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Shavuot June 4-6

THE JEWISH JOURNAL

A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

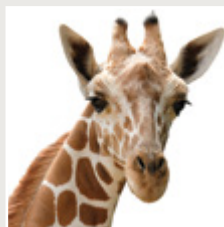
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JUNE 2022 | SIVAN-TAMMUZ 5782

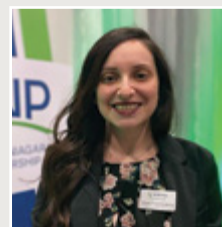
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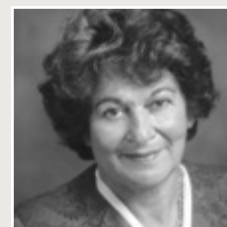
However, **I STAND.**



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Kadimah
Goes Wild!
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LOOK:
Mazel Tov
(16-17)



INSIDE:
Remembering
Gerda
(30)

June 2022

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

As I begin to write this message, President Joe Biden is speaking to the world from right here in Buffalo. In fact, he is at a site less than two miles from my home, speaking to families, mourners, and community members, and consoling the Black community of Buffalo. It is the middle of May, and ten individuals have been gunned down while they were grocery shopping at Tops Friendly Market on Jefferson Ave. They were murdered because they have black skin.

As Jews, we are keenly aware of the consequences of hate and the pain such an incident can bring to a community. As Jews we empathize with the pain many in our Buffalo community are feeling because of this tragedy. But most of us in the Buffalo Jewish community are Caucasian—not all of us, but most of us - and we can't know what it's like to be targeted because of our skin color. So we do what we can. We offer our friendship, our support and our resources, and remember every day that EVERYONE is created in God's image.

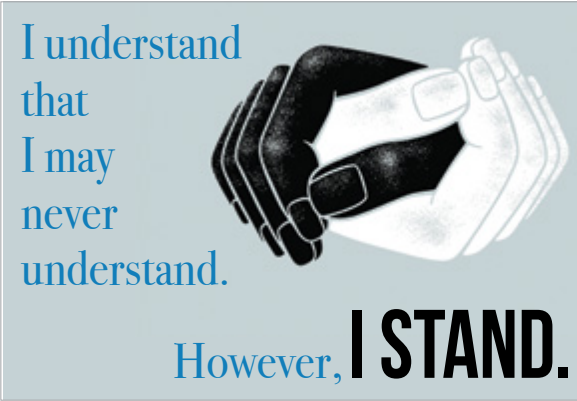
May the names of these innocent individuals be for a blessing forever:

- Celestine Chaney
- Roberta Drury
- Andre Mackniel
- Katherine Massey
- Margus Morrison
- Heyward Patterson
- Aaron Salter
- Geraldine Talley
- Ruth Whitfield
- Pearl Young

Appreciate your family, your friends and your community and hold them close. That is what I am doing. Wishing you a healthy and safe start to another beautiful Buffalo summer.

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

On The Cover



Standing shoulder to shoulder with the Black Community. Cover design by Kim Miers

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We Stand Shoulder to Shoulder

The statement below was circulated on May 16 less than 48 hours after the terrorist attack on Buffalo's East Side that left 10 Black individuals dead and 3 others wounded. The message was modified and shared throughout the Jewish Federations of North America, the Jewish Council of Public Affairs, local Jewish Community Relations Councils, and through various media outlets. **Our purpose was to underscore the message that while we in the Jewish community know too well the insidious nature and toll of extremism and hatred, this was a planned attack on our city's Black community, and our efforts in the early days after the incident was to uplift and amplify the voices of Black leaders and be responsive to what they need from us.** Since this message, we have organized Jewish Buffalonians to attend vigils and prayer services and direct resources to the many organizations that are gathering and distributing food and other essentials to families impacted because their only grocery store is indefinitely closed. In addition, the JCC and many synagogues have also been gathering food and JFS of WNY has been involved in providing mental health services throughout the community. We are grateful for all those who have provided support during this painful time in the Buffalo Black community. ***Should you have any questions or would like to become more involved in Jewish community relations, please contact Mara Koven-Gelman (mara@buffalojewishfederation.org).***

Shelly Yellen, *President, Buffalo Jewish Federation*

Deborah Golden, *Co-chair, Jewish Community Relations Council*

Adam Fogel, *Co-chair, Jewish Community Relations Council*

Buffalo's Jewish Community stands shoulder-to-shoulder linking arms with Buffalo's Black Community as they deal with the aftermath of this weekend's horrific shooting that took the lives of 10 people and injured 3 others at the Tops Market on Jefferson Avenue.

The Talmud tells us that: "Whoever destroys a soul; it is considered as if they destroyed an entire world" (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5).

Our hearts and prayers extend to the families and friends of the deceased and to the larger community that mourns with them. May their memories always be for a blessing.

The Jewish community knows well the manifestation of white nationalism and

collectively we are devastated that our friends and neighbors are experiencing this first hand, yet again.

The Jewish community is here and will continue to be there for our neighbors: Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein of Congregation Shir Shalom and dozens of Jewish community members attended a Prayer Vigil outside the crime scene Sunday morning; Temple Beth Zion's Rabbi Sharon Sobel spoke at an Interfaith service at the Macedonia Baptist Church later in the day; the Jewish Family Services of WNY, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo and congregations from every denomination have released statements expressing outrage and offering support.

While the Buffalo community is strong and relationships between Blacks and whites have been nurtured, much work has to be done together to

BUFFALO JEWISH FEDERATION

BUFFALO JEWISH
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

Ways to help Buffalo's Black Community

- 1 FEEDMORE WNY**
feedmorewny.org/donate
- 2 BLACK LOVE RESISTS IN THE RUST**
donate-usa.keela.co/mental-health-and-food-support
- 3 ROOTED IN LOVE**
rootedinloveinc.com/donate-to-our-cause
- 4 BUFFALO GO GREEN**
buffalogogreen.org
- 5 AFRICAN HERITAGE FOOD CO-OP**
myahfc.com
- 6 BUFFALO COMMUNITY FRIDGE**
facebook.com/buffalocommunityfridge
- 7 JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES**
jfswny.org/east-side-tragedy-support-resources

address issues of systemic racism. **As part of a faith community, we know that this hate crime cannot be tolerated in a civil society.**

In a blink of an eye, life changed in the City of Good Neighbors. We are incredibly grateful to leaders like Bishop Darius Pridgen (True Bethel), Rev. Mark Blue of NAACP Buffalo Branch and Rev. Denise Walden of Voice Buffalo. **They and other Black leaders are providing a voice of calm and one of hope, even amid this horror. We lift up their leadership and to continue to follow their lead.**

These are the times we must pull together and support one another. In Hebrew, we say – "Hineni" - We are here!" One of the critical areas of need is food insecurity as the Tops Market was the only large grocery in the area and it is currently closed indefinitely. See above for a list of organizations that you can support.

We Are Back!

2023

CAMPAIGN FOR JEWISH BUFFALO

KICK OFF EVENT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 | HYATT REGENCY BUFFALO

Mission Focus

Our Federation Mission: Guided by Jewish values, Federation convenes, inspires, collaborates, leads and enriches the Jewish community locally, in Israel and around the world. These are powerful words that drive our organization on a daily basis and I want to highlight just a few of the many recent and ongoing activities that seek to achieve this mission.



Shelly Yellen

On April 24th and 25th, our community gathered for the **Belonging Conference** (see page 6). Organized by LiNK Jewish Buffalo and led by Kirstie Henry, Conference Chair, and Mike Steklof, Director of Jewish Experience, nearly 100 participants spent time discussing how Jewish Buffalo has changed and the impact for individuals and communal institutions. Day 1 was held at the Northland Workforce Training Center and included a variety of workshops on topics such as Innovation vs. Preservation: Belonging and Judaism, Understanding Disabilities, Allyship: Creating a Beloved Community, and several others. I found the program very enriching, engaging, and thought-provoking with excellent leaders and facilitators, such as Rabbi Nikki DeBlosi PhD, Aster Hathaway, Rabbi Alex Lazarus-

Klein, and Rabbi Sara Rich to name just a few. Much appreciation goes to Kirstie's planning team of Jeff Clark, Michelle Lawson, Lisa Davidson, Sharon Nosenchuck, Corey Auerbach, Marjorie Bryen, and Mark Horowitz.

For those still not yet aware of **Life & Legacy** (see page 19), this is a Harold Grinspoon Foundation endowment program initiated by the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies and in partnership with the Buffalo Jewish Federation to help secure funding for "Jewish Buffalo Tomorrows." As of mid May, there are a total of 150 legacy commitments from 78 donors with total dollars in excess of \$5.6 million. In addition to Foundation and Federation, community participants include Center for Jewish Life, Congregation Shir Shalom, Hillel of Buffalo,

Jewish Community Center, Jewish Discovery Center, Jewish Family Services of WNY, Kadimah Scholars, Temple Beth Tzedek, and Temple Beth Zion. The first year of Life & Legacy has been a tremendous success and our community can be very thankful for the many passionate volunteers and donors focused on the future of our community. We look forward to more growth in year two and beyond. Thank you to Howard Rosenhoch and Alison Keane for serving as inspirational co-chairs.

Kadimah will be holding their Annual Dinner on June 20th at the Buffalo Zoo (see next page). The event will raise funds for the Kadimah Scholars at Park School Program, an educational partnership that benefits dozens of Jewish families in our community. This is a great opportunity to learn more about this terrific program and how it enriches Jewish Buffalo.

Our overseas engagement opportunities are in full swing. There are several trips to Israel, including a Momentum Trip for Moms, a Civic Leaders Trip, and Israel Experience for the entire community in October. There is also a Partnership2Gether (P2G) Trip to Budapest in September that 6 members of our community are planning to

attend. For those that may not be aware, P2G is a program of The Jewish Agency and The Jewish Federations of North America, promoting people-to-people relationships through cultural, social, medical, educational and economic programs. Also, a trip is being planned for early 2023 to the United Arab Emirates and will be led by Rob Goldberg and Randi Morkisz. Overall, we expect these opportunities will connect over 100 participants to overseas communities in support of our mission.

With so much going on I hope you feel as good and as proud about Jewish Buffalo as I do. If not already done, I encourage you to find your engagement opportunity. This is the best way to feel that your voice is being heard. There are so many wonderful organizations and institutions in or community that will benefit from your involvement. Please reach out to us if you need help finding your place.

Finally, summer is almost here and we all can look forward to the many joys that come with the season. May you enjoy a time full of sunshine and brightness, good health and happiness. **Please contact me at shelly@buffalojewishfederation.org to share your thoughts.**

PJ Library **LiNK**
Jewish Buffalo

SUMMER PROGRAMS: JUNE 2022

SWEETS FOR SHAVUOT
THURSDAY, JUNE 2 @ 5:30 PM
GLEN PARK, WILLIAMSVILLE
RSVP: [BIT.LY/BUFMGUM](https://bit.ly/bufmgum)

SHABBAT SHAFAMILY
FRIDAY, JUNE 17 @ 5:30 PM
KEHILLAT OHR TZION
RSVP: [BIT.LY/BUFFAMILYSHABBAT](https://bit.ly/buffamilyshabbat)

POP UP PLAYDATE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29 @ 3 PM
HAMLIN PARK, EAST AURORA
RSVP: [BIT.LY/PLAYDATEPARK](https://bit.ly/playdatepark)

SAVE THE DATE
END OF SUMMER FESTIVAL
SUNDAY, AUGUST 28

QUESTIONS? CONTACT ROBIN@BUFFALOJEWISHFEDERATION.ORG

Kadimah Celebrates at Buffalo Zoo, June 20



Lions, and tigers, and bears, oh, my! Get ready for some wild adventures with the Kadimah Scholars as they bring Noah's Ark to the Buffalo Zoo on Monday, June 20.

Kadimah is preparing to celebrate its annual dinner event again this year, for the first time since the COVID pandemic wreaked havoc on socializing. That means it's also the first time The Kadimah Scholars are gathering as a community under the innovative partnership with The Park School of Buffalo. So, it's going to be special – and safe – by embracing our animal side!

Kadimah will take over the entire Buffalo Zoo on Monday, June 20, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and all of Jewish Buffalo is invited! You'll have the run of the nation's third-oldest zoo, from the polar bears, lions and hyenas, to the giraffes, gorillas and sea lions. Or ride the train and carousel as much as you like.

Enjoy kosher heavy hors d'oeuvres from Luscious by Lori, and have some wine, beer or other drinks. Wander the 23 acres and then come back together for dessert and a few words that highlight the progress of the Kadimah Scholars at Park and plans for the future.

Tickets are \$72 per adult and \$36 for children under 13, or \$200 for a family. The Calendar Ad Book will also be available, highlighting the students and their activities this year, as well as many of Buffalo's local business supporters. All proceeds go to Kadimah for student scholarships. **For more information, go to kadimah.org.**

קדימה
Kadimah is Going Wild!

**KADIMAH
ANNUAL DINNER**

June 20, 2022 at Buffalo Zoo
5:30 - 8:30 PM

Register at www.kadimah.org

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A Taste of Jewish 'Soul' Food

BY SUSAN GOLDBERG SCHWARTZ
AND RABBI ORI BERGMAN



Connecting People
to Jewish Life

Rabbi Israel Salanter, the 'father' of modern day Mussar, once said: *When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. I found it too difficult so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that to truly change the world, I need to grow myself and in doing so, I will have an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have an impact on the nation and then I could indeed change the world.*

Judaism sees the process of self-growth and enhancement as beginning with study that leads into action (Kiddushin 40b.) *Torah lishma* - studying Torah (including Jewish texts ancient and modern) - is the greatest of all the commandments and is viewed as the secret of Jewish continuity. In Judaism we not only learn to live; we live to learn. We all get old, but we also have the opportunity to grow old, as learning never stops. Through the variety of learning opportunities offered through LiNK Jewish Buffalo, we have had adult students of all ages express to us how they have grown and transformed as individuals through consistent learning in a community of peers.



Learning to create community

When students come together, they meet fellow seekers while learning from others, gaining support and encouragement. During the challenges of the past two years, the camaraderie and support in the Wise Aging groups served as a perfect antidote for so many peoples' feelings of isolation. This, say our sages, is the secret to wisdom, as *Ben Zoma* says: *Who is wise? One who learns from every person (Pirke Avot 4:1).* A key to growth is being open to learning from all different types of people. Indeed, everyone has something to teach.

Learning as a consistent practice

When the sage Hillel couldn't afford the fees of his local school, he would climb the roof and listen to lessons through an open window, even during the harsh winter months. Hence Hillel said, *Do not say 'When I am free I will study', for perhaps you will not become free (Pirkei Avot 2:6).*

In the hustle and bustle of life, it is often difficult to carve out time for oneself. Even if your schedule is already busy, experiment with making room for classes or other activities you have been meaning to try. One participant in Mussar for Men (which focuses on the personal growth of fathers of young children) reflected that his life is so busy that the only time he feels he regains a sense of balance and perspective is when participating in these gatherings. In set study, we provide a framework for our days that ensures meaning, reflection and improvement and the results can be so life enhancing.

Learning for self-care

Making use of our tradition's ancient and modern texts, we seek to apply its wisdom to enhance our relationships: with ourselves, with others and with the divine. In relation to ourselves, our sacred texts are compared to water in their ability to nurture and sustain our souls and inner world. Says Rav Soloveitchik: *The student of Torah is like the amnesia victim who tries to reconstruct from fragments the beautiful world he once experienced. By learning our tradition, one returns to their self.*

Many of LiNK's groups of learners focus on issues affecting us all such as challenges and fears of getting older, loss, parenting, purpose, balance, resilience and spirituality. Common to all is the satisfying feelings of providing time and attention for oneself to grow. In a recent women's gathering, which focused on caregiving and cultivating kindness/*chesed*, we asked, 'what do you do for self-care?' One woman emphatically stated 'this group.' Each

month, she expressed, she joins the zoom for herself, to hear other women's stories, learning from them and feeling support and encouragement.

Learning to seek clarity and knowledge

In study, we nurture our spirit and gain a moral compass that informs and empowers our lives. King David, the second King of Israel, suffered greatly in his life: losing children, fleeing as a fugitive and embroiled in constant turmoil. Yet, he sang: *Your word (the Torah) is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.* We cannot guarantee that life meets us with ease, but we can ensure that we meet it with moral clarity and depth of purpose.

Elie Wiesel once said that the Jewish tradition of learning - is learning. In the book of Genesis, Adam chose knowledge instead of immortality, reinforcing that Judaism has always seen study to be the greatest of pursuits.

A positive learning experience can inspire one to continue their study. This year, of fourteen students who completed the 12-week session of Intro to Judaism, four students are now taking Beginning Hebrew, two have enrolled in Living a Jewish Year, one joined a new Wise Women group, and another led a workshop at the Belonging Conference. After all is said and done, nothing speaks to the power of Jewish learning more than learning itself. Fortunately, at LiNK, there are various opportunities available from which you can choose and find an opportunity that works for you and with your life.

Susan Goldberg Schwartz (susan@buffalojewishfederation.org) and Rabbi Ori Bergman (oribergman@gmail.com) are members of the LiNK education team.

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Meet Jewish Buffalo's 2022 Teen Leadership Fellows

A talented group of young leaders are finishing up their participation in the 2022 Buffalo Jewish Teen Initiative's Teen Leadership Fellowship. Fellowship participants, known as Teen Fellows, met monthly during the year at locations throughout Buffalo to develop practical leadership skills, gain awareness of Buffalo's history, and explore civic responsibility, issues of race/diversity and personal potential, all through the lens of applied Jewish wisdom. Facilitated by Hadar Borden and Ben Wolfson, sessions included a food exploration with Bloom & Rose, a dialogue with artist Edreys Wajed at the Freedom Wall of WNY, a tour of historical Jewish neighborhoods, and leadership development exercises at the UB Incubator. Below are reflections describing the impact of the program from a few of the Fellows:

Noah (he/him)

Hamburg High School

He enjoys singing, acting, scouting, writing, drawing, and playing all kinds of games, especially Dungeons & Dragons.



"My experience in the Teen Leadership Fellowship this year was a great way for me to connect with other Jewish kids since I don't live in a town with very many other Jewish people. I also found the activities very educational and entertaining, and the people there - the other teens, the facilitators, and the guest presenters - were very kind."

Anya (she/her)

Williamsville South High School

She sings and plays many different instruments, including percussion, electric & classical guitar, piano, and ukulele.

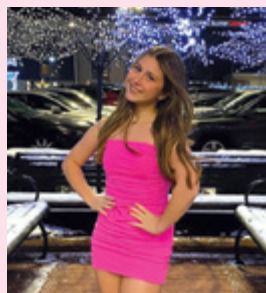


"It's been super insightful and inspirational, being able to learn more about our Jewish history and being able to meet lots of people who positively impact our society. I've learned so much, and made many new friends who are also a part of the program."

Lexi (she/her)

Williamsville East High School

She enjoys golf, skiing, hanging with friends, the beach, and working at Pautler's.



"I really enjoyed being a part of the Teen Leadership Fellowship this year. I like how it was fun, interactive, and helped shape me with the new things I learned."

Jonas (he/him)

Amherst High School

He loves going to the gym, playing drums, engineering and photography.

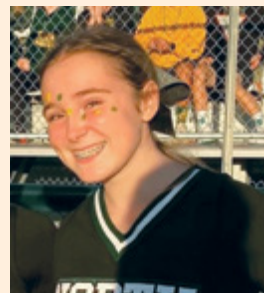


"Teen fellowship allowed me to meet new people in the Jewish community and learn how I can be a future Jewish leader."

Kennedy (she/her)

Williamsville North High School

She loves cheering on the sidelines for her school's football and basketball teams.



"I have really enjoyed being a part of teen leadership fellowship this year and have learned so many ways on how I can be a leader in my community."

Sam (he/him)

Amherst Central High School

He is interested in environmental science and hiking outside.

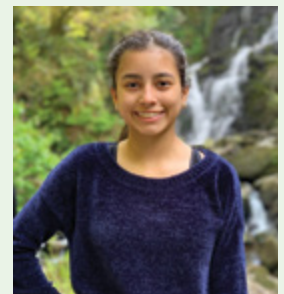


"This year in the Teen Leadership Fellowship, there were so many amazing learning opportunities that took place! Each month, we spent a few hours learning about something new in places in Buffalo that we have never been in before!"

Angelica (she/her)

Clarence High School

She loves hanging out with friends.

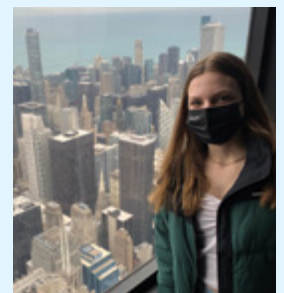


"During the teen fellowship, I enjoyed meeting new people and hanging out with friends."

Mia (she/her)

Buffalo Seminary

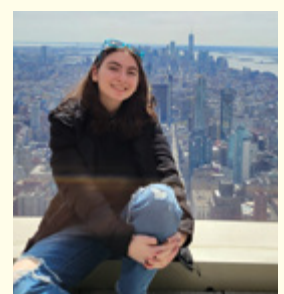
She rows, is a part of stage crew and enjoys reading in her free time.



Shir (she/her)

Williamsville South High School

She enjoys reading, hiking, listening to music and participating in stage crew at her school.



We are inspired by our Teen Fellows, and can't wait to see the impact they will make as future leaders in Jewish Buffalo!

For more information about the 2023 Teen Leadership Fellowship class, contact Mike Steklof at mike@buffalojewishfederation.org

Lessons from the Belonging Conference

BY KIRSTIE HENRY

With over 100 registrants, LiNK's Belonging Conference welcomed the largest group of Jewish professionals and leaders in our community since the pandemic began over two years ago. On April 24, participants gathered inside the Northland Workforce Training Center for a full day of learning which began with an activity challenging them to answer four writing prompts on sticky notes and attaching the notes to display boards. As Chair of the Conference Planning Team, I helped develop the prompts. Yet there I stood on Sunday afternoon, stumped by one of them: *What can't people see when they look at me?* I wasn't the only one who found this question a challenge. Again and again, participants remarked, "This is hard." And that's how I knew the conference was off to a very good start.

Following some welcoming remarks, our Keynote Speaker, Rabbi Nikki DeBlosi, connected with participants through her heartfelt and inspiring story about her journey as an adult convert, right up through her rabbinic ordination and her work with students at NYU's Bronfman Center for Jewish Student Life. Rabbi Nikki's message entitled *From Stranger to Rabbi to Strange Rabbi* was sprinkled with plenty of anecdotes about her father, Bob, and about her



Kirstie Henry and Rabbi Nikki DeBlosi, PhD



Above & right: Committee members; Shelly Yellen & Jacqui Berger; Jordana Maisel & Darren Brown-Hall



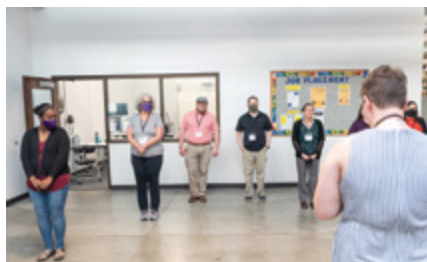
family life with her wife and children, and her students at NYU. She taught us the key steps to create a culture of Belonging: listening and eliciting stories, understanding "Intent versus Impact," recognizing there is wisdom in the group (and lessons in who's not with us), broadening our intake, knowing the difference between "us" vs "all," and stretching ourselves to be brave and vulnerable.



their needs and expressing themselves in other ways that may not be verbal.

We reconvened in the community room for a kosher dinner and a panel discussion, which included a range of guests who work for non-Jewish organizations that have been successful in promoting Inclusion and belonging. It was particularly encouraging to hear how the greater Buffalo community is working to promote Belonging and what we can learn from those organizations and the people who lead them. When Dr. Darren Brown-Hall, Superintendent of Williamsville Schools expressed the critical importance for students to feel like they can bring their "whole self" to school in order to thrive academically and socially, I knew the same principles apply for us here in Jewish Buffalo.

The conference continued for a second day on April 25 at Temple Beth Tzedek, which we selected for its outstanding and truly inspired accessible design. After breakfast we gathered in the sanctuary to learn with Rabbi Nikki in her presentation: *Pecking Our Way to Belonging*, which explored a scenario in which a prince believed himself to be a rooster and was ultimately convinced that even as a rooster, he can dress, behave, and live like a Prince. This story was powerful in the way it challenged us to consider whether the rooster-prince should be made to feel like he has to change his appearance and behavior



After some table discussions about the keynote message, participants had their choice of workshops to attend. I selected *Understanding Disabilities*. Presenters Dr. Andrew Marcum and Sam Mattle shared their insight from lived experience, along with that of contributor Michelle Lawson, to teach us about self-advocacy and disability etiquette. My takeaway from this workshop was that self-advocacy skills can help people express themselves authentically, including those for whom self-advocacy involves communicating

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at all. Rabbi Nikki reminded us that we should seek to embrace individuals exactly as they are rather than inviting them to our spaces contingent on their agreement to conform to our expectations or preferences.

We also learned about the Power of Hello. Presenters Susan DeMari and Captain James McNamara from the Amherst Police Department shared tips and strategies for welcoming the stranger without compromising the safety of our community.

As the conference concluded, I reflected on the several months of preparation and planning. I am incredibly proud to have been part of such a powerful conference and I am particularly grateful for the generous financial support from the Weiss Family Philanthropic Fund and the Estate of Ruth Axelrod. I thought about Shelly Yellen, Federation's President, and Brenda Feldstein, LiNK's chair, who encouraged us and supported us every step of the way. I thought about my dear friend and professional partner Mike Steklof, who steered our planning team with great care and courage to put together such an awesome conference. In fact, all of the professional leaders at the Federation put their trust in us and stepped up to help when we needed them.

I thought about the many meetings we had with Rabbi Nikki preparing for the conference and how many times she left me speechless and even brought me to tears with her personal reflections and Torah-based wisdom. And most of all, I thought about the exhaustive effort of the Belonging Conference Planning Team: Michelle Lawson, Jeff Clark, Lisa Davidson, Sharon Nosenchuck, Corey Auerbach, Marjorie Bryen, and Mark Horowitz. We were a group of strangers when we had our first meeting at my sukkah back in September. Today, we are friends with a shared experience and a commitment to finishing what we've started, each in our own ways. This conference was transformational.

I found the most profound learning often took place between the structured sessions of the conference. Networking and hearing stories from new friends and old friends, during breaks or discussion groups was so profound and meaningful. It made me think about a Torah scroll. When we think about the Torah, we usually see the letters—the black ink on the parchment. But the Talmud reminds us that every letter of the Torah must be surrounded by white space. The white



space is as important as the black letters because, according to Jewish tradition, the white space was written with white fire by the hand of G-d. The white space is that hidden Torah that cannot be read in the usual way. It represents what we bring into the text—the letters of our lives, which we could never see if not for the black letters. So too, the Belonging Conference was two days of learning the black letters of the Torah, while truly experiencing the sublimity of the white letters and the limitless potential for bringing the Torah to life for each and every one of us in Jewish Buffalo.

Kirstie Henry is Courtroom Deputy Clerk to United States District Judge, Hon. John L. Sinatra, Jr. She also serves as chair of Belonging at LiNK Jewish Buffalo.



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JCRC Spotlight: Marc Brown

BY HANNAH GABELNICK

This month, we are spotlighting a Jewish community leader who cares deeply about Jewish Buffalo and the entire WNY region: Marc Brown. A member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors, JCRC's Racial Justice Sub-Committee, and the Jewish Buffalo History Center Work Team, Marc is also an officer at Young Israel Synagogue, and serves as treasurer of the BVK – Buffalo's Kashrut certification organization. Marc is also a past president of Kadimah Academy. Professionally, Marc is an attorney, and a partner at Goldberg Segalla LLP.

Originally from Buffalo, Marc graduated from Binghamton University with a Bachelor's degree in Economics & Judaic Studies, and, later, a Master's degree in Business Administration. After attending the University at Buffalo Law School, Marc worked in Rochester for several years before moving back to Buffalo in 2003. He began working for



Marc Brown

Goldberg Segalla in 2013. Marc is also an adjunct professor at UB Law School, where he teaches Real Estate Litigation. Marc currently lives in Buffalo with his wife, Shira, and three children, David, Deborah, and Joshua, all of whom attend Ohr Temimim Jewish Day School.

At Goldberg Segalla, Marc is the vice-chair of the Business and Commercial

Group, in which he represents clients who are involved in disputes over real estate or business contracts. He decided to become a lawyer while he studied abroad at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem during the Fall of 1993. While there, he interned for the Mayor of Jerusalem and the Peacewatch nonpartisan organization that monitored the recently enacted Oslo Peace Accords. "It was through those experiences where I recognized that law was the best field to effectuate change and make a positive impact on society," Marc said.

Marc is also a member of the Niagara Business Associates, a group of business owners and senior executives in the Buffalo/Niagara region who provide a forum for professionals to share their ideas, knowledge, and experience among members. Through this organization, Marc met Herb L. Bellamy Jr., the President of Buffalo Black Achievers, Inc., an organization that recognizes achievements of Black people in the community and uses positive images to both educate and inspire. Mr. Bellamy's father worked at a liquor store on the East Side of Buffalo, which was owned by a Jewish man named "Mr. Myles." When Mr. Myles retired, he gave his store to Mr. Bellamy's father, which was how he began his long career as a successful businessman. "Mr. Myles' gesture resonated with me, given the positive interaction my family had with the Black community through their pharmacies across Buffalo over a century ago," Marc said.

Marc then met with Shelly Yellen, Buffalo Jewish Federation President, and Rob Goldberg, Buffalo Jewish Federation CEO, to share the Buffalo Black Achievers organization and to discuss how to bridge the connection between Buffalo's African American and Jewish communities.

Next, Marc was introduced to the Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) and joined their Racial Justice Sub-Committee. He was instrumental in organizing a 2021 tour of the Black Achievers Museum for the JCRC. "Marc is a committed leader who is dedicated to making our community more just and equitable. In addition to volunteering his time, Marc helps build bridges to close the gap in Buffalo's racial divide," says Corey Auerbach, Racial Justice Sub-committee chair.

Through the Niagara Business Associates, Marc also connected with Scott Bieler, owner of West Herr Auto Group. Marc knew of Scott's passion for equity and building community and shared JCRC's vision with him. Based on Marc's introduction of Scott to the JCRC leadership, West Herr is now a proud sponsor of the JCRC. "Diversity is very important to me," said Marc. "I'm so excited to be a part of JCRC so that I can help make Buffalo a more inclusive space for everyone."

Hannah Gabelnick is a senior at Amherst Central High School and an intern at the Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council. She is graduating this month and will attend Princeton University in the fall.



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Primary Season: JCRC is here to Help!

The 2020 Census reflected that NYS loss in population resulted in losing a U.S. Congressional seat. Along with gerrymandering districts, lawsuits and appeals, the New York State and Erie County Primary 2022 season may seem confusing. But the JCRC is here to help with a non-partisan resource. Please visit the updated JCRC Vote 2022 webpage: buffalojewishfederation.org/vote/ and keep checking for current information on primary voting and candidate and ballot initiatives. Remember: Voting is your right, please use it at every election. For any questions, please contact: marab@buffalojewishfederation.org.

VOTE 2022!

Standing with Ukraine



Thanks to JCRC Multicultural Women’s Group (MCWG) member Beatrice Singh, several women from throughout Western New York created beautiful Ukrainian Eggs at Congregation Beth Abraham. Deborah Greitzer, founder of the MCWG and violinist with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, performed a Ukrainian musical piece and the Ukrainian anthem as the group stood in solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

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New Era Welcomes Upstander Sophia Veffler



Vilona Trachtenberg with Survivor Sophia Veffler at New Era Cap

BY VILONA TRACHTENBERG

“We should all be upstanders. We must talk and get to know one another. Invite your neighbor over for coffee; it’ll make you feel good. And most importantly, don’t forget to share some chicken soup with each other.” That’s a lesson that local Holocaust Survivor and speaker Sophia Veffler strives to teach when she speaks to schools and businesses about her life during the Holocaust.

This is also a lesson that Grace Clauss took away from hearing Sophia. Grace was one of nearly 70 New Era Cap (NEC) associates who joined Sophia earlier this month as part of New Era’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council speaker series. Grace remembers meeting another survivor, Gerda Weissmann Klein, OBM, when she was in middle school. To meet an additional survivor was a privilege for her. “I feel like for the entire hour, my body was frozen listening to [Sophia’s] story,” Grace said. “Now that I’m older, I was able to comprehend what really happened.”

During Sophia’s presentation, she told NEC associates about her experience growing up in Holland and how the Nazi invasion overturned her life. She also spoke of her life in concentration camps. Throughout her presentation, the underlying theme was to teach associates the difference between perpetrators, bystanders and upstanders, and that we should all strive to stand up to social injustices.

Melissa Lockwood had traveled to Europe before, and had been to Auschwitz and Dachau – but this was the first time she heard firsthand testimony from a survivor. “Everyone was in awe of Sophia’s ability to share real experiences without shying away from the difficult details. And, she has more optimism and faith in humankind than I could have ever imagined,” Melissa said. “Our team left feeling empowered to make the world a better place for the next generation and ensure history doesn’t repeat itself.”

After Sophia’s emotional discussion and question and answer session, another one of New Era’s associates, Jacquie Greco, showed Sophia the company’s cap and history archives, where Sophia enjoyed looking at, and asking questions about the relics. “Sophia was so welcoming from the moment I met her,” Jacquie said. “... we conversed like we had known each other for years.”

Sophia was even treated to caps and joked that it was her first time putting on a baseball cap in 50 years. And clearly, her experience was as memorable and meaningful as it was for the New Era employees. Before leaving, Sophia wrote in the company’s guest book – “Thank you for making me feel happy today!”

Vilona Trachtenberg works in distribution at New Era Cap and is a freelance writer and community advocate. She was also awarded an ATHENA Young Professional Leadership Award through Buffalo Niagara Partnership in 2022.

Dignity Grows™ Teams Up for Mother's Day

BY STACEY BLOCK

This April, Dignity Grows™ teamed up with GIRL UP at Williamsville North High School to raise funds and awareness around hygiene poverty. GIRL UP provides a platform and guides girls along their journey from leader to changemaker with specialized programming in organizing, advocacy, fundraising and more. Teens gathered to pack 300 totes filled with personal hygiene essentials that were provided to neighbors in need through a special Mother's Day program for NONE LIKE YOU/WE CARE COMMUNITY OUTREACH, a completely volunteer-run organization that provides various types of assistance to neighbors in the city of Buffalo, and now across the region.

Elizabeth Triggs, with help from Samantha White and many volunteers, orchestrated this extraordinary community program that provided items to more than 850 moms over 2 days at 10 locations across WNY including the East Side, West Side, South Buffalo, Tonawanda, and Niagara Falls with support



from Dignity Grows™. The moms served were from Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Yemen, and Burma. In addition to each bag, they received a free Mother's Day dinner. This is just one example of the impact Dignity Grows™ has in our community. We look forward to working with Mrs. Triggs and NONE LIKE YOU/WE CARE COMMUNITY OUTREACH again in the near future.

Clockwise: Williamsville North HS students; NONE LIKE YOU volunteers, Samantha White and Mitch Nowakowski, NONE LIKE YOU visitors.

Each month Dignity Grows™ Buffalo supplies up to 150 totes to five local distribution partners. This is made possible through individual donations as well as special funds from angel donors. Sadly, there is no end in sight for hygiene poverty, and we need your help to continue this important work. You can fund one Dignity Grows™ Tote for \$10. **For more information or if you would like to volunteer to help with Dignity Grows™, contact Stacey Block at stacey@buffalojewishfederation.org or 716-463-5053, or visit DignityGrows.org where you can learn more. To donate directly to the Buffalo Chapter, go to bit.ly/DIGNITYGROWSBFLO.**

Stacey Block is the Director of Donor Experience at the Buffalo Jewish Federation.



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COMMUNITY

Making a Profound and Lasting Impact on Jewish Buffalo

BY LORNE STEINHART

Last summer, our community launched the **LIFE & LEGACY® at Buffalo** initiative that emphasizes establishing bequest endowments to ensure a strong, vibrant and enduring Jewish Buffalo.



Increasingly, planned endowments are an essential element of not-for-profits' strategies for long-term financial stability. According to the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, philanthropic researchers report that by 2030, at least 20% of a not-for-profit organization's operating budget should be derived from income from its endowment funds; otherwise, the organization is at substantial risk of sustaining financial challenges.

What is an endowment?

An endowment is a donation of financial or other valuable assets to a not-for-profit charitable cause that uses the investment income for a specific purpose, such as a particular project, ongoing program or initiative or to support annual operating expense. Most endowments are designed to maintain the principal in perpetuity and use the investment income to help an organization achieve its mission.

The **LIFE & LEGACY® at Buffalo** program is designed to enable donors to make after-life commitments to one (or several) of Buffalo's service-oriented organizations and congregations although many individuals, couples and families have opted to remit their gifts immediately to maximize their impact. Legacy gifts may be in the form of:

- Financial assets (cash, stocks, bonds, CD's)
- Real or tangible assets (real estate, buildings, vehicles, commodities, and metals such as gold and silver)
- Retirement accounts
- Life insurance policy
- Estate planning vehicles which allow for during-lifetime income

Why are legacy gifts made?

Let's consider the story of Lillian Schwartz: In the mid-1980's, Lillian Schwartz, a dedicated member of Temple Beth Zion, recognized her life had been well-lived. With modest savings and no direct descendants, she wanted to create a legacy that would provide financial support for meaningful causes after she died, so she established two permanent endowment funds.

Lillian's first endowment fund is the Anna Schwartz Israel Scholarship Fund, named in her memory of her mother, that provides funds for Jewish youth who pursue study in Israel. Created at the Foundation



The Schwartz family

in 1984 with an original contribution of \$20,000, her fund's value increased more than 125% and 30 scholarships have been awarded for over \$35,000.

Lillian also established the Lillian Schwartz Endowment Fund to support agencies that serve the Buffalo Jewish Community. Over 33 years, more than \$28,000 has been distributed to support 35 agencies in Jewish Buffalo and Israel. Concurrently, the fund's value has increase more than 130%.

Most importantly, Lillian and Anna Schwartz are today perpetually remembered and Lillian, through her generosity and foresight, made an enduring positive impact on our community and in the world.

Endowment through legacy giving extends from a desire to lead a purposeful life embracing the traditions and precepts instilled by our family ancestors and the community. Our collective values of *Tikkun Olam* (leaving the world better than we inherited it), *L'Dor V'Dor* (strengthening future generations) and *Tzedakah* (helping the less fortunate) are inherent elements of our **LIFE & LEGACY® at Buffalo** program.

For more information, contact Irv Levy, Executive Director at Irv@jewishphilanthropies.org or 716-204-1139, or Lorne Steinhart, Senior Manager of Client Relations at Lorne@jewishphilanthropies.org or 716-204-1135.

The Miracle of our Survival

BY RABBI HESCHEL GREENBERG

Shavuot is unfortunately a much-ignored holiday these days, partly because there are fewer rituals associated with it than with other more popular holidays. On Passover, for example, we have a Seder; on Rosh Hashanah we have the Shofar, on Chanukah the Menorah, etc. But, on Shavuot there is relatively little that we do in the form of prescribed rituals.

Shavuot, however, is far from a minor or insignificant holiday. It is the anniversary of our very existence as a people. While it is true that the Jewish nation was born on Passover when they were liberated from Egyptian bondage, nevertheless, our existence as a nation was not completed until we received the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Had we not been given the Torah fifty days after the Exodus from Egypt, we would have been a people without a purpose and goal and hence without a real identity as well. In the words of the great Sage, Rabbi Sa'adia Gaon: "We are a nation only by virtue of the Torah." Without the Torah, our freedom notwithstanding, we would have been relegated to the ash-heap of history, like a multitude of other nations and empires that have vanished.

Only our acceptance of the Torah at Sinai 3,300 years ago, provided us with the ability to survive. Jews did not have a common language for most of their history, nor did they have their own country for most of their history. Yet, unlike so many other cultures, we survived, because we had the Torah.

Shavuot is thus the celebration of our identity and the miracle of our survival.

If Passover has been described as the birth of the Jewish people, then Shavuot could be described as their collective Bar Mitzvah.

In our mystical literature we are taught that while the soul enters the person at birth, it does not fully manifest itself within the person until Bar or Bat Mitzvah. While the Jewish people were liberated from Egypt during Passover by G-d's direct intervention in their lives, they could not and did not internalize their relationship with G-d until they received the Torah at Sinai.

Tragically, for many children



Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

and their parents, the Bar Mitzvah is the culmination of one's Jewish education, when, in fact, it is really just the beginning. For just as our first collective Bar Mitzvah at Sinai was the beginning of our peoplehood, so too, Bar Mitzvah marks the beginning of one's journey through life as a Jew.

Here is another lesson that can be applied to the analogy of Shavuot to a Bar Mitzvah: just as Shavuot was not a one-time experience, but repeats itself every year during the Holiday of Shavuot, so too, one's Bar Mitzvah must be re-enacted every year. One's birthday is more than a time to make a party, but it is the time when the Bar-Mitzvah energies that were generated the year before are recreated.

Now, despite the analogy of Shavuot to a Bar Mitzvah, Shavuot is still only a sample of the ultimate Bar Mitzvah we will experience collectively when we reach our spiritual maturity when *Moshiach* will take us out of exile. As long as we are still in exile, we lack the necessary understanding and soul powers to fully appreciate the depth and beauty of Torah and its commandments. Only when the knowledge of G-d will "cover the earth as the sea is covered with water" shall we really celebrate the idea of a Mitzvah to the fullest.

May this Shavuot be a joyous and inspirational one for all.

Rabbi Heschel Greenberg is Founder and Director of the Jewish Discovery Center.

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COMMUNITY

Pride 2022: A Reflection

BY TODD GEISE



New York City, 1994. I'll never forget the parade with the rainbow flag as wide as the avenue and what seemed at least a hundred feet long. Or seeing Liza Minelli and Carol Channing on stage in Central Park.



We were there in 1994 to celebrate Gay Pride and the 25th anniversary of what is known simply as the Stonewall Uprising (or riots depending on who you ask). The raid on the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village contributed to hastening the modern gay rights movement in 1969. And though Stonewall was a raid initiated by police, storming the establishment for the second time in a few days, and terrorizing the neighborhood that was thought to offer refuge, the community fought back.

When we decided that I would write this month's article about Pride 2022, I did not expect the flood of memories or emotion that crept up on my thought process. Twenty-five years is a short period of time from a historical perspective, but there was rapid progress that normally takes generations. In that time, we had gone from violence and arrests at the Stonewall Inn to being able to march by the thousands in a pride parade from one end of Manhattan to the other. I was a young adult and I recall that in some workplaces, you could be out, especially in the arts or other cultural environments. It was risky to be out in the corporate world, but even so, major corporations were starting to consider or even introduce same-sex health benefits for long-term relationships. However, you had to prove you lived together for a certain number of years to show the dependency.

Fast forward another 30 thirty years. Far from perfect, but who would have thought that it was so acceptable to come out at the workplace and not think twice about it? That benefits didn't involve an investigation? That a gay couple could adopt? Or get married? Or file taxes together? It is quite astounding.

So, what does Pride mean in today's world, 53 years from Stonewall? Because I lived through the progress and through some tough times myself because of my sexuality, it's difficult to say exactly.

But pride is a feeling, not negative in the context of being over-zealous or egocentric, but a feeling of being comfortable with who you are, being proud of the community in which you belong, being vocal about diversity, equity, and inclusion and being willing to fight for it.

When someone asks me today what they can do to support, I will often say, support LGBTQ young people. It is almost their turn to lead the advocacy. I only hope we are and will continue to provide what they need to sustain what has been worked on for a long time.

I am grateful that I work for an agency that has a history of helping the LGBTQ community through their individual journeys. This speaks to shared values, I think, between the LGBTQ and Jewish communities.

Gay Pride is one more thing for me. It is about being able to write this article and to share my reflections in such an open way and of knowing that I will be accepted and not judged. And, it is knowing that the readers of this piece have an appreciation for struggle and advocacy and that the micro-communities in which we all participate make one large community. For this, I am proud and grateful.

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

The Time is Now

BY MICHAEL KOMM

With the weather finally starting to take a turn towards summer, it is customary that many families who have lost a loved one over the winter months start to think about making preparations for a monument. This year, like just about everything else, the monument process is taking longer than usual. Whether it's granite that is several months behind from the quarry, longer backlogs for carving and design, or delayed cemetery foundation work, it all means that families should allow more time than in the past.

Since 2020 our industry has seen an unprecedented increase in work. Much of this, sadly, due to COVID, but some of this is from families deciding to have their memorials made ahead of time as part of the funeral prearranging process. Whatever the reason may be, it has led to an unprecedented demand on our industry. Add in logistical issues like global and domestic freight deadlock, rolling COVID closures around the globe,



and a lack of skilled tradespeople, and I think you begin to get the point...

Depending on a number of factors, waiting for higher quality pieces of granite can take several months just to arrive to our studio. In our climate, monument foundations and lettering of existing monuments in the cemetery cannot be completed in the winter months because of our

cold temperatures. This means that work that cannot be completed before winter must wait until the following spring or summer. Families who will be looking for a fall unveiling *should contact our studio now* so as not to miss the window where work can still be installed in the cemetery.

My studio, Leon Komm & Son Monument Company has invested heavily over the last year in state-of-the-art equipment, skilled artisans and staff, as well as granite inventory. We are proud to say that we are in the best possible position to meet our community's needs. If you need a memorial and are trying to satisfy an unveiling time frame, please do not delay in contacting our studio. We will do whatever we can to try to meet your deadlines. By starting the process sooner rather than later you eliminate any unnecessary stress on yourself and your family during what is already a taxing time in your life.

If you have any questions or would like to set up an appointment to discuss a memorial for a loved one either in person or by phone or Zoom, please feel free to contact us directly at 716-893-2500.

Michael Komm is the 4th Generation to operate Leon Komm & Son Monument Company located at 1640 E. Delavan Ave. in Buffalo.

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MAZEL TOV: Community Leaders!

We extend a hearty Mazel Tov to the following individuals who are making a difference both inside and outside of Western New York!



Hadar (center) holding her Blackstone award

Hadar Borden

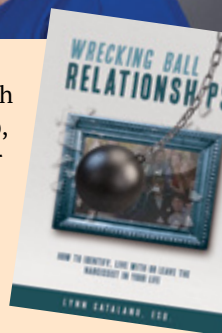
Hadar Borden, Director of the Blackstone LaunchPad at UB, received the national Blackstone Launchpad Campus Director Award for Ecosystem Builder at this year's Annual Startup Grind Conference & Pitch Competition. The award was in recognition of the extraordinary progress the UB team has made over the past year in the following categories:

- Positioning LaunchPad across campus divisions to garner support and achieve buy-in;
- Encouraging strong Stewardship Council involvement;
- Leveraging local, regional economic development and entrepreneurship to establish key partnerships.

Blackstone LaunchPad is an experiential campus program designed to introduce entrepreneurship as a viable career path and opened its doors at UB in March 2016.

Lynn Catalano

Attorney and non-profit leader Lynn Catalano just published her first book, *Wrecking Ball Relationships: How to Identify, Live with or Leave the Narcissist in Your Life*. With more than 20 years of experience in organizational leadership, Lynn has learned how to reframe her thinking, retrain her mind and her reactions. Now she helps others do the same through her book and also with one on one coaching. Lynn's book is available now on Amazon and Barnesandnoble.com. She is available to speak about toxic relationships and 1:1 coaching. You can reach her through her website lynncatalano.com.



Mike Berkun & Adam Cohen

First Cousins & Good (at) Sports

Two grandsons of Harold and the late Marcia Cohen are good sports. Or, rather, good AT sports. The two first cousins have recently secured prestigious positions in college athletics. Mike Berkun, son of Doug & Caryn Cohen Berkun, is SUNY Maritime College's 10th Director of Athletics. Adam Cohen, son of Kenny Cohen and Amy Rumizen, has been named Xavier University Men's Basketball Crawford Family Associate Head Coach.

A Buffalo native, Mike formally moved into the position full-time in April following a nationwide search. Berkun is also the head coach of the Privateers' men's basketball team. As the Director of Athletics, Berkun will oversee a department that features 16 varsity teams and more than 400 student-athletes competing at the NCAA Division III level in the Skyline Conference, Eastern Collegiate Football Conference, Intercollegiate Sailing Association and USA Rowing. He's also responsible for Maritime's three club programs, as well as all intramural sports.

Mike's cousin Adam, also a Buffalo native, is entering his 11th year as a collegiate assistant coach, spending the past six seasons at Stanford. After serving as an assistant coach for the Cardinal his first two seasons, Cohen was elevated to associate head coach prior to the 2018-19 season. Prior to Stanford, Cohen served as an assistant coach at Vanderbilt (2014-16), Harvard (2013-14) and Rice (2012-13). The NABC named Cohen to its prestigious 30-under-30 Team, recognizing the nation's top assistant coaches, at the 2016 Final Four in Houston. Cohen was invited to take part in the 2022 NCAA Champion Forum for Men's Basketball at the NCAA National Office in Indianapolis, Ind., in May. He was also invited to the prestigious Athletic Director U's Collegiate Coaching Consortium at the 2018 Final Four in San Antonio.



Mike Berkun



Adam Cohen



Judge Brenda Freedman

Hon. Brenda M. Freedman was recently appointed by Governor Kathy Hochul to the New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) for a four-year term. The JJAG is responsible for distribution of approximately \$2 million in federal Title II funds for use in juvenile justice, determining strategic priorities and fund services to address them. The JJAG is comprised of the Commissioners of Probation, Department of Corrections, Office of Children and Family Services and other high-ranking stakeholders in addition to representatives for families, youth and service providers. Judge Freedman is only the second judge appointed to the Group and the only jurist outside of New York City.

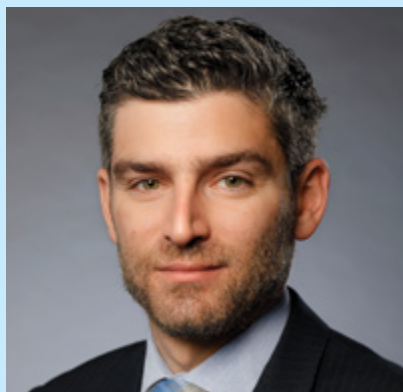
Dr. Jeffrey M. Lackner

Jeffrey M. Lackner, PsyD, professor of medicine at UB's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Science, chief of its Division of Behavioral Medicine and an expert on IBS and other chronic pain disorders, has been elected to the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research (ABMR). ABMR is an honorary senior scientist society for those whose research exists at the interface of behavior and medicine. Election is reserved for those with national and international behavioral medicine research excellence.

The honor means that the work Jeff and his team perform is cutting-edge research whose sustained impact has enriched our understanding of the interface of medicine and behavior. Much of Lackner's research has explored irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), a painful gastrointestinal disorder that is often poorly understood and treated unsatisfactorily with medications, diet changes, etc.

Dr. Lackner has received funding for his research from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health for more than two decades. His research has been distinguished by creativity, impact and boundary-breaking scientific discovery.





Alan Rosenhoch

Alan Rosenhoch was recently appointed Managing Director of Endeavor WNY after previously working as their Entrepreneur Selection and Growth Manager. Endeavor, which opened in WNY in 2020, works with high-impact, high-growth startup companies that are in the later stages and connects them with a global network of markets, mentors, investors and talent. He previously served as Director of Business Development with Invest Buffalo Niagara. He is currently a Board member of Kadimah Scholars at Park and The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, and has served as a SABAH volunteer for many years.

Vilona Trachtenberg

Vilona Trachtenberg, Distribution Coordinator at New Era Cap in Buffalo, is the winner of the 2022 ATHENA Young Professional Leadership Award through the Buffalo Niagara Partnership. This award an emerging leader who demonstrates excellence, creativity and initiative in their business or profession, and serves as a role Model for young women personally and professionally.

In her role, she helps manage multiple production, receiving, and shipping operations for New Era's North America business, which includes shipping throughout the U.S., Canada, and to individual consumers and continues to also work as a freelance journalist for local and national publications including *Buffalo Rising*, *The Jewish Journal*, *Hope Rises*, *The Blast*, and *The Sound Beat*. Vilona is also deeply involved with The Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo, Special Olympics, Danceability, American Cancer Society, Camp Good Days and the Food Bank of WNY.



Dr. Gil I. Wolfe

Dr. Gil Wolfe, UB Distinguished Professor and the Irvin and Rosemary Smith Chair of Neurology, has been granted the rank of State University of New York (SUNY) Distinguished Professor, the highest faculty rank in the SUNY system. An internationally renowned leader in neuromuscular disorders, with a primary focus on myasthenia gravis (MG), Wolfe has made significant contributions to the field of neurology.

Wolfe, who serves as chief of service for neurology with Kaleida Health, received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities in 2018, and the Certificate of Recognition for Distinguished Service from the State of NY Governor's Executive Chamber in 2020. In 2022, Wolfe was appointed to the Food and Drug Administration Cellular, Tissue and Gene Therapies Advisory Committee.

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Buffalo Day of Jewish Learning featured Diverse Talent and Learning

On Sunday February 27, 2022, the Buffalo Day of Jewish Learning was launched as part of the Home/Hub Partnership between the Buffalo Jewish Community and UB's College of Arts and Sciences. It took place both in person at the Jewish Community Center in the Benderson Family Building as well as virtually on Zoom. The event was hosted by Prof. Alex Green, Buffalo Jewish Community Educator, as a celebration of diverse local Jewish talent and learning.

The day began with opening words from Robin Schulze, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University at Buffalo, and Shelly Yellen, President of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors, who both conveyed their enthusiasm for this new partnership between UB and the Jewish community.

Some featured presentations included:

- *Anti-Semitism: Past and Present* with Professor Noam Pines



Shelly Yellen, Dr. Alex Green and Lindy Korn

- *Jewish Values & Civil Rights Leadership* with Lindy Korn, PLLC
- *A Glimpse into Kadimah Scholars at Park* led by Michal Shmuel-Lewis, Nurit Weiner and Kadimah Scholars at Park
- *Jewish vs. Democratic, The Separation of Church and State in Israel* with Gon Erez

- *Jewish Composers, Lyricists and Song Writers: Past to Present*, performed by Zahava Fried
- *Poetry Reading with The Buffalo Corner Reading Series* led by Dr. Gunilla Kester and Dr. Irene Sipos
- *Conversation on The Future of Jewish Buffalo, Post-Covid*, hosted by Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein with Rabbi Ori Bergman, Rabbi Sara Rich, and Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum
- *Spinoza vs. Leibniz in 1676: Science, Reason, & God* with Dr. Gil Wolfe
- *Making Hummus and Falafel* with Lori Morrison
- *Teaching Gender in Jewish Education* with Mike Steklof, Ed.D.
- *Kosher Meditation: Relaxation Techniques in the Digitally Distracted World* with Rus Devorah Wallen, LCSW
- *Introduction to Story Building with The Anne Frank Project*, led by Prof Drew Kahn
- *A Sabbath for the Land: Learn the Basics of Shmita/The Sabbatical Year and Creative Contemporary Applications* with Rabbi Sara Rich.

While the adults studied together, the children were given the opportunity to experience Jewish life cycle through hands-on art projects led by UB undergraduate student, Elizabeth Ilyina-Orak—building edible sukkahs, decorating honey jars for Rosh Hashanah and dreidels for Hanukkah.



Kadimah at Park Scholars following their lesson.

Recordings of the presentations will soon be available online for those who were not able to attend in person. Many thanks to the Buffalo Jewish Federation, the UB College of Arts and Sciences at the University at Buffalo, Hillel of Buffalo, Amherst Memorial Chapel, and the TELL Fund for sponsoring this event.

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Distinguished Fellow David Makovsky addresses Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process at UB

On April 11, 2022, the University at Buffalo hosted David Makovsky, the Ziegler Distinguished Fellow at the Koret Project on Arab-Israeli Relations and Director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy Project on the Middle East Peace Process.

David has been intimately involved with the Israeli-Palestinian peace process for more than three decades. He has worked as a journalist in Israel, and in government as a member of then-Secretary of State John Kerry's peace process team in 2013-2014. He has published widely on Israel and has Arab-Israeli relations and appeared frequently in media and before Congress.

David's visit to campus, made possible through a grant from Hillel International, began with an informal lunch and learn with undergraduate students and faculty at Hillel on campus. His topic was Inside the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, in



which he shared insights from his many years involved in Middle East peace negotiations. He responded to students' questions about how Israel is presented in the media and on campus. He then gave a guest lecture at the freshman Political Science course, Introduction to Comparative Politics, where he provided a brief history of Israel in the context of the history of the Middle East. In the evening, he spoke to the larger community about the future of the Israeli coalition government with the topic, Ten Months In: Evaluating the Bennett-Lapid Coalition.



**“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: 148**

Total dollar amount:

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**through May 20, 2022*



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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

KADIMAH SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT PARK

This month, we are pleased to highlight the Kadimah Scholars Program at Park, one of the collaborating partner organizations in the LIFE & LEGACY @ Buffalo initiative.

How do we ensure that the flame of Torah continues to burn brightly in the hearts of the next generation? How do we educate our children to appreciate the Jewish past, live joyously in the present and prepare for the future? Kadimah Scholars is our answer to these questions.

Since its founding 60 years ago, Kadimah has evolved from a stand-alone community day school to a Jewish program within a larger independent school environment at the Park School. It is the best of two worlds brought together. The students who are part of the new Kadimah Scholars Program at Park are educated in a diverse learning environment alongside their peers, while integrating Hebrew and Jewish Studies on a daily basis. In partnership with the Buffalo Jewish community, Kadimah offers essential financial aid at every income level, so no Jewish child who wants this type of Jewish education is denied this opportunity.

Kadimah parents delight in watching their young children lead Shabbat blessings, pray with skill and confidently add Yiddishkeit



at the Seder table. Parents and families form close bonds of friendship with one another, coming together to celebrate Jewish traditions, and sharing Jewish culture with the broader community.

A love for Judaism, the Jewish people and the land

of Israel, together with a commitment to a strong Buffalo Jewish community is what drives Kadimah to ensure that a rich immersive Jewish educational environment is available to all who desire it. The legacy donors are people like you who know that investing in the children is the best way to carry on traditions and heritage, protect and grow the Jewish people, and keep the Jewish flame burning brightly.

For any questions about the Kadimah Scholars Program at Park and how you can leave your legacy with them, please contact Alan Rosenhoch at alan.rosenhoch@gmail.com.

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

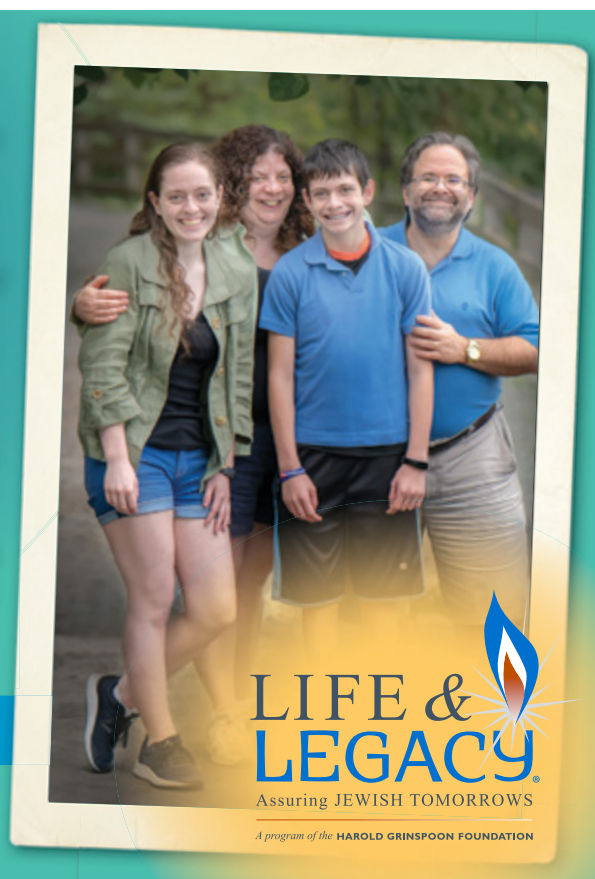
- Buffalo Jewish Federation
- Center for Jewish Life
- Congregation Shir Shalom
- Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies
- Hillel of Buffalo
- Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo
- Jewish Discovery Center
- Jewish Family Services of Western New York
- Kadimah Scholars
- Temple Beth Tzedek
- Temple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

“We are inspired *by our family; our love for Judaism, Jewish traditions, and Jewish history; and our commitment to preserve the past while ensuring the future. Judaism and our Jewish identity have always been very special to us - something to not only love but to enjoy to the fullest. That's something that we want to pass on to our children. Family means everything to us, and our commitment to date reflects that on both ends.*

Our vision *is to ensure a strong, vibrant and engaged Jewish community in Buffalo, one that prioritizes its youth and especially its Jewish education to the highest degree, and that puts an emphasis on the quality and breadth of that education, so that every Jewish child in Western New York can receive it. At the same time, we must also guarantee that our past is preserved. We cannot learn from our mistakes and successes if we do not know where we came from or fail to appreciate those who came before us, so we must invest in supporting our cemeteries to protect our history.”*

Judith and Jonathan Epstein, Legacy contributors to the Kadimah Scholars Program at Park and the Buffalo Jewish Federation Cemetery Corporation.

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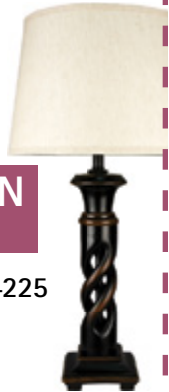
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SALES TEAM

Kadimah Scholars Learn about Creativity

Author Julie Salamon was a visiting scholar at The Park School as part of the Hertha Ball Creative Writing Fund. Julie Salamon is an internationally known author and journalist, the author of 12 books, culture former writer for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*, and now creator of one of this year's top 10 podcasts - THE DEVIL'S CANDY, for Turner Classic Movies' *The Plot Thickens*, hosted by Josh Mankiewicz. It's about the year she spent on the set of director Brian DePalma's famous catastrophe, the film of Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*. Julie Spent a day with Park students, including Kadimah Scholars (pictured here), talking and teaching about writing and creative expression.



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COMMUNITY

Yom HaShoah 2022

On Sunday, May 1, the Buffalo Jewish Community held its Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) Commemoration featuring six local Holocaust Survivor couples/individuals. These individuals were part of a film created by Brenda Feldstein and streamed especially for Yom HaShoah.

They were also invited to experience the event in person with their families at the Amherst Dipson Theater. "To be in that theater with our survivors and their families was beautiful and emotional," noted Wendy Weisbrot, chair of the program. "We have all had tremendous feedback from the community that watched at home, as we're grateful for these individuals who helped to remember the Shoah and take that message forward." Wendy added: "There are no words that can sufficiently describe the love, depth of thought, precision, and artistic skill that director, editor and producer Brenda Feldstein put into the masterpiece that she created."



Herman Stone and family



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with their daughter Rose
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daughter



Martin Lewin and his daughter
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HRC Chair Wendy Weisbrot and
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*You can watch the program here:
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Top Israeli Singer Noga Erez at JCC Summer Concert June 28

Kick-off your summer with a blast at the JCC's biggest event ever Tuesday, June 28 featuring live music, food trucks, refreshments, activities, zip lining, community vendors, group fitness and wellness demonstrations, games, and giveaways. Magenta Sunshine will open at 6:00 p.m. and Noga Erez will take the stage at 7:00 p.m. This is a free event and open to the community!



Noga Erez is an Israeli singer, songwriter, producer, and the #1 international singer in Israel. She has performed all over the world including Bonnaroo 2022 and is visiting Buffalo to mark the end of her second US tour.

Magenta Sunshine laces danceable rhythms, horn-driven soundscapes, and poetic lyricism. This sextet synthesizes well-crafted songwriting into brass-inspired, funky psychedelia suited for hip shakers and wallflowers alike.

The event begins at 5:00 p.m. at the Irving M. Shuman Campgrounds at the JCC, 2640 North Forest Road in Getzville. The event is free to the community! For more information, contact Gon Erez at 716-688-4033 or gerez@jccbuffalo.org.

CBA Commemorates the Memory of Murdered Jewish Civil Rights Activists on June 19

Congregation Beth Abraham will be screening the documentary, *Shared Legacies* on Sunday, June 19 at 4:00 p.m.



The program is in honor of the memory of Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, the two Jewish Civil Rights Workers (along with Black activist, James Chaney) murdered by the Ku Klux Klan in June, 1964.

The murders of Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney galvanized the nation and provided impetus for the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. *Shared Legacies* explores the common cause found between Jews and Blacks during the turbulent 60's and how that partnership helped shape the Civil Rights Movement.

Sadly, the film also touches on how that relationship deteriorated over time. Preceding the film, there will be a presentation on the political and social events of the "Freedom Summer" of 1964. The program will be held at Congregation Beth Abraham, 1073 Elmwood Avenue on Sunday, June 19 at 4:00 p.m. There will also be an option for online viewing. *Please check the CBA website at congregationbethabraham.net for any updates on mask protocols.*

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD: THE DIGNITY OF EVERY JEWISH SOUL

Community-Wide Tikkun Leyl Shavuot study

Saturday, June 4 - Sunday, June 5 (Erev Shavuot)

Program begins Saturday with Minha at 8:00 p.m.

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Cantor Mark Horowitz
KEYNOTE LECTURE

10:30 p.m.

Rabbi Sara Rich

11:30 p.m.

Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein

12:30 a.m.

Rabbi Ori Bergman

2:00 a.m.

Yonina Foster, Ph.D.

3:00 a.m.

Mike Steklof, Ed.D.

4:00 a.m.

Rabbi Adam J. Rosenbaum

Free and open to the community

For more information, visit btzbuffalo.org or call 716-838-3232

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1» Support the people 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 jewishfederations.org/crisis-in-ukraine2022 or buffalojewishfederation.org and click on the "Crisis in Ukraine" link.

2» JCC Summer Kick-off. Kick-off summer with a blast at the JCC's biggest event ever, Tuesday, June 28, opening at 5:00 p.m. This free event features live music, food trucks, refreshments, activities, zip lining, community vendors, group fitness and wellness demonstrations, games, and giveaways. Magenta Sunshine will open at 6:00 p.m. and Noga Erez will take the stage at 7:00 p.m. The Irving M. Shuman Campgrounds at the JCC, 2640 North Forest Road. **For information, contact Gon Erez at 716-688-4033 or gerez@jccbuffalo.org.**

3» Ride for Roswell - June 24 & 25. Get your helmets on, pull your friends together and Ride for Roswell. The 24th annual, very popular bike ride to raise money to fight cancer takes place the last weekend in June. Headquartered at UB, the Ride has participants riding all over WNY to raise funds. If you aren't riding, consider donating to the Roswell Donor Center Team in memory of past Federation President Leslie Shuman Kramer (z"l). **Go to www.rideforroswell.org.**

4» Go wild at Kadimah's Annual Dinner June 20 at the Buffalo Zoo from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m! Enjoy kosher heavy hors d'oeuvres from Luscious by Lori, and have some wine, beer or other drinks. Wander the 23 acres. And then dessert and schmooze. Tickets are \$72 per adult and \$36 for children under 13, or \$200 for a family. **Register at www.kadimah.org.**

5» Tikkun Leyl Shavuot. Join your community friends at an all-night learning session in person or virtually for Shavuot starting Saturday, June 4 at 8:30 p.m. at Temple Beth Tzedek. Learn with Cantor Mark Horowitz, Rabbi Sara Rich, Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein, Rabbi Ori Bergman, Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum, Dr. Mike Stekloff and Dr. Yonina Foster. **Call 838-3232 or go to btzbuffalo.org for information.**

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For the May issue, **Karen Wiseman** wrote to say that this was a plaque to honor past JCC President Gretchen Gross, and it is located at the JCC. In fact, it is at the Holland Building, and is accompanied by a sculpture made from one of the trees cut down on the Delaware Ave property.

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Shelly Yellen - President

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Rabbi Eliezer Marcus - Rabbinic Administrator
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Chabad House of Buffalo

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Rabbi Moshe Gurary

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Chani Labkovski - Director

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Rabbi Sara Rich - Director
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338 Harris Hill Rd. – Suite 108B
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jewishfederationapartments.org
Kathleen Haggerty - Property Manager

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Williamsville, NY 14221
buffalojewishfederation.org
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congregationbethabraham.net
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716-689-8059
congregationhavurah.org
info@congregationhavurah.org
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Buffalo Remembers Gerda Klein (z”l)

Holocaust survivor Gerda Weissmann Klein was a writer and human rights activist whose autobiographical account of the Holocaust, *All But My Life*, was adapted for the 1995 short film, *One Survivor Remembers*, which received an Academy Award and an Emmy Award. Before relocating to Arizona where she died this spring, she lived with her late husband Kurt and their children in Kenmore for decades. Gerda was known to say “I have traveled all over the globe. Buffalo, New York is the most beautiful city in the world.” Gerda indeed loved Buffalo, and Buffalo loved her. During her online memorial service May 1, she was remembered by family, friends, and by people she touched. We wanted to share a few additional reminiscences from a few of Gerda Klein’s many Buffalo friends.

Ethel Roblin Melzer

One of the many benefits of serving as chair of the Federation’s Womens’ Division in 1977 was meeting and working with Gerda Weissmann Klein. Although I knew Gerda and Kurt Klein socially, prior to my taking over the reins from Gail Kaplan, it wasn’t until I traveled to Israel on a National Women’s Division Mission in 1975 that our friendship really developed and permanently solidified.

I had never been to Israel before, and when my husband Dick and I met Gerda and Kurt at the Buffalo airport, Dick asked Gerda to, “Please keep an eye on me.” Since that first trip, I have been to Israel six more times, but that initial experience with Gerda and a tour bus full of other Jewish community chairs was the most memorable!

On the plane to New York City where we were to meet our fellow travelers, Gerda told me to “keep my eyes and ears open and my mouth shut and I would learn a lot.” How right she was. At that time, Gerda was just starting out on her future fund-raising speaking engagements for the National UJF and she was already a “celebrity.”

Three very special events took place on the Mission that changed my life forever! The first one was walking to the Western Wall in Jerusalem just before Shabbat holding hands with Gerda. It was an overwhelming experience that still affects me to this day. She took my hand, kissed me on the cheek and escorted me to a spot at The Wall where I could press my body against the stones. I can still feel it! It is where I made the connection with my heritage!

The second experience took place a few nights later when our group went on a tour of Jerusalem that took us up onto The Ramparts of the wall that surrounds the Old City. The moon was shining, and it was one of those gorgeous nights that

often takes place in Jerusalem in October. It was a spectacular view and I suddenly felt Gerda put her arm through mine and whisper in my ear, “We’ve come a long way from Kenmore, Baby!” And how right she was. Gerda lived on East Hazeltine, and I lived on Columbia Blvd. We were right around the corner from each other in Kenmore, and there we were standing together in the moonlight peering out over the Golden City of Jerusalem. It was an amazing moment!

The third event was the most incredible! One night while we were still at the Hilton Hotel in Jerusalem, Gerda invited me to join her after dinner. She was going to meet with some of her friends that now lived in Israel who were part of that infamous Death March with her just before the end of the war. She had reserved a small meeting room and when we entered, chairs were set up in a circle and seven or eight very attractive middle-aged women were sipping wine and sitting around talking to each other.

Gerda introduced me as her “very special friend from Buffalo.” I was thrilled to just be in the room. They all soon ignored me, and I sat in amazement as I heard them talking about their families and their rather ordinary lives. They had survived the horrors of the Holocaust, and just like any other group of women, were sharing pictures of their children and grandchildren. It was the most beautiful example of life, hope and survival that I had ever seen, and I found myself crying at the joy they all displayed.

My friend, Gerda Weissmann Klein was an extraordinary woman. She had an enormous impact on me that gave meaning to my life and helped to motivate all the volunteer



“I have traveled all over the globe. Buffalo, New York is the most beautiful city in the world.”

Gerda Weissman Klein

work I have done in the Buffalo Jewish community for the past 47 years. She was, indeed, My Very Special Friend. May her memory be a blessing!

As a volunteer leader, Ethel Melzer served as chair of the Federation’s Women’s Campaign and past president of the JCC of Buffalo. She also was a member of the professional team at the Bureau of Jewish Education for many years.

A. Reed Taylor

In 1981, encouraged by friends in my Presbyterian church as well as fellow faculty at Amherst High School, I offered a ten-week elective English course for seniors on Literature of the Holocaust, relying heavily on guidance from Toby Back, a Jewish educator in Buffalo who established the Holocaust Resource Center two years later. Along with guiding me to appropriate books for my students to read and discuss, she offered to arrange for one of the authors to visit my class. This was Gerda Klein, whose memoir *All But My Life* the class found both accessible and compelling as

a personal account of a 15-year-old girl’s life being suddenly interrupted and changed forever by the cruelty of the Nazi invasion of her native Poland.

Unsure of how to plan for her day with my class, I had made sure we had read and discussed the book ahead of time, and had reviewed the historical context. But I was unprepared for the warm and gentle woman who arrived and immediately got under the skin and into the very souls of my “sophisticated” seniors. She noted that she was just their age when her world was suddenly shattered as she was separated from her home and family and sent to a series of labor camps, facing forced marches, starvation, and the constant fear of extermination—a word she said the Nazis used to describe their wiping out of Jews as insects and vermin being cleansed from the society to maintain racial purity.

She asked the students to picture their departure for school that morning—especially the outer door and pathway to the street. She said she could recall vividly every detail of the day she left routinely for school—and was never to return to her secure home and family, but was confronted on her return with Nazis rounding up her father and other community leaders, and within days evacuating all Jews from the town. She had each student describe the pathway from their home, and stood right in front of each urging them to record that scene as if they would never see it again. May I say they really “got it.”

One girl lingered after class to speak to me. I had not realized she came from a Jewish home, but soon learned that Gerda’s story had been especially difficult for her to hear—especially in this eyewitness version. Then she said her father had expressed great interest in this class, and asked if I might pay him a visit on a Saturday morning. It turned out that he was a “silent

survivor,” who had not shared his death camp experience even with his family, but wanted my help in going public. He came to not only share his story with his daughter, who had already sensed his unspeakable horror, but to reach out to the nascent Holocaust Resource Center to tape his story for its survivor archives. Gerda’s story of imprisonment had set him free.

Educator A. Reed Taylor is one of the co-founders of the Buffalo Holocaust Resource Center

Ellice Halpern

I have wonderful memories of Gerda in Buffalo. My mother Sheila Halpern introduced me to Gerda, and her daughter Vivian taught my Sunday school class. The Klein family lived around the corner from my mother’s brother, Jerry Frank, and his family. I heard Gerda speak about her experiences for the first time at my high school in Buffalo, Nichols School.

Years later, I saw Gerda’s first book, *All But My Life*, in our Temple Rodef Shalom library in Falls Church, Virginia. Memories flooded back, and I asked her to come speak to our northern Virginia community. I thought my oldest daughter Julia would want to meet her. Gerda must have been in her 80s then and she had the energy of someone decades younger. She boarded a plane and came to our temple. She spoke to two different standing room only audiences and signed her most recent book, *A Boring Evening at Home*. Of course, Gerda made quite an impact on Julia and all of the attendees– young and old. Later on, my three children and I visited Gerda at her home in Arizona. She will always be my hero. With love, Ellice (Lisa) Halpern and family

Attorney Ellice Halpern grew up in Buffalo and now lives with her family and works in Falls Church, Virginia.

Linda & Kenneth Kahn

Gerda Weissmann Klein shared a special bond of love and friendship with our mother, Ruth Kahn Stovroff. When Gerda first emigrated to Buffalo as a newlywed, Ruth warmly welcomed her, as she too had been welcomed when she moved from Denver. Ruth, who was heavily invested in her Jewish community, introduced Gerda to others who shared a similar passion for Jewish life.

Gerda and Ruth quickly became fast friends, embracing similar causes and shared ideals. While their life stories

were quite different, their compassion, caring, and deep understanding came from a place of respect and admiration. They were accessible and nurturing friends. During last few years of Ruth’s life, she and Gerda spoke by phone every afternoon.

Gerda’s inspirational legacy lives in our hearts and souls forever. Her memory is so much more than a blessing.... She has gifted us in our lifetimes a benediction of endurance and grace.

Linda Angert Kahn was a major fundraiser for Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Dr. Kenneth Kahn was an Obstetrician/ Gynecologist in Buffalo for many years. They both continue to share the lessons they learned from both Ruth Kahn Stovroff (z”l) and Gerda Weissmann Klein (z”l).

Donations may be made in Gerda’s memory to Citizenship Counts, KAVOD which ensures dignity for Holocaust survivors, or the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo at hrcbuffalo.org.

In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from April 19- May 20, 2022*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.



**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.*

- Michelle Isenberg Agostinelli
- Andrew Cahill
- Robert Dekoff
- Morton Korn
- Eva Meizlik
- Ruth Palanker
- Dr. M. Steven Piver
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This War is Personal

BY ILONA TROSMAN

The current war in Ukraine reminded me of my personal family history. My ancestors lived in Ukraine for generations and my grandmother left her home in 1941 with absolutely nothing, just a few things to survive. When I was just a kid, Grandma would constantly share with me stories about her love for Ukraine. Studying in Odessa, visiting beautiful Kiev, her parents in Korosten, her brother in Vinnytsai. I was born in the place where my grandparents had decided to settle after they lost absolutely everything they could think of, including old family photos and heirlooms that were passed down from generation to generation.

Now, 80 years later, this past April, and I am in Warsaw, Poland, meeting Jewish refugee families from Ukraine who barely escaped with only plastic bags full of their belongings, including their important documents. I am a part of a volunteer effort with the Jewish Agency for Israel organized by the Jewish Federations of North America and have a feeling of being a part of a great operation. I feel that our community is doing everything they can to protect my fellow Jews.

I heard a story from a family who lived in Mariupol about their escape during a bombardment after their house was completely destroyed. They walked with two kids through a field of dead bodies covering their eyes in order to protect their children from the horrific sight.

I met another family from the same city. They stayed for a few weeks in a house with no heat and water, collecting raindrops in order to survive and cooking on an open fire. They also had to walk through scores of dead bodies to escape the intense bombing. And, they had to witness the cemetery where all their ancestors had been buried destroyed by tanks.

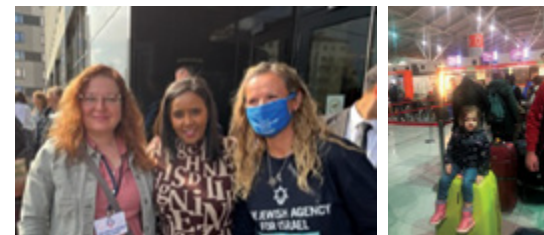
I met the children and grandchildren of the *Righteous Among the Nations*. These are the non-Jews who risked their lives during World War II in order to save our people from the Nazis. A father and a son sat in front of me, their family was a part of the *Righteous Among the Nations*, and the grandchildren of the Jewish family they saved today live in Israel. And as soon as the war started and just hours after the man and his son had woken up to the sound of bombs destroying their city, they were invited to come to Israel. It was



Ilona Trossman (left) on a Jewish Agency for Israel panel during her journey to Eastern Europe in April.

very emotional for them as if the saving of refugees had come full circle; the selflessness and kindness their family members had given to Jews during World War II had come back to help them be saved.

During my time in Poland I helped to translate the speech given by Pnina Tamano-Shata, the first Ethiopian-born woman to enter the Knesset in 2013 and the current Minister of Immigrant Absorption. She's with us in the room, personally taking a group of the refugees with her on the same flight to Israel. Her family was saved in 1981 by another Israeli operation, when Ethiopian Jews had to walk in the desert to be picked up by Israeli planes. Most of the people are women, children, and the elderly. She tries to encourage women that their husbands will soon join them in



Israel, as the men now stay in Ukraine to protect the country.

It's 2:30 in the morning, at the Warsaw airport. I see a crowd of the people who were helped last week preparing to board their flight to Israel, only a week before Passover. It looks like exile. I see older ladies in wheelchairs, pets in crates, kids excited to take a flight, and parents nervous to start their life from scratch in a new country with a different language.

This experience for me was very emotional and makes me very proud; I feel as if I am a part of history.

Ilona Trossman is a real estate and mortgage broker who moved from Montreal to Buffalo with her family just before the pandemic. She was part of a volunteer team this past April in Warsaw through a Jewish Federations of North America volunteer program. If you are a Russian or Ukrainian speaker, are over the age of 18 and are interested in volunteering through the same program, please contact Federation's Director of Planning & Overseas, Mandy Weiss (mandy@buffalojewishfederation.org).



Join us at the Grossman Family Outdoor Pool Complex for fun events, beach volleyball, a NEW pickleball complex, and the Snack Shack!

All of these events are FREE and OPEN to the community!

J-FLICK OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHT

Wednesdays | July 6, July 20, August 10, & August 24 | 7:00 pm



Enjoy family movies at our heated outdoor pool. Arts and crafts, lawn games, swimming, and food from the snack shack. Bring your own blanket and chairs. Movie begins at dusk.

SUNDAY FUNDAY

June 26, July 31, August 28
1:00 - 4:00 pm



Lawn games, family activities, poolside DJ, food from the snack shack and pickup games of volleyball and pickleball.

POOLSIDE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Thursdays | July 14 - August 18
5:30 - 7:30 pm



Enjoy live music by the pool! All are welcome to use the entire Outdoor Pool Complex, and purchase food from our Snack Shack.

Creekside Concert with Noga Erez!

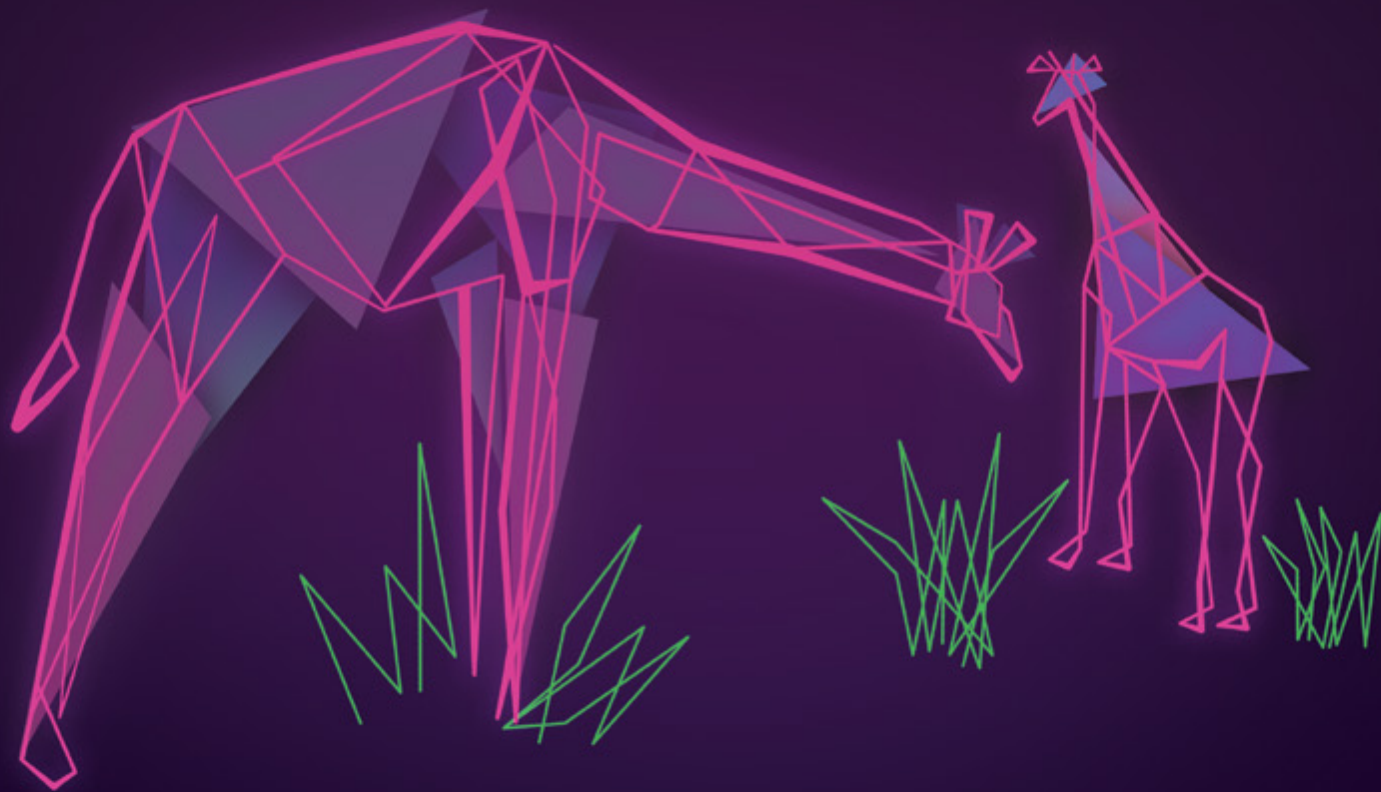
Noga is a critically-acclaimed singer, songwriter, producer, and the #1 international pop star in Israel.

June 28 | 5-9 pm
Live at the
Irving M. Shuman
Campgrounds

2640 N. Forest Road, Getzville, NY 14068

Magenta Sunshine is opening the event!

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