*

BY MICHELLE LAWSON

With Passover around the corner, many of our minds are focused on our annual Seder celebrations to retell the story of our people's Exodus from Egypt. Each year at Passover, we read the Haggadah (the guide book for Seder) and re-live our collective memory of bondage and subsequent freedom, with the critical reminder that "we were once strangers."

In addition to preparing for Passover, LiNK Jewish Buffalo is also immersed in preparation for the upcoming 2022 Belonging Conference, an opportunity for volunteer and professional leaders from across Jewish Buffalo, to gather, grow, learn, and work together to ensure no one feels minimized, marginalized, ignored, and/or excluded from Jewish spaces.

As we prepare to retell the story of the Four Children around our Seder



Michelle Lawson

tables, let us contemplate how we can create a Jewish Buffalo where all children—and, all Jews, their friends and life partners, and those exploring Judaism—have access to Jewish living and learning experiences that help them thrive regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or ability.

The Wise Child within us may be aware of the lack of belonging and diversity within our separate communities. While the diversity within our Jewish community grows, some of our spaces may not be ready. Even with wise minds, **The Wise Child** may not have the tools, language, or resources necessary to create these opportunities. This can lead to feeling overwhelmed with even starting such an endeavor. **By participating in the Belonging Conference, leaders can continue on**

review of policy language in our bylaws. **By participating in the Belonging Conference, leaders will understand why creating a culture of Belonging is an ongoing conversation that touches every part of an organization.**

Finally, **The Child Who Doesn't Know How to Ask** is totally unaware of the challenges that our own community faces. They might be clouded by their own biases, assumptions, and frame of reality to see differing perspectives and needs that others face. We can all fall back on the familiar and traditions that creates tunnel vision and ensure all remains stagnant. By falling into this trap, we can easily lose focus on what is really important: the strength in the whole representation of our

Belonging Conference Sunday, April 24 - Monday, April 25

Sunday @ Northland Workforce Training Center
(683 Northland Ave, Buffalo, NY 14211)

Monday @ Temple Beth Tzedek
(1641 North Forest Road, Williamsville, NY 14221)

Cost: \$18

Register: bit.ly/belongingconference

More info: buffalojewishfederation.org/belongingconference

belonging conference
Sunday & Monday
April 24 - 25, 2022

Keynote Speaker - Rabbi Nikki DeBlosi

GATHER, GROW, LEARN AND BUILD

There are many people within Jewish Buffalo who've historically been minimized, marginalized, ignored, or even excluded from Jewish spaces.... let's work together to ensure that this no longer occurs.

Gather together in person and hear from thought leaders to develop shared language, skills, and action plans to create a Jewish Buffalo where all can feel a true sense of belonging.

For current volunteer and professional leaders of Jewish agencies and congregations and for individuals who want to lead or create using Jewish values.

Register at: bit.ly/belongingconference

Made possible through the generosity of the Weiss Family Philanthropic Fund and the estate of Ruth Axelrod.

For more information, contact Mike Steklhof, mike@buffalojewishfederation.org

LiNK
Jewish Buffalo

the path to bringing the vision of including all to reality.

In contrast, we also find **The Wicked Child** archetype in our Haggadah, who may be lulled by the comfort of the status quo, perhaps overlooking increasing diversity and the needs of un-engaged individuals. **The Wicked Child** may think that we can just ignore those Jews with different abilities, ethnic cultures, and gender identities. For them we must increase self-awareness through discussion and education, as the survival of our Jewish family depends on it. **By participating in the Belonging Conference, leaders will learn why the rallying cry of "nothing about us without us" is integral to our future.**

The Simple Child believes that fixing one aspect of our community will serve as a panacea for ongoing issues that reside in our organizations. They may even believe that just stating "diversity and inclusion" in a mission statement will create a sense of Belonging, and that a "Welcome Home" mat shows tolerance. However, we must still do the ongoing work necessary and not just a one-time

community. **By participating in the Belonging Conference, leaders will gain a foundational understanding of Belonging—what it is and why it is important and create practical and easy short-term next steps that can be taken to put the learning into practice.**

We all stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai, each one of us then and now. This year, let us commit to reaching out to every Jew among us, no matter how we look, our backgrounds, and abilities. There is beauty, strength, and blessing in our diversity. Let us become inspired with new questions as we grow in our self-awareness and togetherness. May your Passover be restorative and redemptive. *Chag Pesach Sameach* (Happy Passover) and see you at the Belonging Conference! For more information about the Belonging Conference contact Mike Steklhof: mike@buffalojewishfederation.org.

Michelle Lawson is Vice Chair of Belonging at LiNK Jewish Buffalo, serves as a member of the Belonging Conference Planning Team, and is the owner of Knitorious Knerd.

Buffalo Hillel Celebrates 75 Years

BY RABBI SARA RICH

The students of the Hillel in Buffalo gathered together for their first programs in the 1946-1947 school year, and 75 years later we are celebrating the legacy of this thriving organization on Thursday, May 12th at 6:30 p.m. at the UB Center for the Arts.



Hillel of Buffalo primarily serves University at Buffalo students, but programming is open to students at Buffalo State, Canisius, Daemen, and all of our local campuses. In the five years that I have served as Hillel's Executive Director, I have been struck by how many people in our community have an affiliation with one of these schools. It seems that most people I meet are alumni, faculty, staff, parents, or are connected to current or past students. We hope that everyone who has had a connection with Hillel of Buffalo in the past 75 years will join us for the celebration. We also welcome everyone who feels connected to the mission of creating community for Jewish students on campus and empowering them as leaders.

A highlight of the evening will be presenting awards to individuals who have helped elevate Hillel's impact in recent years. Steven and Ellen Weiss will be honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award and Dr. Jeffrey Lackner

will be honored with the Exceptional Leadership Award. Student Abby Feldman will be honored with the Feuerstein Family Tzedakah Award. We hope you will join us in thanking and honoring them as exemplars in our community.

Hillel President Marc Adler said, "It's humbling to serve as Hillel of Buffalo Board Chair during our 75th anniversary. I know that today's Hillel is the product of the thousands of students, staff member and volunteer leaders who believed in the mission of this great organization. We invite the community to join us in celebration of this milestone, and we look forward to building a stronger foundation for the future."

The celebration will include heavy appetizers and dessert, a silent auction, and a student *a capella* musical performance. **Tickets are \$75 and can be purchased along with tribute ads at wizevents.com/hillelofbuffalo2022.**

Rabbi Sara Rich is Executive Director of Hillel at Buffalo.



HILLEL OF BUFFALO'S 75TH MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
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Student to Student: Leadership Lessons

BY BEN WOLFSON

Student to Student is a national program developed in St. Louis, which sends Jewish teens into area high schools to engage with their non-Jewish peers and teach them about Judaism. Participants are trained to share personal stories and respond to questions about Jewish identity, culture, history, and religious practices. The eleven teen leaders who are a part of this year's *Student to Student* cohort have learned valuable leadership and public speaking skills and have presented at schools in Hamburg, Niagara Wheatfield, and Orchard Park – with more on the schedule this spring.

By going into schools across Western New York, the *Student to Student* teens have been able to directly impact their peers and, in turn, the larger community. Here is what some had to say about the impact of this experience:

Asher Y: "Throughout the presentations, I better understand that informing others about Judaism will help prevent ignorance and indifference that our people have faced over the generations."

Amanda R: "What we are doing is so important and the opportunity and responsibility to educate others about Judaism has been so rewarding."

Ava R: "I love educating others on what it is like to be a Jewish teen and it is very encouraging to see positive reinforcement from other students."

Stephanie N: "I've enjoyed working with my peers to learn more about my own religion, in turn making me better able to educate others who are brand new to Judaism."

Daniel S: "Student to Student is a great program because we get to inform others about our culture"

Elliott B: "Student to Student allows me to connect to other Jewish teens, and allows me to play a part in making the world a little bit more educated about my religion."

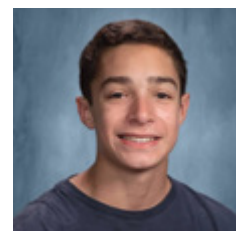
Student to Student has the power to change not only the lives of the non-Jewish students across greater Buffalo, but the members of the cohort themselves. Syvonne, a multi-year participant in the program, shared, "prior to joining *Student to Student*, I was often uncomfortable talking about my Jewish identity. I would keep the conversations brief and would quickly change the subject. Then, I joined *Student to Student* where we are constantly talking about our lives as Jewish teens. I began embracing it. Now, any time someone brings up Judaism I encourage the conversation and am happy to share my experience because I have realized the importance of accepting our differences."

We are so grateful for all the hard work done by these impressive young leaders, and we can't wait to see the impact they will make in the coming month.

Ben Wolfson is the Director of the Teen Initiative. For more information about *Student to Student* contact Mike Steklof: mike@buffalojewishfederation.org



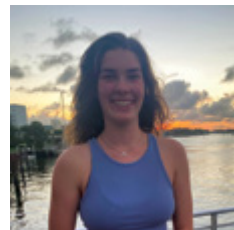
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Amherst High School



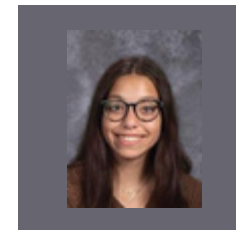
Daniel S (he/him)
Grade 11,
Williamsville East



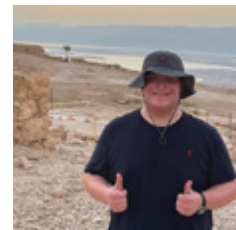
Anya W (she/her)
Grade 12,
Williamsville South



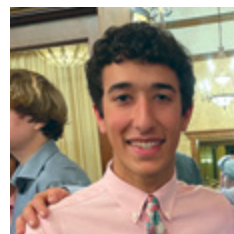
Syvonne F (she/her)
Grade 12,
City Honors



Ava R (she/her)
Grade 11,
Williamsville East



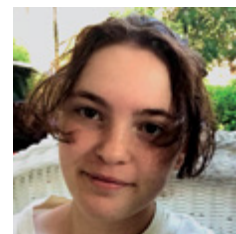
Josh G (he/him)
Grade 12,
Clarence High School



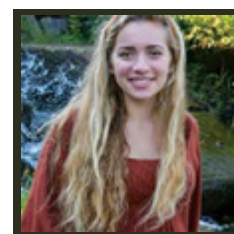
Asher Y (he/him)
Grade 11,
Williamsville East



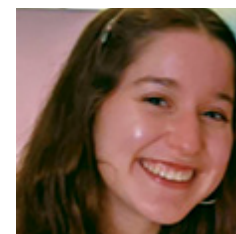
Syndi W (she/her)
Grade 11,
Williamsville North



Amanda R (she/her)
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JCRC's Inaugural Legislative Forum

BY HANNAH GABELNICK

The Buffalo JCRC held their first JCRC Legislative Forum in February to introduce their work and issues of concern with the WNY State Delegation. The 50-person virtual forum focused on three priority areas: combatting antisemitism and hate, social justice and equity, and welcoming Afghan evacuees. It also emphasized the strong relationships JCRC builds with its community partners.

The forum featured Susan DeMari, Jewish Buffalo Security Coordinator, who focused on combatting hate. Susan thanked the NYS legislature for the additional \$25 million in state security funds and for administering the Federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Adam Fogel, Co-Chair of JCRC, discussed social justice and equity, encouraging NYS Legislators to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York and a bill that would require counting affidavit ballots of eligible voters if a voter appears at a polling place in the correct county but incorrect election district. He also encouraged WNY Legislators to pass bills that would establish the office of racial equity and social justice.

Molly Carr, CEO of Jewish Family



Services of WNY, focused on supporting Afghan evacuees. She advocated for \$6 million in funding for New York State Enhanced Services for Refugee Program (NYSERP) to support integration and self-sufficiency work of refugees and Afghan evacuees.

The forum included Senator Tim Kennedy (Senate District 63), Senator Robert Ort (Senate District 62), Senator Sean Ryan (Senate District 60), Senator Edward Rath (Senate District 61), Assembly Member Karen McMahon (Assembly District 146), and Assembly Member William Conrad (Assembly District 140), as well as the staff members of Governor Kathy Hochul.

Deborah Goldman, co-chair of JCRC closed the forum with Q&A where many community members asked questions of the legislators. JCRC looks forward to future legislative forums to

continue building relationships with our elected officials. If you would like to see the recording, please contact Mara@buffalojewishfederation.org

Hannah Gabelnick is a senior at Amherst Central High School and an intern at the Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council.

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JCRC Jewish Calendar Project

In early February, JCRC sent a six-year Jewish calendar to the school districts of Williamsville, Amherst, Sweet Home, Clarence, Buffalo, Hamburg, and Orchard Park. The purpose of the calendar was to help educators and school administrators plan their academic year. JCRC also contacted BOCES-1, which sets the academic calendar for the region.

By providing this calendar, JCRC hopes to reduce disruption for students and teachers by ensuring that the major Jewish holy days were taken into account in the scheduling of exams, field trips, and major assignments, as well as non-academic activities such as back-to-school nights, concerts, photo days, school dances, and athletic competitions. Several administrators responded and were grateful to have the calendars early to help plan the school year 2022-23.

Additionally, an updated contact list of school administrators was shared with the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo and LiNK, which interact with local schools, as well as other faith communities who want to educate public schools about their religious holiday schedules.

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Meet Anna Kaplan, Director of Graycliff

BY VILONA TRACHTENBERG

Founded in 1997, The Graycliff Conservancy seeks to restore and preserve the summer home of Darwin and Isabelle Martin, which was built between 1926 and 1931, and designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.



Photo by Tess Butera

Since December 2019, Anna Kaplan—a native Jewish Buffalonian, mother of four and Executive Director of the Conservancy—has been tasked with continuing this massive mission. She and her team work to achieve the Conservancy's original preservation and restoration goal: to return the houses and grounds under their care to their original condition.

Anna grew up in the Elmwood Village and is a proud alumna of City Honors. Her family was part of the Temple Beth Am community, now Congregation Shir Shalom, where she became a Bat Mitzvah

and was later confirmed. Anna also spent a few summers of her childhood at Camp Lakeland.

Anna holds a dual bachelor's degree in history of art and architecture from Brown University, and a master's degree in history of decorative arts, design history, and material culture from Bard Graduate Center. She began her career in the Curatorial Department at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, working as an intern and then a Curatorial Assistant.

Anna also has always longed to start her own business, a goal she actualized when starting a vintage



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clothing business, all the while she maintained her relationship in the fine arts community as a volunteer. In 2014 she was able to merge her passions for business management and the arts when she started BT&C Gallery – Body of Trade and Commerce Gallery – a contemporary art gallery project on Buffalo’s West Side, later rebranding to Anna Kaplan Contemporary. She also started Resource:Art, an art consultancy collaboration with other Western New York art gallery owners.

In 2019, after her art space was bought out by a neighboring business – her career took on a new direction. “I took that moment to pause and reflect on the businesses that I had built and consider a new professional chapter, one that would allow me to flex my entrepreneurial muscles, and also engage my intellectual curiosity, and ultimately found that at Graycliff,” Anna said.



Photo by Matthew Digati

Her passion for her work at Graycliff was immediate, and she fell in love with the site. Anna became Graycliff’s Executive Director a few months before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. “It’s incredibly rejuvenating to spend time on the property, to see Lake Erie on a daily basis and have that connection to nature,” Anna



Photo by Matthew Digati

noted. “The drive out to Derby...is in itself a really lovely experience and something that I grew to rely on as time to myself and time to decompress with the lake by my side.”

The summer home is filled with Wright’s architecture; it sits on eight acres of land, and includes three buildings, a pond and a tennis court. With the home’s interior restoration complete, Anna and her team are working on the exterior. They are dismantling the stair tower leading to the site’s beach, and restoring a historic stone bench designed by Wright to define an outdoor area on Graycliff’s lakeside lawn. Anna is excited for the site’s continued progress, as this project will help to make the back lawn safe and functional for programming.

“In this role at Graycliff, I’m able to be a part of building something—which keeps me personally engaged and enthusiastic,” Anna reflected. “I’m an ambitious person and I’m thrilled to be part of this next piece of the organization’s history.”

Graycliff is open for a variety of docent-led tours all year round. For more information, and to book tours, guests can visit experiencegraycliff.org, and find Graycliff on Facebook and Instagram at @flwgraycliff.

Vilona Trachtenberg is a distribution coordinator at New Era Cap, a freelance writer, and a community advocate. She was also a Buffalo Niagara Partnership “Spotlight Professional” in 2020.

THE AVY STERMAN JEWISH EDUCATION FUND

Dear Friends,

Today we are excited to announce the establishment of the **Avy Sterman Jewish Education Fund**. Avy was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend. After Avy passed away last October, our families wanted to do something special in his honor. And as many of you know, Avy had a passion for Jewish education and believed that every Jew deserves the opportunity to have meaningful Jewish learning experiences. Therefore, we have created the **Avy Sterman Jewish Education Fund** to



continue his legacy by helping to ensure Jewish educational experiences continue to be accessible and meaningful in Jewish Buffalo.

We know there is no way to replicate Avy’s impact on our community. He was one of a kind. We believe though, he would want to see his commitment to Jewish life live on through the work of LiNK Jewish Buffalo – the engagement and learning arm of the Buffalo Jewish Federation. LiNK’s team works to be in relationship with individuals and families through semester-long classes, and festive



gatherings for holidays and festivals, helping them find ways to connect – to Judaism, and to one another.

On behalf of the Sterman and Karpati families, we are well on our way to laying the foundation in Avy’s memory to tangibly sustain and further Jewish education in Buffalo.

But we need your help!

We have pledged to match every contribution to the **Avy Sterman Jewish Education Fund** up to \$50,000 so this fund can flourish long into the future. Avy would be so proud and thank you for your support. Donations can be made at bit.ly/avystermanfund or by mailing a check to the Buffalo Jewish Federation (338 Harris Hill Rd, St. 108B, Williamsville, NY 14221) with a notation of this new fund.



Together, we will make a difference in Jewish Buffalo.

With Gratitude,
The Sterman and Karpati Families

Donations can be made at bit.ly/avystermanfund or by mailing a check to the Buffalo Jewish Federation (338 Harris Hill Rd, St. 108B, Williamsville, NY 14221) with a notation of this new fund.

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THANK YOU

COMMUNITY

TBT and JCRC send warmth to Phoenix

BY MARA KOVEN-GELMAN

It started with a simple email from the Phoenix JCRC director Paul Rockower: "Help on the Asylum front—need winter clothing ASAP." Paul sent this urgent request to several cold climate Jewish Community Relations Councils. He explained the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Phoenix Welcome Center helps up to 250 people seeking asylum a day. The asylees, mostly fleeing gang violence and political strife from South and Central America and Cuba, are processed and immediately sent to sponsors in cold climates. Phoenix aid organizations quickly ran out of warm clothing and coats, and they needed more.

JCRC Buffalo reached out to Temple Beth Tzedek (TBT) member and co-chair of the Keshet Inclusion Committee Sharla Bleichfeld, who in turn organized a coat drive. Together with Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum, Janet Gunner, Marian Lustig, Bruce Bleichfeld, Kim Jones and Pat Farrell, the synagogue gathered 50 coats, mittens, and hats for people of all ages. Ariel Kostiner of HQ Shipping, packed and shipped the coats at a discounted rate. Additional donated funds bought 11 new coats, purchased from Lands' End. A large quantity of warm clothing that was also given to JFS stayed in Buffalo and went to local Afghan asylees who are settling in the Buffalo community.



David Schiller & Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum
collecting coats

"Most importantly, we are grateful for this opportunity to coordinate with the IRC Welcome Center along with volunteers in the Jewish community in Phoenix as well as Jewish Family Services of Buffalo to put our Jewish values into action," said Sharla.

The Asylee Journey from the South

Anna Keating, an Interfaith Asylum Refugee Volunteer working with The Phoenix Welcome Center, who acted as the contact for TBT and JCRC, explained, "In early November we started thinking about the need for warm clothing for those traveling to colder climates. We found quickly that getting winter coats in Phoenix was difficult."

Asylees come from countries with significant gang violence or political strife. They typically cross the border and tell a border patrol agent that they wish to claim asylum. The vast majority are returned to Mexico without being allowed to claim asylum. If they pass an initial interview and are from certain countries, they may be allowed entry to join their sponsors who are located all over the country. Normally people stay at The Welcome Center less than 24 hours before they travel to their sponsors. They are offered a place to sleep and meals, and often people arrive with only the clothes they are wearing.

Anna Keating was so grateful for the coats, which arrived March 1: "The people who travel to their sponsors will face many challenges, but thanks to your generosity, being cold will not be one of them. I wanted to offer my heartfelt thanks to all of you who worked to make this delivery of winter coats possible."

Mara Koven-Gelman is Director of the Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council.



Top: Phoenix volunteers sorting donated clothing. Bottom: Bags of clothing collected by the Buffalo group before shipping to Phoenix

Community Commemoration of Yom HaShoah May 1

Zog Nit Keyn Mol- We Are Here

The community is invited to the 2022 commemoration of Yom HaShoah Sunday, May 1, 11:00 a.m. Chaired by Wendy Weisbrot, the program is directed by Brenda Feldstein and available to view virtually. You can register at bit.ly/BuffaloYomHaShoah2022.

The theme of this year's program is "Zog Nit Keyn Mol—We Are Here" and will commemorate the Six Million Jewish victims of the Holocaust by honoring six local survivors and their descendants: Drs. Gerhard and Ursula Falk, Ruth Lansing, Martin and Beth Lewin, Grigory and Rya Shershnevsky, Mark Solarz and Dr. Herman Stone. Video recordings will showcase these six extraordinary families sharing the experiences of the survivors and the lessons learned by the next generations.

Dr. Benjamin Balderman, grandson of Drs. Gerhard and Ursula Falk notes:

"It's very special that all four of my grandparents survived the Holocaust and that they have so many grandchildren and great grandchildren who are proud to be Jewish. The most important lesson they have instilled in us is that being Jewish is bigger than just your own experience. We have a responsibility to ourselves and each other to preserve Judaism for generations to come."

"Planning this event allows me the honor of helping to commemorate survivors like my father, Joe Diamond (z"l) and remember those who didn't survive," adds Wendy Weisbrot. "It is with such gratitude that I see that the community has embraced the importance of this remembrance and that they take responsibility to come together to honor the Holocaust victims and survivors with their presence."

The Girl in the Diary

Searching for Rywka from the Łódź Ghetto traveling exhibition is coming to Buffalo!



During the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945, the diary of Rywka Lipsyc, a young orthodox Jewish girl, was discovered by a Soviet doctor. The Girl in the Diary: Searching for Rywka from the Łódź Ghetto presents powerful excerpts from Rywka's diary while she was in Łódź Ghetto from October 1943 - April 1944. This exhibit also includes expert commentary from historians, doctors and Rabbis.

The exhibition is free and open to the public and will be on display at the

Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum

453 Porter Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14201

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Purim Fun with Nickel City Jews

Scenes from the NCJ Purim event. For more information contact Mike@[buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:mike@buffalojewishfederation.org).



Yom HaShoah 5782 | Holocaust Remembrance Day 2022

We are Here

Zog Nit Keyn Mol



**HOLOCAUST RESOURCE
CENTER OF BUFFALO**

Questions? Contact Lauren Bloomberg
lauren@buffalojewishfederation.org

Sunday, May 1, 2022

11 AM - 12 PM EST

Virtual Event

Register: bit.ly/BuffaloYomHaShoah2022

An East Side Story: Harold Arlen's Buffalo Roots

BY CHANA R. KOTZIN, PH.D.

We know a lot about Harold Arlen and his life beyond Buffalo through his own music and numerous articles, biographies and celebrations of his music. He was a prolific and highly talented composer known for hundreds of wistful, romantic, and jaunty songs including *Get Happy*, *Stormy Weather*, *Come Rain or Come Shine*, *It's Only a Paper Moon*, and perhaps most of all: *Over the Rainbow* from the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*.

But what about his hometown roots, when he was Hyman Arluck and lived on the East Side of Buffalo?

In celebration of American Jewish Heritage Month, we are debuting the first formal exhibition created by the Jewish Buffalo History Center: *An East Side Story: Harold Arlen's Buffalo Roots* in May at jewishbuffalohistory.org. This visual exploration focuses on Arlen's earliest beginnings, as a son, a teenager, a performer, a music arranger and a band leader, and also highlights how he has been celebrated in his home town over recent decades. It draws on critical materials from many individuals including Sam Arlen, his son, and

local families and organizations. The exhibition is sponsored by a number of local organizations led by the Buffalo Jewish Federation in partnership with the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library and the Benjamin and Dr. Edgar R. Cofeld Judaic Museum of Temple Beth Zion.

Born at home on Clinton Street in the hours between February 14th and February 15, 1905, "Joseph" as he was first named, barely made it, and his twin brother died. As the surviving four-pound baby, his parents Samuel and Celia Arluck, renamed him Chaim (Hebrew for Life) after a Jewish folklore tradition to ward away further danger to life. Both his parents were recent arrivals to Buffalo from other cities. Samuel moved from Louisville, Kentucky and Celia from Cincinnati, Ohio, but their roots lay in Europe, in Vilna, the "Jerusalem of Lithuania." Both were born in the early 1880s and each had come as children with parents who sought a better life away from the Russian Empire.

In America, Celia and her family as well as Samuel and his family, continued a commitment to Orthodox Judaism. Samuel became a cantor and after visitors from Buffalo heard his voice in 1904, Cantor Arluck came to Buffalo to interview at Beth Jacob, otherwise known as the Clinton Street Shul. After receiving a job offer, he traveled to Cincinnati, to marry Celia Orlin in a home ceremony and together they moved to Buffalo. Within a year, Hyman was born. With a start at Beth Jacob and a temporary High Holiday stint at Temple Beth El, Cantor Arluck was eventually appointed as cantor to the Pine Street Shul, also known as Brith Sholem. By then the Arlucks had discovered that their son was musically inclined, and at the age of seven he began singing in the choir, often perched on top of a stool! Carrie Faller, their neighbor at a new home on Pratt Street, began teaching Hyman the piano from the age of nine. Within two years, he was studying under Arnold Cornelissen, a local composer



Cantor Samuel Arluck and Celia Arluck with Hyman Arluck, c. 1908. Courtesy of Sam A. Arlen, used with permission of SA Arlen, LLC.

This visual exploration focuses on Arlen's earliest beginnings... and also highlights how he has been celebrated in his home town over recent decades.

and part of an organizing group for the future Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. Celia had high hopes that Hyman would become a piano teacher, but Hyman had other ideas.

In the thrall of ragtime and blues music in a neighborhood of Jewish and African American musical networks and on the cusp of the Jazz Age, Hyman Arluck happened upon a music that appealed to his musical sensibilities and talents. Shaped by his upbringing steeped in liturgical music (that his father could be found adapting and embellishing), Hyman's experience in cantorial music and classical piano training provided a significant influence in his new-found love of improvisational music styling. As a young teen, Hyman began playing the piano in local theaters and clubs. He formed his own band, the *Snappy Trio* with two friends, Ted Meyer (on violin) and Hymie Sandler (on drums) appearing at local joints including the Maple Leaf Café on Oak Street. With a burgeoning performing career, the prospect of remaining in school had limited appeal. After dropping out of Hutchinson at 15 in 1920, Hyman

then briefly attended East High to appease his parents. But this proved uninspiring too, and before he turned 16, he had left high school for good.

When Prohibition hit and the taverns closed, Hyman found other outlets for the growing group under the "See-Mor Jazz Band" name, and then as the "Southbound Shufflers", often playing on the Canadiana boat between Buffalo and Crystal Beach, Ontario. Within a couple of years, he was supporting himself and had changed his first name to Harold, listing himself in the Buffalo City Directory in 1923. By the time his parents and younger brother left Buffalo for Syracuse in 1924 so that his father could take up a new position, Harold had published his first piece of music. A year later, he began another band, the "Yankee Six." In 1926, he joined a much larger popular band, the "Buffalodians", as performer and a musical arranger on a touring circuit across the Midwest and New York City. Harold's career was taking off beyond Buffalo, and before long he would make composing his life-long passion, while always retaining his improvisational gift and as his extra spark of magic. Broadway, Hollywood, and an enviable list of awards have made Harold Arlen one of the most beloved composers of the twentieth century, and with a legacy that continues to grow in our own times.

To learn more, and view images of Harold's neighborhood, see his performing venues, band photographs and much more, visit <https://jewishbuffalohistory.org> in May!

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

Hadassah Happenings

Hadassah Shabbat Across the Regions was celebrated on Shabbat Zachor when our chapter opened the program with Kabbalat Shabbat Zoom services led by Talula Enis. The Regional President of Hadassah Northern New England region welcomed participants from several dozen other chapters.

In March, Dr. Ted Steinberg discussed his work translating Yiddish Yizkor Books, collections of essays and memoirs from the shtetls of Eastern Europe, translations of which are being collected by the Jewish Genealogical Society.

Monday, April 4 at 2:00 p.m. Rabbi Ori Bergman of Kehillat Ohr Tzion will be sharing recipes and doing a Zoom cooking demonstration from his home on some of his favorite Mizrahi Passover recipes. **To receive the link, email mkatzel@me.com**

For membership information contact ecapell@roadrunner.com.

Purim is Back!

Thanks to the JCC, Congregation Shir Shalom, Community Religious School, and Temple Beth Tzedek for sharing Purim images of activities around Jewish Buffalo!



In Honor of Jewish American Heritage Month The Jewish Buffalo History Center Proudly Presents

AN AFTERNOON CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF HAROLD ARLEN

Sunday, May 1, 2022
5 PM

Temple Beth Zion Sanctuary
805 Delaware Avenue Buffalo, NY

Join us in celebrating the music of legendary composer Harold Arlen. Born in Buffalo and the son of celebrated Cantor Samuel Arluck, Arlen composed over 500 songs including "Over the Rainbow," "Swanee River," "Let's Fall in Love" and "Stormy Weather."

Featuring:

- The Cabaret Big Band
- Local artists performing many of Arlen's most beloved compositions
- Debut of a new Exhibition "An East Side Story: Harold Arlen's Buffalo Roots"



Tickets for this in-person event are \$36/person | \$60/couple
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Questions? Contact Joan at 716-463-5050 or joan@buffalojewishfederation.org

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How can we ever thank you?

BY TODD GEISE

When I started at JFS nearly a year ago, I knew instinctively that there was something special about this agency. It is a much more abstract, almost spiritual feeling. As I continue to learn, I realize it is not just the agency that is special, but the Buffalo Jewish Community that has supported the agency for more than 160 years.

We can all appreciate the challenges that confronted us in coping with the pandemic; from the extremes of isolation to the loss of loved ones. Still, the Buffalo Jewish Community was there. You supported JFS with acquisition and distribution of PPE materials; purchased succulents from our Good Nature Plant Sale; and gave to our 2020 Gratitude and 2021 Building Our Tomorrow annual appeals.

But it does not stop there. In September 2021, we launched a bold fundraising effort with our refugee services partners to raise \$750,000 to



Todd Geise

support the unplanned arrivals of more than 600 Afghan evacuees. Not only did we meet this goal, but we also exceeded it, closing the campaign at \$950,000.

We were so grateful for all the individual contributions that came directly through the campaign portal. But what was unexpected was the first match grant launched by the Buffalo

Jewish Federation and the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies. This supplemental campaign raised a total of \$50,000 more for Afghan evacuees.

Then, we learned of another matching program resulting from two significant anonymous donations through the Federation that would benefit JFS' Refugee Services Department. At its completion, the matching program raised another \$70,000.

We are often asked how we will use all the financial support. The truth is that it goes very quickly as a supplement to what is provided by any federal, state, or non-governmental funding. Priorities include the need to ensure that every new neighbor has the basics and to ensure adequate staffing across the agency. Examples include safe and furnished housing, fresh food, hygiene products, mental health, or trauma support; and coordinators to support engagement in social services programs, education, training, employment, and language needs.

The financial element is one part, and we will certainly always have this need. The complementing part is the in-kind and volunteer support that we receive all year long. When we need new bedding, someone from the Jewish Community is there to donate; or towels, or furniture, or back to school supplies. When we need home set-ups, or doing PPE pick 'n packs, or direct mailers, volunteers come out as individuals or as teams to help with whatever is necessary.

It is very humbling for us to have the level of support the Jewish Community extends to us. It speaks to the shared values of community, humility, dignity, charity, and so many others.

As I said at the beginning, there is something special about Jewish Buffalo. And I know that I speak for all of us who have the honor to work at JFS that we also have the honor of representing the Jewish community. We aren't certain how to thank you but please know that you and the entire Jewish Community have our sincere gratitude for all that you do.

Todd Geise is the Director of Marketing at Jewish Family Services of Western New York.

BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

GREAT SEATS GOING FAST!

Schumann's Cello
Fri Apr 1, 10:30am | Sat Apr 2, 7:30pm
Elizabeth Schulze, conductor
Oliver Herbert, cello
 Robert Schumann's poetically expressive Cello Concerto was rarely performed before the end of the 19th century, and Franck's only symphony, both melancholy and luminous, was originally considered too avant-garde and radical. Contemporary composer Carlos Simon portrays the vibrant energy of an urban city.

Majestic Mendelssohn
Fri Apr 8, 10:30am | Sat Apr 9, 7:30pm
William Eddins, conductor
Drew Petersen, piano
 Mendelssohn's dramatic "Scottish" Symphony tells the tale of the composer's travels through the highlands, and virtuoso Drew Petersen returns to perform the eloquent Piano Concerto. Jonathan Bailey Holland's high-spirited homage to the city of Detroit complements the two masterworks.

Peter & The Wolf **BPOKIDS**
Sun May 1, 2:30pm
Jaman E. Dunn, conductor
 A symphonic fairy tale introducing the instruments of the orchestra as they portray each character in the thrilling story of Peter and his adventures to capture the wolf. The BPO narration will include a Spanish bilingual translation for Pedro Y el Lobo, and additional Hispanic presentations.

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Temple Beth Zion Welcomes Rabbi Gutmann

At a special Temple Beth Zion Congregational Meeting on February 28, congregants approved the hiring of Rabbi Brent Gutmann to become the Temple's new Senior Rabbi. Rabbi Gutmann currently serves as the Rabbi of Temple Kol Ami in West Bloomfield, Michigan.

Temple Beth Zion's Search Committee, led by Warren Clark and Susan Adelman, was impressed by Rabbi Gutmann's warmth, temperament, and compassion. "His openness, faith, and respectfulness have inspired us, and we are thrilled he will be the rabbi to help lead us forward."



The Gutmann Family

Bloomfield, Michigan since 2016.

"My family and I are thrilled to be moving to Buffalo," the Rabbi said. "Temple Beth Zion is a historic and beloved congregation. In the days since the news of my selection became public, individuals have been coming out of the woodwork to share their special connections with Temple Beth Zion and Buffalo with me. I am humbled to have been selected as the next Senior Rabbi of TBZ and eager for the position to officially begin on July 1st."

Rabbi Gutmann and his wife, Jill, have four daughters ages 2 to 10. Their family has visited Buffalo in the past and are fans of the architecture, culture, wings and, hopefully soon, the Bills. The Temple Beth Zion community looks forward to the arrival of the Gutmann family and welcoming them to Buffalo's Jewish Community and the larger Western New York Community.



2 of the Gutmann Girls boosting Buffalo

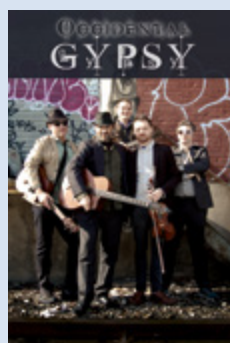
Rabbi Gutmann was ordained at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio in 2013. Following ordination, he served at Beth Shalom Progressive Congregation of Auckland, New Zealand. He has served as Senior Rabbi at Temple Kol Ami in West

Occidental Gypsy

will be appearing at MusicalFare
4380 #123 Main St. in Amherst N.Y.

April 2nd at 8 p.m.

Jazz/Klezmer/Gypsy band Occidental Gypsy is made up of a traditional acoustic Klezmer style quintette featuring Eli Bishop on violin. Eli has been studying and playing Eastern European music for many years. The compositions created by Brett Feldman and Eli are Klezmer and Gypsy orientated with facilitation of minor progressions and harmonies. The most recent CD was recorded as a tribute to a Holocaust Hero Rudolf Vrba.



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REGISTER

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\$500 deposit and completed registration is due by April 15, 2022 to guarantee your spot on the trip and group transportation

CONTACT

Stacey Block

stacey@buffalowejewishfederation.org

716-463-5053

**All days and events are subject to change.*

BUFFALOWJEWISHFEDERATION

Yom HaAtzmaut

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*A musical performance by
Israeli artist Rami Feinstein*



jccbuffalo.org

For questions,
email Gon Erez at
gerez@jccbuffalo.org



Register here

COMMUNITY



PARTNERSHIP2GETHER
פִּינָה
BUFFALO JEWISH FEDERATION

This month we are excited to highlight the upcoming opportunity to visit Israel and experience the Partnership region in the Western Galilee first-hand. Partnership2Gether Leadership Council Chair Laurie Sadler participated in the 2018 Buffalo Israel Experience with her husband Ron. “One of the most meaningful experiences that we all shared was the time spent in our partnership region in the Western Galilee,” reflected Laurie. “In addition to meeting people from the area and touring the famous sites in Akko, we each had the chance to dine in the home of a local family. Sitting around the table, we enjoyed each other’s company and conversation. My group even had the chance to go into the family’s bomb shelter, something that I’d never experienced before.”

“While many activities included all 77 of us on the BIE, we also had the opportunity to choose different tracks,” she added. “This allowed first time visitors to experience the classic Israeli sites while returning visitors could choose novel experiences. Walking along the Wall that separates the West Bank from Israel was one of the many highlights. Israel built the barrier as a necessary security measure to protect themselves from terrorism. The Palestinians see the wall as a means of restricting their freedoms. As part of this excursion, we met with members of a Grassroots organization, a group of Israelis and Palestinians living in the West Bank, whose mission is to foster understanding, nonviolence, and cooperation between the two groups. There were neighbors experiencing the conflict on a daily basis



Ron and Laurie Sadler (left) and Gerry and Randi Morkisz (right) in Israel with their P2G hosts on the 2018 BIE trip.

whose words stuck with many of us.” By the end of our trip, Laurie concluded, “we had all formed new friendships and had strengthened our sense of community and our connection to Israel.”

Everyone is invited to spend nine amazing days discovering Israel as part of **Buffalo Israel Experience II**, October 19-28, 2022. From Jerusalem to Tel Aviv to once again in our partner region in the Western Galilee, we will immerse ourselves in Israel’s history and culture, explore new ways of creating community and reimagine Jewish identity. Enjoy a great travel experience in Israel (good food, great accommodations, and top-notch guides) with fellow Buffalonians, who will become dear friends. **For more information and to reserve your spot, visit www.buffalojewishfederation.org/bie.**

For more information or any questions about Partnership2Gether, please contact Mandy Weiss at mandy@buffalojewishfederation.org.



The entire BIE 2018 group in Jerusalem.



**“As my forefathers
planted these carob trees
for me so I too plant
these for my children.”**

– Talmud (Ta'anis 23b)

**Total legacy commitments
received: 113**

**Total dollar amount:
\$4,695,050**

**through March 16, 2022*



LIFE & LEGACY® is a partnership with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation that promotes after-lifetime giving to benefit Jewish synagogues and organizations. Legacy giving ensures that *you* will be remembered by those who directly benefit from your generosity as well as those who will be inspired by your example for future generations.

In 2021, the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, in collaboration with the Buffalo Jewish Federation, was selected to join more than 70 other communities across North America in this Jewish legacy giving initiative. To-date, the initiative has secured **more than 30,000** permanently endowed commitments amounting to more than **\$1 Billion**. The four-year LIFE & LEGACY® program provides coaching, training, and resources to ensure that a culture of philanthropy and legacy giving becomes an integral part of the Buffalo Jewish community. Together, the Foundation and Federation are committed to helping secure the future of Jewish Buffalo. Each month, please visit this *LIFE & LEGACY® @ Buffalo* section to learn about the local agencies and synagogues partnering in this effort.

For more information, please contact Mandy Weiss, LIFE & LEGACY® Coordinator for the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies at legacy@jewishphilanthropies.org or 716-463-5065.

ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

JEWISH DISCOVERY CENTER

This month, we are pleased to highlight the Jewish Discovery Center of Greater Buffalo (JDC), one of the collaborating partner organizations in the LIFE & LEGACY @ Buffalo initiative. The JDC is a dynamic, vibrant catalyst for Jewish unity and renewal that serves as a universal open door to Judaism.

Established in 1993, the Jewish Discovery Center embraces all Jews with unconditional love. From wide-eyed children, whose hearts fill with joy and whose spirit dances as they encounter the rhythms and sounds of Jewish music for the first time, to seniors, who form bonds of friendship and engage their minds and hearts through activities and classes, JDC brings the joy and richness of the Jewish heritage to Jews of all ages.

In blending traditional Jewish teaching and values with modern and innovative techniques, the JDC engages Jews of all ages and backgrounds in experiences that reach them emotionally and intellectually. The special holy spark that lies within every single Jew yearns for connection and meaning. With hearts overflowing with love, the JDC engages every Jew as an individual to connect them more deeply to G-d, Torah and Israel.

The JDC believes that each and every Jew should be connected to the Jewish people and experience the joy of Jewish living. A legacy gift will help them transmit the sacred heritage of yesterday to the Jew of today, thereby ensuring a Jewish tomorrow.

For any questions about the JDC and how you can leave your legacy with them, please contact Rabbi Levi Greenberg at rabbilevi@yahoo.com.



Rabbis Yehoshua, Heschel, and Levi Greenberg in front of the JDC.

The following organizations are partnering in the *LIFE & LEGACY® @ Buffalo* collaborative effort:

- Buffalo Jewish Federation
- Center for Jewish Life
- Congregation Shir Shalom
- Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies
- Hillel of Buffalo
- Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo
- Jewish Discovery Center
- Jewish Family Services of Western New York
- Kadimah Scholars
- Temple Beth Tzedek
- Temple Beth Zion

Legacy is what you leave for your loved ones, causes you believe in and your community. A legacy gift to the Jewish community is one that will make a permanent difference to Jewish life after your death.

Your legacy gift becomes a permanent extension of your values and visions by perpetuating those organizations, synagogues and/or programs that you recognize are important to the Buffalo Jewish community.

Learn more about Life & Legacy® by visiting jewishphilanthropies.org/life-and-legacy

Thanks to David Gordon from Kadimah Scholars!

It's not every day that someone offers to donate a historic seven-foot tall brass menorah and Holocaust memorial plaque. So, when Kadimah Scholars Hebrew teacher Michal Shmuel-Lewis was approached by local businessman David Gordon, grandfather of two of her students, she seized the opportunity to accept.

"I was very touched when I saw that this menorah was dedicated to the Six Million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust, and to the Jews who fought in the wars for Israel's independence," she wrote to Gordon's son, Nathan, father of 9-year-old twins Ari and Madeline, who are part of the Kadimah Scholars program at Park School of Buffalo.

Shmuel-Lewis received the menorah and four large plaques – including two with the names of bygone local synagogues – when Gordon delivered them in February. Discussions are underway about how and where to display them.

David Gordon owns The Gordon



Companies, the parent of several local and online retail businesses. He came upon the items several years ago, after receiving a phone call from a friend, Rick Rusiniak, owner of Gateway Recycling Inc., a scrap-metal recycling business on Broadway in Cheektowaga.

Rusiniak, who is also the former town historian, had been hired to help a local institution remove the last items from its previous building prior to a move and construction project. The institution had been working for some time to clear out possessions that it could not use or keep in the new building.

While in the building to oversee the work, Rusiniak spotted the menorah and plaques, recognized potential emotional value, and separated them from the other items that his employees were removing.

"They were under the gun to get out of there, trying to do the best they could," Rusiniak said. "I'm kind of a history buff. I decided to save a piece of history."

He reached out to Gordon, whom he knew was Jewish. "He had a good eye for things," Gordon said of Rusiniak, noting the "significance of the wording" on the plaques. "He recognized the value."

The four large memorial plaques – all six feet in length, one foot in height and an inch thick – had graced the top of old yahrzeit boards in a synagogue, but were not retained when the synagogue merged and moved. Two of them referenced the six million Jews who perished in

the Holocaust and those who died fighting for Israel's independence. "That piece really disturbed me when I saw it," Gordon said.

He bought the items from Rusiniak and then COVID-19 pandemic struck, and the items sat idle. Then his grandchildren joined the Kadimah Scholars program, where they learn Hebrew and Judaic Studies within the Park curriculum and community, cultivating a Jewish foundation for the future. "They love the Kadimah program," Gordon said of his family.

In conversations with Shmuel-Lewis, Gordon's son, Nathan, mentioned his father's possessions, and she told him Kadimah would be "delighted" to receive them. "I was so moved," Shmuel-Lewis wrote to Nathan. "The Kadimah family is very appreciative of this act of Chesed (kindness) that your family did by saving this menorah and bringing it to our program at Park."

Happy Passover

Temple Beth Zion is pleased to host
a remote, live, online participatory Seder

Friday, April 15, 6 PM
Via Zoom

Led by Rabbi Sharon Sobel, Judy Henn,
Zack Steinberg and all of you!

- Appropriate for all ages
- A blend of contemporary and traditional
- Participatory • Musical • Interactive

Advance registration
required by April 11
Go to www.tbz.org to register

KOT Moves into Spring

Kehillat Ohr Tzion held a Packing Party for Federation's Dignity Grows™ program, and it was such a success that plans are underway for another gathering this summer. The team, headed by Cheryl Stein and Barb Chazen, packed 150 totes in a very short period of time! In addition, Dr. Iris Danziger led a special security training program "Stop the Bleed" on March 27.



KOT members were delighted to once again be in shul for Purim to hear the *Megillah*. Costumes and good spirit abounded as the *Megillah* was read Wednesday evening, March 16 and again on Purim day. The long-standing shul tradition of having a *Seudah* following the afternoon reading of the *Megillah* was enjoyed by everyone in attendance.

Want to learn at KOT? Contact oribergman@gmail.com for more information.



Foundation's Academic Scholarship Applications Available In April



April 1, and will be accepting applications through June 1.

The Foundation's academic scholarship and financial assistance program was created more than a century ago with endowments by generous donors who preserved their legacy by financially supporting students' education for future generations. Since 2000, the Committee has awarded more than \$1.4 million in grants and \$440,000 in interest-free loans to hundreds of Jewish students who meet



Lenore J. Levy

Lenore J. Levy, Chair of the Foundation's Academic Scholarship and Loan Committee, announced that applications for the 2022 academic scholarship program will be available on the Foundation's website starting

loans. Ultimately, the Foundation informs each candidate student by the end of August.

"The Committee consists of inspired volunteers from the Jewish community who take their responsibilities seriously," Mrs. Levy explained. "They dedicate a lot of time and effort to the

application review and award process."

Academic scholarships are awarded in the form of grants or interest-free loans to Jewish students who have attended high school in Erie or Niagara counties and based on documented financial need. Further, the scholarships enable applicants to pursue their studies in accredited colleges, universities or institutions. Students may choose any concentration that their inspiration, talents and abilities may justify.

Mrs. Levy added: "The Foundation's academic scholarship program began in 1918 with establishment of the Isaac Hoenig Memorial Fund which started by awarding up to \$1,800 annually. Today, through prudent investing and compounded interest, Mr. Hoenig's fund can provide up to \$26,000 annually. Also, his criteria for awarding scholarships continue to be used."

For information on the Foundation's academic scholarship and financial assistance programs, their eligibility criteria and donors, and to access an application, visit the Foundation's website (jewishphilanthropies.org) and review the section titled Grants & Scholarships. For information about creating an endowment for academic scholarships, contact Irv Levy, Executive Director or Lorne Steinhart, Senior Manager of Client Relations. Questions? Contact the Foundation at 716.204.1133 or submit an email inquiry to info@jewishphilanthropies.org.



the eligibility criteria. 2021 was a record-setting year in which the Committee awarded 31 scholarships, totaling more than \$107,000.

Beginning April 1, prospective student beneficiaries can submit applications and supporting documentation to be considered for the upcoming academic year beginning in August or September. After the June 1 application submission deadline, all applications are delivered to Jewish Family Services of WNY's Career Services Department for consideration.

JFS's Career Services' professional staff review all applications and interview each qualifying applicant. By late July, JFS counselors' opinions are presented to the Committee anonymously to ensure unbiased reviews and determinations are made. In early August, the Committee convenes to consider and award the scholarships, grants and interest-free

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Buffalo International Jewish Film Festival Returns with Hybrid Program

BY RICK KOLLINS

After two years of presenting films and special events virtually, the Buffalo International Jewish Film Festival will be offering a hybrid format for its 37th annual festival this year. Five films will be available on line, six other films will be screened at the Amherst Theater, and a special family event will be held at the Transit Drive-In.

This year's festival lineup includes seven dramas, four documentaries and one comedy, representing Israel, Germany, France, Spain, Russia, Argentina and the U.S. The festival committee has attempted this year to include films that provide insights into Jewish themes and issues that might not be well known to North Americans.

Talk to the Filmmaker

My Dearest Enemy is a compelling story of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as seen, not through the lens of politics or history, but by following a lifelong relationship between two close friends, one an Israeli Jew and the other a Palestinian Muslim. The complexity of the conflict is borne out through the challenges of the personal relationship central to the film, as well as by the vagaries of family dynamics, community attitudes and intercultural suspicions. Writer and director Zipora "Tzipi" Trope also challenges several accepted stereotypes of women's roles on either side of the cultural divide by portraying Alice as a stylish middle class Palestinian with a secret lover while Israeli Maya is a single parent and free-thinking artist.

The Israeli filmmaker will also be the featured guest for a "Tuesday Talkback" via Zoom on Tuesday, May 3 at 7:00 p.m.

Drive-In Movie

The family film at the Transit Drive-In at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 12 is *The Raft*, the whimsical story of four teenagers who build a raft to sail from Israel to Cyprus for the World Cup of Soccer. As well as showing aspects of everyday life in Israel, including the Arab-Israeli conflict and the constant threat of attacks, this film also reflects universal adolescent attitudes and behaviors, such as generational rebellion, peer bonding, intra-group conflict, and teen romance. What starts out as a somewhat superficial story ultimately turns into a serious disaster adventure that tests the relationships between the four protagonists.

Fiddler on the Roof

Following up on the popularity of the acclaimed documentary about the background and international impact of *Fiddler on the Roof*, this year's lineup includes a new documentary about the 1972 movie adaptation of the stage musical. *Fiddler's Journey to The Big Screen* is less about the story itself and more about director Norman Jewison and the steps that went into making the film.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect is the way in which Jewison, who is not Jewish, related to the story and the Sholom Aleichem legacy, and came to see himself in some ways as a Jew, even to the point of having a chuppah at his second marriage in 2010. As Jewison explained, since his family name literally means "son of a Jew," it was logical that he would have an affinity to Judaism. The film also goes behind the scenes to unveil many of the challenges and "tricks of the trade" in producing a Hollywood blockbuster, and shares insights from members of the cast and production crew.

Another film that provides a teenage perspective on the Middle Eastern conflict is *Wet Dog*, a German drama set in inner-city Berlin where Muslim and Jewish immigrants live in close proximity. The story is based on the autobiography "A Wet Dog is Better Than a Dry Jew" by Arye Sharuz Sharica, whose parents fled to Germany to escape anti-Semitism in their native Iran.

An unusual documentary related to Eastern European Jewry and the Holocaust is *Three Minutes – A Lengthening*. Based on the book by Glen Kurtz, the film uses a three-minute home movie that Kurtz's grandfather shot in 1938 in the Polish shtetl of



Actor Topol and director Norman Jewison on the set of *Fiddler on the Roof*

Nasielsk to show how unaware the Jewish population was of what was to come just one year later. The documentary includes interviews with a few of the Nasielsk residents who survived the Holocaust.

In what is obviously a timely film, *Song Searcher* documents the story of Moyshe Beregovsky, a Ukrainian musician and scholar who spent 30 years recording traditional Yiddish music in defiance of Russian attempts to eliminate Jewish culture in the Soviet Union. This film goes beyond the main focus of the story to include rare archival materials and first-hand personal testaments to illustrate Jewish persecution in Eastern Europe even before the Nazis' "final solution."

Kiss Me Kosher is a romantic comedy that takes a satirical look at serious issues such as German-Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian relations, the legacy of Naziism and the Holocaust, and Israeli attitudes towards the LGBTQ community. As one reviewer wrote: "It's a bold move, looking for lighthearted love against the fraught backdrop of the West Bank."

Complete information, including the full schedule, synopses, trailers, ticket prices, and instructions for streaming films and Zoom discussions, is available on the JCC web site at jccbuffalo.org. Ticket options include single, flex and all-access passes.



2022 Film Schedule

APRIL 28 – MAY 19, 2022

THURSDAY, APRIL 28 – SATURDAY, APRIL 30

A RADIANT GIRL (STREAMED) 6:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, MAY 1 – TUESDAY, MAY 3

MY DEAREST ENEMY (STREAMED) 6:00 P.M.

TUESDAY, MAY 3

TUESDAY TALKBACK: *MY DEAREST ENEMY*
with Director Tzipi TropE (ZOOM) 7:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4 – FRIDAY, MAY 6

WET DOG (STREAMED) 6:00 P.M.

SATURDAY, MAY 7 – MONDAY, MAY 9

XUETA ISLAND (STREAMED) 6:00 P.M.

TUESDAY, MAY 10 – THURSDAY, MAY 12

RED STAR (STREAMED) 6:00 P.M.

THURSDAY, MAY 12 - TRANSIT DRIVE-IN

THE RAFT 7:30 P.M.

FRIDAY, MAY 13 AMHERST THEATER

KISS ME KOSHER 4:00 P.M.

SATURDAY, MAY 14 - AMHERST THEATER

HERE WE ARE 7:30 P.M.

SUNDAY, MAY 15 - AMHERST THEATER

FIDDLER'S JOURNEY TO THE BIG SCREEN 1:00 P.M.

MONDAY, MAY 16 - AMHERST THEATER

HERE WE ARE 4:00 P.M.

KISS ME KOSHER 7:30 P.M.

TUESDAY, MAY 17 - AMHERST THEATER

THREE MINUTES: A LENGTHENING 7:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18 AMHERST THEATER

IMAGE OF VICTORY 7:30 P.M.

THURSDAY, MAY 19 - AMHERST THEATER

SONG SEARCHER 7:30 P.M.

Film synopses, trailers, ticket prices and streaming instructions available at jccbuffalo.org.

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



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Remembering Sheila Shapiro

Sheila Shapiro was a force of nature, a force for good, and among many other things, a force on behalf of the Adult Department of the JCC. As a passionate volunteer for more than ten years, she organized and created interesting programs for adults at the JCC, at both the Holland and the Benderson Buildings. Her work was recognized and celebrated when she was honored for her ingenuity and effective contributions with the JCC's Ralph Kushner Volunteer Award. She died peacefully last November in Buffalo at the age of 78.

Many of the individuals she worked with and spent time with her, contacted *The Jewish Journal* to share their memories about her as an engaging community resource. We are grateful to Rise' Kulick, Marcie Frankel and Arlene Burrows for compiling and sharing these reflections.

Marcie Frankel

Sheila Shapiro's death notice talked of her passion for teaching. Sheila demonstrated that passion continually in the ten plus years of her retirement life here in her hometown. When she returned to Buffalo from Chicago in 2011, where she taught college literature and creative writing for thirty years, she connected with staff at the JCC to offer her services as a volunteer for adult education. And volunteer she did, creating innovative learning opportunities that attracted a devoted

audience. Sheila started with high level literature classes of the kind we experienced in college English classes. Sheila had a real knack for initiating ideas and finding leaders to develop and run a variety of opportunities, key among them a *New Yorker Magazine* weekly discussion group which still takes place in both locations.

Other options included classes on aging, current events, short story reading and discussion, small art projects, and movies. Her ability to develop ideas,



Sheila Shapiro

encourage participation, and make everyone she met feel like a dear friend created a feeling of camaraderie among the participants in these programs.

Jo Nasoff-Finton

Sheila Shapiro was a dear friend of mine for 46 years. I met her in September 1975 when I came to Buffalo from Israel and we both had daughters in kindergarten at Kadimah Academy. But Sheila wasn't just my friend—she was a most generous “bringer together of friends” and often, her friends became your friends, too. I benefitted greatly from Sheila's talent and expertise on many things—antiques, literature, movies, among many others.

Sheila was a life-long learner and a creative and natural teacher. As a volunteer to the JCC, she was the initiator and organizer of several new adult learning forums which brought both learning and social opportunities to so many people.

In the days, weeks, months and years ahead, I will be thinking of Sheila and remembering

her with tears and smiles. What a sad loss for her family but also a significant loss for everyone whose lives Sheila touched—and that is one heck of a lot of people.

Rise' Kulick

Sheila was a volunteer at the JCC for about 10 years. And the programs she organized—film groups, women's discussion groups, and so many more—would not have happened without her. She had a tremendous spirit and a way of getting people to participate in all these things. Sheila was a woman filled with a zest for life, fun and adventure, and she told the best true- life stories ever!

Susan Stoll

The last time I saw Sheila was in one of the many groups she attended and initiated. She was wearing a grey vest that she had knitted with an interesting button. The mention of the button sparked a conversation that led to a discussion where I learned some things about her I did not know. She spoke of her antiquing days and about the dry goods store her mother operated. We talked about fabrics and the fabric shops that had sadly closed.

I especially liked the story about her making mushroom soup. She had purchased some exotic mushrooms at a Chinese store to put in her soup. She was like an alchemist at work. Anything I would say about her interests and accomplishments would include her enthusiasm and delight in what she was doing. I know she would not want anyone to be sad at her passing, but that would be impossible. She was embedded deeply in the hearts of so many people. I am grateful for the time I knew her, and the beautiful memory of her goodness.

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A group of Sheila Shapiro admirers and others are planning to pay tribute to her and all she did to promote adult learning at the JCC by planting a tree on the Camp Centerland campus with a plaque in her memory. Plans include planting in late spring and a gathering at the site to share stories about Sheila.



To contribute toward the project, send a check made out to JCC and mail to:

JCC of Greater Buffalo
Alex Eadie, Director of Advancement
2640 North Forest Rd, Getzville, NY 14068

Jennie Pohl – Young till the End

BY BRUCE CORRIS

It seems strange at Congregation Shir Shalom (CSS) to not be planning something for Jennie Pohl's 102nd birthday this month. While it wasn't unexpected that Jennie passed away in January at the age of 101 (and three-quarters...she would want that included), it was a shock for many of us. We just figured Jennie would always be here.

Our friend had been an active temple member for as long as anyone can remember. How active? The joke at CSS is it isn't an official temple event unless Jennie is there, because she volunteered for just about every single one. And she was a hard worker, always pitching in for setup, cleanup, whatever was needed. Especially at the Women of Shir Shalom rummage sale. When the spring sale fell on her birthday, she was still there, and last fall, she helped out one last time at age 101 (and a half).

For many years, Jennie also volunteered at Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital at the front check-in desk. And when someone she knew showed up, she would always walk them to wherever they needed to be, no matter how far it was.

But perhaps the biggest impact Jennie had can be summed up in three words: Walk Off Hunger. When Temple Beth Am founded the Walk to raise money for the Food Bank of WNY in 2008, Jennie was there, and every year since. And Jennie didn't just walk the "Walk". She raised money. Lots of it. She is the all-time



Jennie meets Sabretooth at the Walk

leading fundraiser for the event, and she's so far ahead of everyone else, it's unlikely anyone will ever catch her. How did she do it? She just asked people. And then she gave them that "Jennie" smile. Saying no to her would be like saying no to your grandmother.

By the way, when Jennie actually walked the Walk, she didn't dawdle. Even well into her 90s, she was one of the first ones to complete the route. For the last few years, she would tell me that she didn't think she would do the Walk that year...but the day of the event, she would still show up with an envelope filled with cash and checks.

Walk Off Hunger won't be the same without her, and neither will CSS. But we have many years of memories of someone who defined the adage: "young at heart."

Bruce Corris is immediate past president of Congregation Shir Shalom.

Temple Beth Tzedek Springs Forward

Building off a welcome return to in-person Purim celebrations, Temple Beth Tzedek is preparing for Passover with a range of programs and classes.

Pesach Pleasures

On Sunday, April 3 at 7:00 p.m., Women's Network will be having a



Zoom presentation with local chef Robin Kurss, Director of Jewish Experience at Buffalo Jewish Federation, on "More Than Matzoh!"

where she will demonstrate some of her favorite Passover desserts. **RSVP to Helen Weinstein at hsweinstein@yahoo.com.**

"Chai Rolling" Bowling

Jewish men from across the religious spectrum are invited to join the TBT Men's Club for a wonderful time on Sunday, April 3 from 3:00-6:00 p.m. at Transit Lanes. The cost is \$25 per person with an additional \$5 for those who need shoe rental. **RSVP to Scott Herman at spberman@webeditor.com or call 716-694-9992.**



A scene from the recent World Wide Wrap event on Tefilin with the Community Religious School and the TBT Men's Club.

Tinok Time

Tinok Time, Temple Beth Tzedek's Thursday morning program for children

ages 6 months-4 years) led by Zahava Fried, will be held next on Thursday, April 7, from 10:00-12 noon. **RSVP to zahava.taylor@gmail.com.**



Sacred Access

On Thursday, April 7, at 8:00 p.m., Dr. Lisa Benson will be presenting "Understanding your cemetery privileges: What to do when the time comes" on Zoom at tinyurl.com/4rtmx9jp.

Klein Scholar-In-Residence Weekend Is Returning

The Rabbi Isaac Klein Scholar in Residence Weekend will be held May 13-May 15. Our scholar this year will be Dr. Fredrick Greenspahn. His overarching topic will be "The Changing Nature of American Jewry," which will be divided into four sessions: institutions, ethnicity, gender, and religion. Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks.

Please visit btzbuffalo.org for the full array of services, programming and more.



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A Nation of Leaders

BY RABBI YEHUDA LORBER

Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, once met with the then US President. In their conversation they were comparing the challenges and difficulties they both faced as leaders. At some point POTUS boasted that he was the president of over 150 million people compared to the Israeli population of only 1.5 million, to which Ben Gurion responded "you have 150 million citizens I have 1.5 million prime ministers..."

This may be told as a joke, but there is truth to it. The Jewish people are a nation of leaders. We hold the torch of light, leading the nations to a better, peaceful world by sharing with them the 7 Noahide Universal Laws, teaching all to add in acts of goodness and kindness, while we stand firm in keeping our own 613 laws.

This Pesach we celebrate - for the 3334 time - G-d taking us out of the Egyptian exile and making us His nation,



Rabbi Yehuda Lorber

His army. We read all about the hardship, slavery, misery, and despair, and how Moshe then came to redeem us. Before it got better, it got worse to a point where we didn't want to be helped, or

redeemed; we were too steeped in the darkness.

We were lucky to have a leader like Moshe who didn't give up on us (precisely the reason G-d chose him). Moshe awakened our *neshamos* (souls) and renewed our belief and trust in G-d, earning us wonders and miracles, leading us out of exile and into the Promised Land, to liberation.

Breaking Through Barriers

The Torah is no history book telling us exciting and dramatic stories. The word "Torah" means "teachings" and "instruction;" it contains eternal lessons for us to learn from and to apply to ourselves at every time and place, as our sages say, and as recorded in the Haggadah: In every generation one must look upon himself as if he personally had gone out of Egypt!

What does "going out of Egypt" mean in 2022? The teachings of Chassidus explain that the word "mitzrayim" or "Egypt" in Hebrew comes from the root

word which means "limitations" and "boundaries." "Going out of mitzrayim" means going out of our own limitations and boundaries, those which block and prevent us from fulfilling our G-d-given mission here in this world.

A Leap Of Faith

At the end of a harsh training for one of the IDF's top special units, the few remaining selected soldiers had reached the final stage before joining the prestigious unit. They climbed to the top of a difficult, dangerously high mountain. At its peak they were instructed to jump down into what seemed to be certain death. After the first few gave up saying "this is our limit," one brave soldier took a few steps back and to the shock of his friends leaped forward and jumped straight down into the abyss. He was intercepted by a giant net at the bottom of the mountain which saved him. He passed the test with flying colors!

His friends later asked him how he was so sure he would be ok, to which he answered—with typical Israeli logic—"the army invested millions into our training, it made no sense that they would just let us die and it would all go to waste."

Our Commander in Chief - the Almighty - has invested in us so much. He had chosen and carefully selected us from all the nations of the world for a mission, He entrusted us to bring down and reveal his presence into this physical world and ultimately to bring Moshiach. Let's trust in him - and in ourselves - and get the job done.

Mission Possible

How to do that? By going out of Egypt! Our Egypt, breaking through our own limitations and boundaries, doing something more than what we are comfortable and used to doing, better than what we did until now: putting on Tefillin, lighting Shabbat candles, keeping Shabbat, keeping Kosher, giving Tzedakah, studying Torah, giving our children (and ourselves) Jewish education.

Rabbi Lorber teaches at the Ohr Temimim School and serves as a Rabbi and a Chaplain in the greater Buffalo area.

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1» Have you always wanted to travel to Israel, or can't wait to go back? Join your Buffalo friends and neighbors in the **Buffalo Israel Experience (BIE) II** taking place this coming October. Read about it on page 13, and reserve your spot NOW at buffalojewishfederation.org/bie. For more information, contact Miriam Abramovich at miriam@buffalojewishfederation.org.

2» Come to LiNK Jewish Buffalo's Belonging Conference Sunday, April 24 at the Northland Workforce Training Center and Monday, April 25 at Temple Beth Tzedek and explore what the Jewish Community looks like today. Examine what this changing environment means for our Jewish communal institutions. \$18 for the conference. Register at bit.ly/belongingconference. More info? mike@buffalojewishfederation.org.

3» Celebrate Hillel of Buffalo's 75 Anniversary Thursday, May 12 at the UB Center for the Arts. Enjoy food, drink, a silent auction, and a musical performance by students. Tickets are \$75/per person and can be purchased along with tribute ads at wizevents.com/hillelofbuffalo2022. Contact rabbisara@hillelofbuffalo.org for more information.

4» Don't miss the HRC's exhibition *The Girl in the Diary* now through May 27 at the Karpeles Museum on Porter Ave in Buffalo (see page 9). Contact Elizabeth Schram at Elizabeth@buffalojewishfederation.org for more information or to arrange for a guided tour.

5» Crisis in Ukraine. You can help Jews today by acting NOW! Make a 2022 Ukraine Crisis Fund donation through Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) by going to jfeds.org/CrisisInUkraine or buffalojewishfederation.org and click on the "Crisis in Ukraine" link.

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*.

Email your answers to ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org.

For the March issue, Cheryl Tobias and Harvey Horowitz correctly identified the memorial stone in Cantor Susan Wehle's memory at Congregation Shir Shalom's grove.

2022 Arts & Writing Contest

FOR WNY STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 - 12

ANTISEMITISM IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

ANTISEMITISM EXISTED BEFORE THE HOLOCAUST, DURING THE HOLOCAUST, AND CONTINUES TO BE PREVALENT IN TODAY'S SOCIETY. PLEASE RESPOND TO ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS THROUGH ART OR WRITING.

WHERE HAVE I SEEN OR EXPERIENCED ANTISEMITISM?

WHY DOES ANTISEMITISM STILL EXIST?

WHAT CAN I DO PERSONALLY AND/OR WE DO AS A COMMUNITY TO COMBAT ANTISEMITISM?

HOW DOES ANTISEMITISM THREATEN A SOCIETY THAT DOES NOT ADDRESS IT?

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AT 6:00PM VIA ZOOM

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Joanie Leeds

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Chag Passover Sameach!



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Tops Kosher Deli Provides for Jewish Buffalo

SUBMITTED BY TOPS PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

As Tops celebrates the Grand Re-Opening of its Amherst location, it also embraces its rich history in the community which wouldn't be complete without Nissan Berg. Nissan, who opened his Kosher Deli & Grocery inside this Tops store 31 years ago, has been a staple at this location and Western New York, serving the Amherst, Buffalo, and Niagara Falls communities.



"We're the only Kosher deli you will find in this region. We have so many unique offerings that not many people seek out anymore, but I'm proud to still have my shop here to serve the community," Nissan told a Tops representative.

Nissan offers a variety of over 700 kosher items with everything you need for a mid-week stay or Shabbat meal. The deli and bakery is supervised by the Buffalo Va'ad Kashruth so you can get kosher baked goods like bread, cakes and doughnuts that are "BVK" (kosher, pareve, and Pas Yisroel) for all of your special occasions. Each week Rabbi Eliezer Marcus from Young Israel of Greater Buffalo stops by Nissan's shop to bless the food.

"Keeping kosher foods is very serious," said Nissan. "Keeping kosher is a commitment and the younger generation does not adhere to these traditions as much as the older generations do. There are people who come to me that have been coming to me for a very long time, or people who have never had kosher food and really like it. For example, my chicken, people love it and will never go back to eating a different kind."

You can see the passion Nissan has for running his deli, not only in how he speaks about his business and his customers, but also in the fact that he

is its only employee. Working six days a week with help from his wife, Nissan loves serving the community. "I moved here 32 years ago because I loved the small city. No big cities for me. I picked Buffalo because it felt different for me, in a good way, and all of the four seasons. Here everyone smiles, says hello, even if they don't know me."

And he loves his partnership with Tops. Over the past three decades he has seen many changes, but the one thing that has remained constant are the strong ties he has made with the company and its shoppers. "There is a mutual respect that has always been here. We help one another out."

And the feeling is mutual. "We really enjoy having Nissan as part of the Tops family," said store manager Jim Giambra. "He truly brings a sense of family and pride to everything he does and our customers look forward to learning from him."

You can visit Nissan's Kosher Deli & Grocery inside the newly renovated Tops at 3980 Maple Road & North Bailey in Amherst, Monday-Thursday from 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. and Friday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Nissan also offers catering for your special occasions. For more information, visit buffalokosher.com.

Community Seders in WNY

Many of the WNY synagogues and agencies are organizing Passover Seders, both in-person and virtual. Below is a listing as of March 21. For more information, contact one of the organizations below.

Center for Jewish Life

CJL will be holding Passover Seders Friday, April 15 and Saturday, April 16 at 8:00 p.m. each evening at 757 Hopkins Road in Williamsville. RSVP required. **Go to jewishbuffalo.com or call 716-639-7600.** Free of Charge. \$180 to sponsor.

You can also order all your food for Pesach at jewishbuffalo.com.

Chabad of Buffalo

Chabad will be holding Seders Friday, April 15 and Saturday, April 16 at the Chabad House on North Forest Road. **For times and reservation, please call 688-1642.**

Congregation Shir Shalom

Saturday, April 16
Second Night Virtual Seder via Zoom

Led by Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein, Cantor Arlene Frank and singer/songwriter Joanie Leeds.

Zoom registration is required.

Go to shirshalombuffalo.org for the link.

Hillel of Buffalo

Hillel of Buffalo will be holding a Seder on Friday, April 15th in the University at Buffalo Student Union, Room 210. The Seder is free for undergraduate and graduate students. **For more information, contact Logan Woodward, Director of Engagement, logan@hillelofbuffalo.org.**

Jewish Discovery Center

If you would like to celebrate the Passover Seder with Rabbi Heschel & Rebbetzin Lea Greenberg, **call 716-245-9520 to reserve a space.**

The Jewish Discovery Center is distributing hand-baked Shmurah Matzah. If you would like a box containing 2-3 round Shmurah Matzahs, **please call 716-583-2524.**

Kehillat Ohr Tzion

KOT is not holding a community Seder, but invites anyone who needs a Seder to contact Rabbi Ori Bergman and he will find a welcoming home.

oribergman@gmail.com

Temple Beth Zion

Friday, April 15 6:00 p.m.

TBZ will host a remote, live, online participatory Seder via Zoom.

Led by Rabbi Sharon Sobel, Judy Henn, and Zack Steinberg.

Advance registration required by April 11. **Go to tbz.org to register.**

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-26)

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Recipe: Leah's Sweet Matzo Brei

LEAH KRAMER



While this recipe is basic and easy, I truly look forward to making sweet matzah brei each time Passover rolls around.

**2 eggs
2-3 sheets of matzo
Cinnamon and sugar to taste**

Begin by whisking the 2 eggs in a separate bowl. Once thoroughly mixed, crumble however much matzo you want to use and put it straight into the egg mix. Next, add as much cinnamon and sugar as you would like! Spend about 30 seconds mixing it all together. Once thoroughly mixed, scramble on a pan until the eggs are cooked completely and enjoy! Top the brei with maple syrup, jam, yogurt, honey, or whatever your heart desires. The recipe can be easily tweaked to be savory but adding salt and pepper instead of cinnamon and sugar. Either way, delicious!

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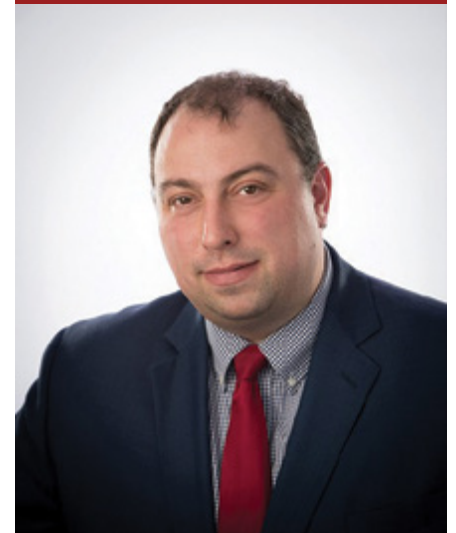
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would like to wish everyone a happy and
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*May you be
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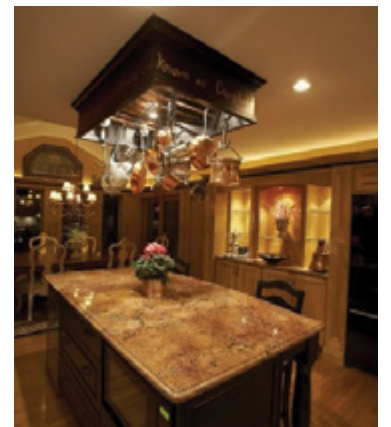
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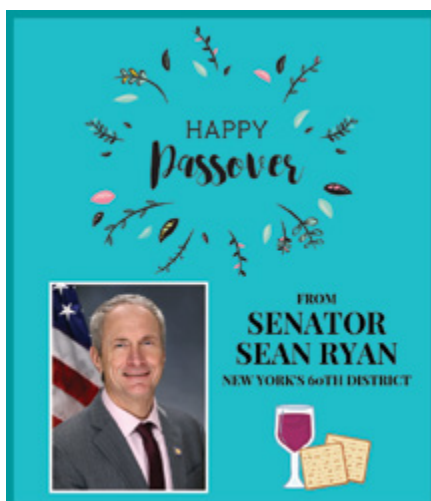
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Leslie Kramer 1961-2022

Leslie Shuman Kramer, attorney, community leader and passionate advocate for causes in which she believed, passed away February 24, 2022 in Buffalo after a heroic 9-month battle with cancer. Born in 1961 in Buffalo, she was 60 years old at the time of her death.

She is survived by her husband, James; her children Josh, Joseph and Leah; her mother, Marilyn Shuman; her sisters Catherine (Dr. David) Miller of Buffalo and Diane (Alan) Harkavy of Israel, brother James Shuman (Amanda) of New York City, and numerous uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces.

The following remarks are excerpted from eulogies given at her funeral held in-person February 27, 2022 and streamed from Temple Beth Tzedek.

Diane Harkavy, sister

Our relationship as siblings together and individually is extraordinary...the four of us, each with a strong personality, each with our strengths and with our weaknesses. We have learned over our lives to love, respect, share and really, really enjoy each other! We are to each other, the best of friends. The last day of Leslie's life was not our choice. It was bigger than us and more painful than any words can describe. But it was also beautiful because for a few hours, on that last day, Cathy, Jimmy and I stayed with Leslie. It was a day that was beyond intimate. It was a day that I believe Leslie could feel our infinite love for her. It was a day that I never wanted to end.

Catherine Shuman Miller, sister

Things I am going to miss sharing my life with Leslie: Going to the JCC in the morning and seeing her car parked right next to where I park mine; Showing up at hair appointments and finding out she was there right before me or is coming right after me – and it wasn't planned; Running into people in Buffalo who start talking to me and halfway through the conversation I realize they think I am Leslie; Getting phone calls from her early in the morning to discuss a menu for one of the holidays, weeks in advance. Shabbat dinners, family gatherings, everything and more. I am lucky in that my sisters are my best friends.

James Shuman, brother

36 years ago, Leslie came to visit me when I was a student in London and we travelled to Paris together. On the Channel ferry, when she wasn't seasick, she was talking. If there was a fellow traveler within earshot, she was chatting with them. By that night, Les and I found an affordable hotel room together with one fellow traveler and the next night had Shabbat dinner at the Paris home of another passenger. This wasn't because of me.

There are so many Leslie stories just like this. She didn't make acquaintances, she forged real connections and lasting relationships. She connected with people on a deep level, she grew to know and love them, and they her. To know Les was to be swept up by her energy and passion.

To so many people, Leslie is an inspiration. To me, she is also an inspiration, but more than that, she was my mentor, confidant, travel buddy, Hebrew school chauffeur, wise elder and counsel, fellow cycling junkie. She is the reason I never had to pay for a therapist. I had Les. And Leslie dispensed sisterly advice with love, wisdom and sometimes brute force. Some loving words of hers from decades ago still resonate with me: "Jimmy, life is not a dress rehearsal."

Boy did she walk that walk. Life was not a rehearsal for Les, it was action – whether it was above everything else raising those three amazing kids with Jim, leading missions to Israel, running a fundraising campaign or cycling up a 12% gradient, she was perpetual motion.

Rabbi Sara Rich, Director of Hillel of Buffalo

A teaching in the Jerusalem Talmud states, "Rabbi Chizkiah taught, 'A person will have to answer for everything that his eye beheld and he did not consume.'" In this rabbi's vision for what judgement looks like when we die, we will not only be held accountable for what we did that we should not have done. We will be held accountable for why we didn't try everything that we had the opportunity to enjoy. I picture that for Leslie, this judgement is a brief exchange. She embraced life.

Leslie loved life's abundance. As Jim reflected, her commitment to fitness, to being an athlete, was motivated by a desire to be able to go to the most beautiful places in nature. Her body was a vessel that she challenged, and tended, so that she could do anything that was possible. And you, Jim, were with her,



Leslie Kramer

because the beauty of the world meant more to her, and to you, when you could enjoy it together. You surmounted so many challenges together—climbed literal mountains, and you have so lovingly, with such courage, accompanied her to the top of this final peak.

Leslie can also claim with confidence that she took the opportunity to explore the richness of knowledge and ideas in the world. Her approach to learning reminds me of another teaching from the Talmud, which says, "A pair of scholars learning together sharpens one another." From this perspective, the point of discussing a text, or an idea, isn't to convince the other, to soften them, but rather for both to emerge sharper from the exchange—more thoughtful, more passionate.

Before COVID, Leslie, Iris Danziger and I met weekly to study Torah. She loved analyzing the characters and their motives, and she loved linking the places mentioned in the text to Israel today. She would sit with the Torah in one hand and an atlas in the other, matching the sites she had been to in her travels. I was truly sharpened through my study with Leslie, and I invite you to reflect on how Leslie has sharpened you as well. It might be that she introduced you to a new idea, that she got you involved as a volunteer, or as a supporter of a cause, or encouraged you through a physical challenge, or tapped you to serve as a

leader of this community. As Jews, we are part of a tradition that encourages us to wrestle with God. We are allowed to feel not just sad, but angry at the injustice of her loss. The irony of someone as healthy as Leslie succumbing to illness at this point in her life – we can neither justify it nor understand it. We also cannot allow ourselves to grow cynical, because that would only be more tragic, and that was not Leslie's way. She and I had one last phone call, late in December, during which she shared more about what was going on. She was going through so much physically as a result of her treatment – fatigue, loss of vision, and probably so much more that she didn't want to share. But one thing she was very clear about – she did not want to go. She wanted to live.

Rob Goldberg, CEO Buffalo Jewish Federation

A former colleague shared a tradition she began years ago that has helped her when someone she loves dies: she seeks to adopt one of their special traits so that she will always remember them and keep learning from them.

When her father died, she told me, she took on the virtue of standing against injustice and it has helped her live with greater purpose. From Paul, a mutual friend we both loved who was buried just this past Friday, she pledged to take on how he kept in touch with so many friends

year after year, with such commitment and affection.

This is a tradition that may be helpful for all of us on this dark day.

I know it is for me and my wife Shira as we try to make sense of Leslie's death.

There is so much for us to take from Leslie—her exuberance and dogged determination, her warmth and humor, her special leadership...there are so many traits from which to choose.

I vow to take on Leslie's capacity to love.

Leslie had a boundless capacity to love...

I learned years ago that the word capacity comes from the Latin *capax*, meaning to hold or carry much, as in a basket.

For Leslie, she had a boundless capacity to love; it was overflowing: she loved her family fiercely and her Sokolifka roots, she loved our Jewish community with vigor. She loved the land of Israel and saw always its beauty amid its complexity.

And she loved her pottery classes that she shared with Shira each Thursday afternoon.

I was honored to work side by side with Leslie in many of her roles within Federation. She was a vivacious leader throughout our community and beyond. Before beginning her cancer battle, she had just begun her tenure as American Chair of our Partnership2Gether Consortium with the Western Galilee in Israel, and she was a beloved leader through NWP: National Women's Philanthropy.

...Leslie was a treasure and poured her heart and soul into serving as Federation president. She was also, well to be honest, intense and exhausting – but that's what we loved about her!

She and I met over countless cups of coffee at one of the many SpOT coffees in the neighborhood – our favorite being the one in Snyder – where Leslie BTW always brought her own beverage! She was also Federation President during the first months of COVID, and just days after the virus was detected in Buffalo nearly two years ago, she established weekly community Zoom gatherings to enable us to support one another and learn how we can best serve our communities during the pandemic.

These are but two memories—all of which underscored Leslie, who in a word, was a champion of community.

She also exemplified the sense that there is never a wasted breath; that with Leslie, no matter who you were –you were

always “in” conversation with her, and that nothing you shared was insignificant.

I leave you with...a moment that Leslie and I shared pre-pandemic, that for me, captures the legacy that my friend and partner will always have in me...at Stage 42 Theatre when we watched the Yiddish version of *Fiddler on the Roof*...It was a moment that for both of us was visceral and resonant; in essence, we experienced the retelling of a familiar Jewish story that, at the final curtain, we claimed as ours.

Why? Because of the language and the set and performers. It was in stark contrast to the Zero Mostel *Fiddler*: our Tevye was slight and drawn, the set was bland—browns and grays—it felt authentic. And for Leslie, this wasn't Anatevka—it was Sokolifka, the village of her ancestry located less than 100 miles west of Kyiv.

This *Fiddler* prompted Leslie to initiate an immersive experience for the community to visit Ukraine in partnership with World ORT under the

leadership of our dear friend Jim Lodge who is here today with his wife Gail. The trip was sadly cancelled because of COVID, but Leslie was so eager to go to Sokolifka, to touch and feel those roots that every day fed her with strength and such remarkable drive.

About a third of the way during *Fiddler*, the company sings *Lekhayim, Lekhayim, Zol Zayn*. To life, to life, should we drink *Lechaim*.

Then there's a verse following that Tevye and Laizer Wolf sing together: *Dos lebin iz a mishmash for undz, brokes un kloles undz*.

Meaning: life has a way of confusing us, blessing and bruising us.

And then Tevye and the men sing: God would like us to be joyful, even when our hearts are broken.

My friends, I raise a mug – from Leslie and Shira's pottery studio – one that for me this morning is overflowing with heartbreak and pain. But at the same time, it is filled to the brim with joy—as we celebrate Leslie, and remember a life well-lived. To Leslie—*Lechaim*!

In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from February 21-March 20, 2022*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

Donald Altman
Sona Hampar Beshar
Lisa A. Felman
Anni Fierstein
Rochelle Glick Gryfe
Mikhla Kagan
Leslie Shuman Kramer
Marcia Kutner
Carol Macon
Rachelle Marks
Jennifer Fayeth Milich
Eldene Mohl
Fanesta Perlstein
Milton Pitterman
Jean S. Rothstein
Lillian Ungerleider
Sheldon Nathan Weinberg



*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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(NOT) THE LAST WORD

Young Israel Of Greater Buffalo: Minyan Through The Years

BY FRAN AND MICHAEL PASKOWITZ

The Young Israel of Greater Buffalo has been in existence since 1973, created by twelve founding families: the Dubbs, Klein, Lakein, Magid, Maslow, Merowitz, Paskowitz, Schwartz, Scclair, Weinberger, Weisberger and Zombek families. From its humble beginning in a small duplex, the generosity of its founders and the support of the Buffalo Jewish community enabled the establishment of its current building, located at 105 Maple Road in Amherst.

Our founding families' belief was in the importance of the creation of a modern Orthodox Shul, providing the community with daily morning, afternoon and evening minyans, opportunities for learning Torah, social gatherings and enabling the members of the Buffalo Jewish Community to enrich its Kosher food options by Rabbinical leadership and involvement in a nationally-recognized *Va'ad Hakashrut*.

Our members strongly believe in the critical importance of a *minyan*, "a quorum of ten men" in order to say the daily, Shabbat and Festival prayers. We pride ourselves on 49 years of daily *minyanim*- quite a feat, thanks to the commitment of our members. We pride ourselves on "*hachnosas orchim*" the mitzvah of welcoming guests, many of whom are travelers needing a *minyan* for Kaddish and stopping at Young Israel of Greater Buffalo which usually guarantees such a minyan for *Shacharis*, *Mincha* and *Maariv*, coordinated by Rabbi Shmuel Shanowitz, our *gabbai*.

We also pride ourselves on our warm, *heimish* welcoming Shul. We are indebted to our founders for their vision, to our many noteworthy Rabbis and Simi Presidents

for their leadership, and to all our members for their support. Our members have been and continue to be active in all community agencies, Kadimah, JFS, BJE, Jewish Federation, Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, and *Va'ad Hakashrus*.

Our Rabbi, Eliezer Marcus, is from a dynasty of Rabbis. His father, Rabbi Raphael Marcus, was the Rabbi of B'nei Torah Synagogue in Toronto; his grandfather, Rabbi Ahron Soloveitchik, was a world renowned from the esteemed Brisker dynasty. Rabbi Eliezer Marcus and his wife, Bailah, moved to Buffalo from Toronto, and both are involved with "*gemilas chesed*," acts of kindness, often done "*beseser*," quietly, without fanfare. Rabbi Marcus is a gifted speaker and is very knowledgeable in all areas of *Kashrus* supervision.

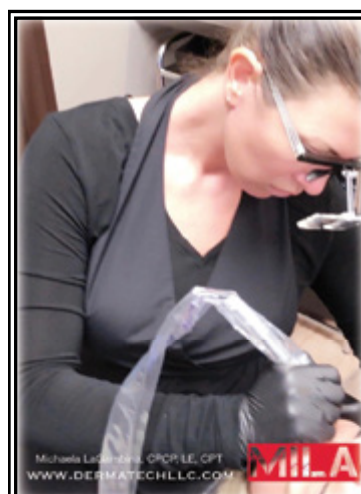
In addition to daily *minyanim*, Rabbi Marcus offers a number of classes and opportunities for learning "*b'chavrusa*," with a learning partner. Our Thursday evening "*mishmar*" is



a traditional and noteworthy *gemorrah shir* (Talmud class) in person or via Zoom. Michael Paskowitz helped organize the *shir* and Rabbi Moshe and Sara Heimowitz help to provide specific details. Our Sunday morning breakfast class follows our traditional *minyan*. Classes are also offered for children; Saturday evening *Avos U'Banim* class affords an opportunity for fathers and sons to study together.

We invite you to join our daily, in-person, masked mandated minyanim and/or classes. We also offer a women's Tehillim group monthly, done via conference call and we encourage community involvement. All are welcome to the Young Israel of Greater Buffalo, and we look forward to welcoming new members. More information can be found on our website: Yibuffalo.org.

Fran and Michael Paskowitz are among the founding members of Buffalo's Young Israel.



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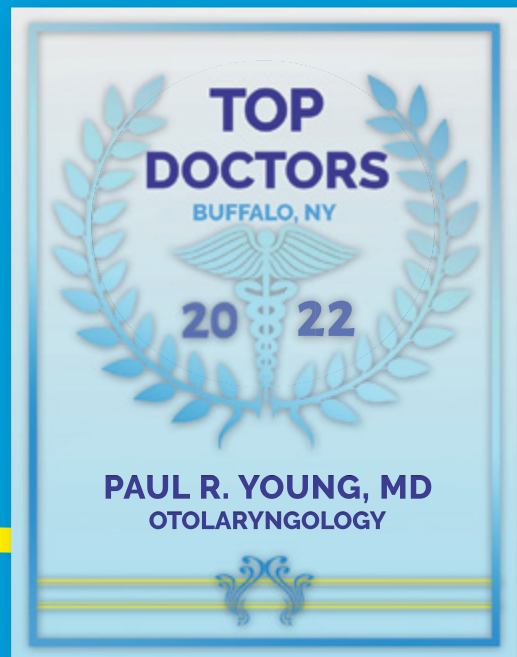
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