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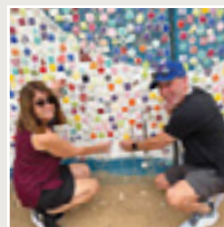
THE JEWISH JOURNAL

A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation

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DECEMBER 2022 | KISLEV-TEVET 5783

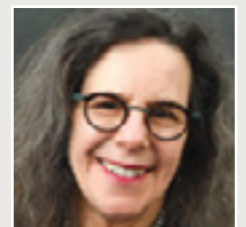
celebrate!



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December 2022

Editor's Note



Ellen Goldstein, Editor

Days are getting shorter as December begins, and the earth continues its roll around the sun. In this month of holidays, we yearn for light. We seek it out, travel to sunnier climes, and put on extra lights inside and outside of our houses. And we also do things which bring light inside us. In short, we CELEBRATE! That's what Hanukkah—the Festival of Light—is all about.

And we at *The Jewish Journal* are indeed celebrating this month. There are lots of events, services, good news, and inspiration to carry us through to 2023. Let's take a closer look: The Foundation and Federation's joint Annual Meeting and Award Ceremony (pages 6-7) taking place at Congregation Shir Shalom December 7 is honoring, and yes, celebrating, three awesome individuals: Jim Biltekoff, Rabbi Sara Rich and Howard Rosenhoch! Come and celebrate with us!

We are spotlighting eight Jewish Buffalonians in our *Kol HaKavod* feature (see pages 14-15). Their good news and good works translate into a better Buffalo for all of us. *Mazel tov* to our honored friends!

We call attention to the 50th anniversary of Congregation Havurah (see page 23), a group of Jews who came together 50 years ago and some thought they wouldn't still be around after five years! And did they celebrate their big 5-0!

You can see a list on page 12 of all the Hanukkah events we were able to compile by press time (mid-November); you'll find so many fun, joyful, exciting, celebratory and gustatory (read "latkes") programs, services and celebrations to attend this month, filled with soulful light as well as candle light.

Finally, you can be inspired by Rabbi Heschel Greenberg's enlightening message (see page 18) on the meaning of Hanukkah and its blessings.

Sending love and light from our own shining, light-filled city on Lake Erie to you all. *Chag Hanukkah Sameach!*

Ellen Goldstein - Editor

On The Cover



A student in Miss Maya's 3-year old classroom at the JCC Benderson Early Childhood program plays with a menorah to celebrate Hanukkah!

Photo credit: Jim Gibbons

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Published by
Buffalo Jewish Federation
338 Harris Hill Rd., Suite 108B
Williamsville, NY 14221
716-463-5050
www.buffalojewishfederation.org



BUFFALO JEWISH FEDERATION

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Editor.....**Ellen S. Goldstein**



The Buffalo Jewish Federation is a proud member
of the Jewish Federations of North America and the
American Jewish Press Association

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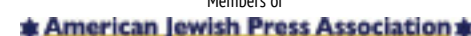
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Year-End Reflections

As my time as President of the Buffalo Jewish Federation (BJF) draws to a conclusion this month, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on the past two years. COVID had just started toward the end of 2019 and my term as President began in January 2020, just prior to the World Health Organization declaring the disease a world pandemic two months later. Fortunately, I was able to tap into the strength of the professionals and volunteers of the organization, led by our wonderful CEO, Rob Goldberg, and his very talented professional team. With an effective infrastructure, the BJF quickly provided a central means of communication and coordination for our Jewish Community.

Weekly leadership zoom calls with Federation agencies, synagogues, and community partners provided the opportunity to share knowledge and gain valuable information as we searched together for our path forward. The BJF, Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies (FJP), The Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family Services, and all the synagogues were able to provide our community with current health information and help with basic life assistances for many in need. Our collective strength was present and on full display.

In fact, working together became our mantra, as the words "Better Together" took on new life. Community participants worked together in planning and visioning to fulfill a mission of a vibrant and caring Jewish Buffalo. For the first time, the leaders of BJF and FJP began to regularly meet and discuss ways to collaborate and innovate. Outcomes from this work include various fundraising efforts to support resettlement efforts through Jewish Family Services and their partner organizations for Afghani evacuees and refugees displaced by the war in Ukraine coming to Buffalo, funding sources for various community projects, and the launch of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation Life & Legacy initiative. This ongoing program consists of eleven Jewish Buffalo organizations working together to secure the financial future for our community through endowment giving. Professional Staff and a group of dedicated volunteers from the different organizations, led by volunteers Howard Rosenhoch and Alison Keane, took a deep dive into the Grinspoon Foundation program and began engaging community members in donor-centric conversations. I am very happy to report that after completing the first year of the program in July 2022, we now have secured 234 Legacy commitments totaling over \$8.3 million. Now into the second year, we are looking for further growth through long-term

commitments that do not require immediate funding. I want to recognize Irv Levy, Lorne Steinhart, Randi Morkisz, Stacey Block, Mandy Weiss, and Linda Barat for their exceptional Life & Legacy leadership. Please contact Randi (randi@buffalojewishfederation.org) to learn how you can participate and provide for future generations (read more on page 21).



Margie Bryen and Shelly Yellen

At the same time, much of our attention has also been on engagement and impact. There has been a major effort to provide programs, initiatives, and experiences to engage our Board of Directors, donors, and volunteers. The BJF is providing high quality engagement opportunities for those looking to participate. Learning and connecting through LiNK, community outreach and combating antisemitism and other forms of hate through the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), teaching the lessons of the Holocaust through the Holocaust Resource Center (HRC), and providing a hub for Jewish life on campus through Hillel are just some of the efforts. I am grateful to Miriam Abramovich, Mike Steklhof, Mara Koven-Gelman, Elizabeth Schram, Lauren Bloomberg, and Rabbi Sara Rich for providing exceptional programs and services that strengthen our community.

Most recently, my wife Heidi and I



Shelly Yellen

participated in the Buffalo Israel Experience. We feel so fortunate to have been part of a wonderful and diverse group from Buffalo (and beyond). The trip represented the best of the BJF by providing an immersive, engaging, and impactful opportunity to visit this beautiful country and experience Israeli life and culture. We created many happy memories and look forward to connecting with other participants for years to come. Thanks again to Miriam, Stacey, Mike, and Mandy for your professional leadership as well as Robin Raphael and Alan Gellin for your volunteer leadership. As a reminder, Rob Goldberg and Randi Morkisz will be leading an incredible experience to the United Arab Emirates on February 2 -9, 2023. Please contact Rob (rob@buffalojewishfederation.org) for more details on this amazing opportunity to visit Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

During my time as President, I have been fortunate to work with very talented and dedicated volunteers. Much appreciation goes to our Officers, including Rise' Kulick, Shawn Frier, Margery Bryen, and Ellen Weiss. This group provided knowledge, experience, insight, and vision as well as encouragement and support for Rob and his team to carry out the mission. Moving forward, I am very happy that Margie will be our next President along with vice-presidents Rise' Kulick and Marc Brown, treasurer Shawn Frier, and secretary Cheryl Stein. Margie chaired the very successful **Made in Buffalo** programs and as Treasurer, worked closely with Rob and Debbie Pivarsi, our Chief Financial Officer. Margie's strategic vision, focus on collaboration, and nurturing of staff and volunteers will help her lead us forward.

I want to acknowledge Rob Goldberg, our Chief Executive Officer. It has been a pleasure to work with and learn so much from him.

Rob has successfully transformed the BJF from primarily a fundraising entity to an organization that strives to create a flourishing Jewish Buffalo by providing programs, activities, and services relevant for our community. His ability to engage with the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, partner agencies, synagogues, other community organizations as well as connect with volunteers and staff on a local and national level has been instrumental in Buffalo, and is now setting standards for other Federation communities.



L to R: Shelly and Heidi Yellen, Brenda Fox, Florence Fox

Finally, thank you to the many amazing volunteers and donors that are the life-blood of the BJF and our community. It is a pleasure working with dedicated and passionate people and your contributions to our community have made it a very rewarding experience. You are essential to the BJF and our community, and your time, hard work, contributions, and commitment are why we have a vibrant and caring Jewish Buffalo. I am excited about the future and look forward to the continued journey.

Thank you for the honor of serving as President and wishing you all a very happy and healthy Year in 2023.

Jewish Buffalo at Chicago General Assembly

JCRC leader Deborah Goldman, JCC President Irwin Gelman, and Federation professionals, Mara Koven-Gelman and Rob Goldberg, joined over 1,200 Jewish communal leaders in Chicago last month at Jewish Federations' three-day General Assembly, where they set the shared Jewish communal agenda for the year ahead and heard from a diverse array of voices on critical issues facing the North American Jewish community. (*Read Deborah's reflections on page 40*). First held 90 years ago, The General Assembly is the most consequential gathering of the leadership of the North American Jewish community.

This year's General Assembly focused on responses to the geopolitical challenges and global events impacting the Jewish community, and challenges and opportunities towards building flourishing Jewish communities. Topics that were discussed include the urgency of Jewish communal security,



JCC President Irwin Gelman, Mara Koven-Gelman, JCRC leader Deborah Goldman, and Rob Goldberg

Jewish Federations' response to the Ukraine crisis and the uncertainties that lie ahead for Jews in Ukraine and Russia, and new initiatives and partnerships to combat the rise in antisemitism.

Global figures, activists, public officials and communal leaders addressed the audience. Noteworthy names include President of Israel Isaac Herzog, U.S. Ambassador to Germany Amy Gutmann, Israel's Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Herzog, journalist and news anchor Andrea Mitchell, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Ambassador Dr. Deborah Lipstadt, philosopher and author and filmmaker Bernard-Henri Levy, among many others.

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An Inspired Gift in Israel

On one of the last full days on the recent Buffalo Israel Experience, travelers had the opportunity to visit the Erez Crossing Point for an understanding of the complexities involved in Israel's relationship with Gaza. The visit included time in the town of Sderot, a working-class community that exists just 1 mile from the border with Gaza. Its proximity to the border means that Sderot residents have experienced more rocket fire than any other place in Israel. As one would imagine, this has taken quite a toll on residents, including the town's youngest who experience significantly high rates of PTSD.



Children who attend the Reut-Sderot's after school program, enjoying new playground toys thanks to the generosity of David Feuerstein and Jodi Bloom.

David Feuerstein and Jodi Bloom, participants on the Buffalo Israel Experience, were quite moved during their visit to Sderot and wanted to do something immediately to support the city's children. With one of the BIE's guides as lead investigator, they learned about the Reut-Sderot Association, which works to strengthen community ties, impart leadership skills, and offer support services that assist youth and families to overcome and manage trauma, deal with social and emotional hardships, and surmount academic challenges.

Working quickly, David and Jodi, who did not want to leave Sderot without giving something back, arranged for bags of toys to be purchased and delivered to the Reut-Sderot Association. After the visit David reflected "The main reason for the donation came after speaking with our guide Shahar. I asked him what would make a difference to the kids' lives, bring them joy and what they can



Jodi Bloom and David Feuerstein

benefit from. The children are the future. After seeing their faces in the pictures, it brought a feeling of gratification and joy to us as well."

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BUFFALO JEWISH FEDERATION

Jim Biltekoff Receives Cohn Community Impact Award

Buffalo Jewish Federation is pleased to present the **Ann Holland Cohn Community Impact Award to James Biltekoff**. Established in 2017, the Cohn Award celebrates a person, couple or family who leads boldly and with determination and has made a significant impact in the greater Buffalo community. Ann Holland Cohn was a mentor to many and an extraordinary leader in the Jewish Community. She was the ultimate role model, and bestowing this award in her name is another way to keep her memory and spirit alive.

James (Jim) Biltekoff graduated from Nichols School, Yale and Harvard Business School. He returned to Buffalo and joined his family business, Bison Foods Company, makers of Bison cottage



Jim Biltekoff

up companies and turnaround situations in the United States and Canada as owner or CEO, including Elan Foods, Inc., Astro Dairy Products Ltd., and Alfresh Beverages Canada Corp.

Jim has served on the Boards of the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, and the Buffalo Jewish Federation. At Federation, he advocated and helped to sponsor Federation's Human Capital Fund, for investment in volunteer and staff development, Board diversity, and young leadership development.

Jim is also Director Emeritus and past Chair of Hauptman-Woodward Institute, and served on the boards of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Shaw Festival, the Buffalo chapter of AIPAC, and the Buffalo Convention Center Management Corporation.

In both his commercial and not-for-profit activities, Jim has made a profound impact in the areas of strategy, operations, finance, and

governance, never afraid to ask hard questions and push each venture to excel. Previous Cohn awardee Lana Benatovich, said of Jim: "He is an extraordinary leader who truly does not seek recognition for the many efforts he makes to meet the goals and needs, not only of our Jewish Federation, but of many other vital WNY organizations, as well. We are so fortunate that Jim and his wife Joanne are here in Buffalo and quietly and effectively support programs, people and progress every day."

The Biltekoffs spend their time in Buffalo and Naples, Florida. They have two children, Katy, a middle-school science teacher living in Oregon, and Leslie, who works for Lusha, an Israeli tech company, and four grandchildren, Max, Isaac, Ella, and Nate.

cheese, yogurt, and Chip Dip. Over the next 25 years, Jim led a number of start-

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Rabbi Sara Rich Receives Kantor Professional Award

Federation will also present the **Judith & Daniel Kantor Professional Service Award to Rabbi Sara Rich**, Executive Director of Hillel at Buffalo. The Kantor Award is bestowed upon a current Jewish professional working in Jewish Buffalo, who exemplifies the highest level of dedication to their agency or organization and helps to strengthen the vibrancy and health of Jewish Buffalo.

Sara has led the rejuvenation of Hillel at Buffalo over the past 6 years. During her tenure at Hillel, Sara has brought new opportunities for Jewish learning, travel, career development, and community networking to hundreds of students each year. She handled the challenges of working with college students remotely during the pandemic with excellence and grace. Sara also spearheaded an incredible 75th Anniversary event



Rabbi Sara Rich

last spring celebrating the rich history of the organization. Prior to joining the staff in 2017, Sara was the Director of Education at the Hillel of Princeton University for six years. In that role, she worked with students on leadership development and community-building, and taught numerous classes at the Hillel in topics such as Jewish

Biomedical Ethics and Judaism 101. Sara currently serves on Hillel International's Directors Cabinet

Sara was ordained in 2011 from the New York campus of the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion. She subsequently earned a Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education in 2015 from Yeshiva University and completed Hillel International's Weinberg Accelerate executive training program in 2016.

Sara earned a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Maryland, College Park and an M.A. in Hebrew Literature from HUC-JIR. Since moving to Buffalo, she has gotten involved in the local community, serving as the Chair of the Buffalo Board of Rabbis and Cantors and the Secretary of the Board of the JCC of Greater Buffalo. Sara resides in Williamsville with her husband, Ezra, and their daughters, Miriam, Sivan and Naomi.

Howard Rosenhoch Receives FJP Endowment Leadership Award

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies will award its 2022 Endowment Leadership Award to Howard Rosenhoch December 7 in recognition of his commitment to LIFE & LEGACY® at Buffalo as well his long-standing efforts to strengthen and support Jewish Buffalo. The Endowment Leadership Award is the Foundation's highest honor.

Through LIFE & LEGACY® at Buffalo, Howard is supporting three participating agencies and organizations to help build their endowments, ensure their sustainability, and more broadly strengthen the Buffalo Jewish community for generations to come. Howard's legacy gift will benefit the Buffalo Jewish Federation, Kadimah Scholars, and Temple Beth Zion so they endure.

Born and raised in Manhattan, Howard moved to Buffalo, earning his bachelor's and law degrees at the University of Buffalo. It was during his time as an undergrad at UB that Howard met Valerie, his wife of 47 years. They remained in their adopted City of Buffalo, enjoying the close-knit community, and raising their sons Alan and David while Howard pursued a career in law.

Howard and Valerie were inspired to connect with Jewish Buffalo by international and community events, particularly Israel's



The Rosenhoch Family: Valerie (z"l), Howard, David, Gabby and Alan

successful hostage rescue mission in Entebbe, Uganda as well as the community's Israel Expo, both occurring in 1976. These events led Howard and Valerie to pursue a personal connection to Israel, visiting together six times starting in 1979 including three trips with their children.

Since Valerie's untimely passing in 2018 from a lengthy illness, Howard has traveled to Israel twice more, once in 2018, and again in 2019 as part of the Western Galilee Partnership Discovery Trip with his partner, Jody Goldstein, who serves as one of Federation's Partnership leaders.

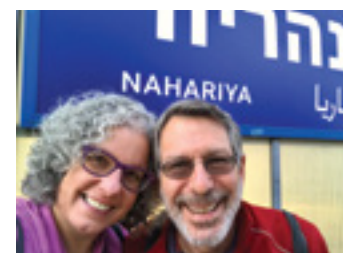
Howard has been active at Hillel of Buffalo where he served as President in the late 1990's; Kadimah where he and Valerie were Capital Campaign ambassadors and Valerie served on the Board; Temple Beth Zion, where Howard served as President from 2010-2012; and Buffalo Jewish Federation where he was President from 2015-2016, and currently serves as Chair of its Life & Legacy Team.

Howard explains why he has named Kadimah, TBZ and

Federation as recipients of his and Valerie's legacy: "Valerie's and my son, Alan, graduated from Kadimah, served as President, and continues to sit on the Board. I see the Kadimah Scholars program and its innovative partnership with Park School, as an integral part of our community's Jewish education infrastructure. For decades, Temple Beth Zion, where our son, David, who has Down Syndrome, became Bar Mitzvah and graduated from and served as a *Madrich* and teacher's aide in the religious and pre-schools for many years, has been my family's Jewish spiritual home and source of close social connections. Further, Buffalo Jewish Federation is the overarching pillar of the structure of Jewish Buffalo; it is the engine that makes everything Jewish Buffalo go!"

Over time, as Howard and Valerie became involved in the Buffalo Jewish community, they saw various agencies and organizations struggle financially and recognized the way to positively impact them: through legacy giving. "Valerie's

and my life experiences were Jewish-centric, and philanthropy followed," Howard explains. "Philanthropy, especially legacy or planned giving, makes a lasting impact that helps ensure the strength and continuity of the organizations – and the community – that we love."



Jody and Howard in Nahariya, 2019

Howard continues the focus he and Valerie developed together, supporting the Buffalo Jewish community in words and in deeds: "What better way to teach children than by doing; by serving as an example and a role model. Being actively engaged in Jewish Buffalo, and supporting foundational agencies and organizations of the community, involves during-life efforts and after-life commitments."

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Foundation Endowment Leadership Award
Howard Rosenhoch

The Ann Holland Cohn Community Leadership Award
Jim Biltekoff

The Judith & Daniel Kantor Professional Service Award
Rabbi Sara Rich

Annual Business Meetings & Election of Officers



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BUFFALO ISRAEL EXPERIENCE 2

More than 50 members of Jewish Buffalo had the fortune to visit Israel as participants on Buffalo Jewish Federation's Buffalo Israel Experience (BIE) 2. The following are reflections, impressions and photos from this very meaningful journey.

BUFFALO
ISRAEL
EXPERIENCE
OCTOBER 2022



Ezra N. Rich

At the start of the Torah portion *Lech Lechah*, we have the first verse connecting the Jewish people to the land of Israel: "G-d said to Avram (this is before he is given the name Abraham), 'Go forth and from your native land and your father's house to the land that I will show you'" (Gen. 12.1). There are strong connections between people and places, and this is the foundation of our connection to the Holy Land that has spanned thousands of years and remained a source of hope in the face of countless hardships over the centuries.

At the close of Yom Kippur, we prayed for "Next year in Jerusalem" and BIE travelers were blessed to find ourselves at the *Kotel* (Western Wall) a few weeks later. It was exhilarating to shop for Shabbat treats at *Machane Yehuda*, where merchants completed the transactions with a warm "Shabbat Shalom!" It was clearly a place where Jews were in the majority, where Jewish culture is the dominant culture.

The special relationship between the Jewish people and the land of Israel was certainly felt by participants on the BIE. It was especially special as the group was comprised of members from across our local Jewish community and included a number who were visiting Israel for the first time. Others had not been to Israel in decades. With the State of Israel on the cusp of her 75th birthday this spring, it was a wonderful glimpse into the rebirth, vibrancy, and tapestry of this modern nation built upon our sacred past. "I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to travel to Israel for the first time through the Buffalo Israel Experience," noted Mel LeMay, who visited Israel for the first time on

BIE and was on the trip with their wife, Sara Weinstein. "Visiting Israel affirmed my Jewish identity in ways I didn't know I needed, and helped me feel a visceral connection with the Jewish people, past, present, and future."

"The BIE meant so many things to me. The physical beauty of Israel and learning the history from our amazing tour guides was very meaningful," said Heidi Yellen, who was on BIE with her husband, Buffalo Jewish Federation President Shelly Yellen, her mother, Mrs. Florence Fox, and her sister, Brenda Fox. "I met more of my neighbors in one week than I did in the past 10 years living in East Amherst," reflected Andy Schneider, who came to Israel for the first time on BIE with his wife, Charlene Celano. "We plan to maintain the connections now that we are back. Our tour guide thought we were a special friendly tight knit group. I think Buffalo and Israelis share that trait. Hope to find a way to return sooner than later. What a great experience!"

From my perspective, the trip was a vivid reminder of the beautiful tapestry of the Jewish people—spanning Ashkenazim and Sefardim, new *Olim* (Israeli citizens) and native *Sabras* (Israelis)—and how our internal diversity is a strength. While the Jewish people in the land of Israel began with Avraham thousands of years ago, we are blessed to be able to play a role in the continuing history of our people this year and for many years to come.





REMEMBERING Leslie Shuman Kramer z"l

The original Buffalo Israel Experience (BIE) in 2018 was one of the many transformative initiatives spearheaded by community leader Leslie Shuman Kramer z"l. Our involvement in the P2G Partnership consortium in the Western Galilee was also initiated by Leslie after she and her husband Jim visited their daughter Leah who was studying in Israel as a High School student.

When the BIE visited the Partnership Center in Nahariya, time was set aside to share reflections and remembrances of our dear friend. Brenda Feldstein, Shelly Yellen, Pam Snyder, Laurie Sadler, Miriam Abramovich and Noa Kali (a friend of Leslie's through Partnership) each shared beautiful sentiments, stories and inspirations from Leslie's life. What followed was a ceremonial tree planting on the grounds of the Center. A beautiful olive tree will grow and thrive; it will provide shade and food, and a contemplative place for travelers to feel connected and close to our friend.



Wendy Weisbrot

My husband Aaron and I returned from BIE with overflowing emotions and our hearts filled with gratitude and joy to be part of this life changing experience. This was Aaron's first trip to Israel, and it had been over three decades since I was there. To find ourselves at the *Kotel* less than a few hours after we landed in Tel Aviv set the tone for an experience that was filled with the immeasurable impact of being immersed into the sights, sensations, and soul of our beloved Israel. Aaron shared with me

that his moment at the *Kotel* reignited his deep bond to his Jewish identity--a moment that will stay forever in his heart and soul.

Experiencing the heart of our vibrant culture at the *Machane Yehuda* Market in Jerusalem before Shabbat and hearing the effortless, natural, and heartfelt "Shabbat Shalom" from the many merchants gave us a unique sense of comfort and pride in being Jewish that can only be felt by being in Israel – by being part of the majority. To be fully immersed in the prayers and celebration of Shabbat at the Egalitarian *Kotel* with our beautiful and diverse group of 50 moved me to tears; and was particularly poignant as we simultaneously overheard Christian prayer and the Muslim call to evening prayer in the Old City. Visiting the Erez Crossing point in Gaza and having honest conversations with the residents of a beautiful Moshav that borders Gaza shed light on the complexities of this region. The dedication of this community to live their lives with meaning and promote

hope and peace, while danger always looms in the background, left us speechless, in awe, and inspired by their dedication and love of their homeland, our homeland.

Truly, what made all of our experiences during BIE so meaningful and precious was having our beautiful community of 50 dear friends surrounding us. The MANY falafels and dozens of Marzipan chocolate rugelach that everyone indulged in; the exhilaration, laughter, tears, and pure joy that we shared together was a simply magnificent and heartfelt bonding experience that is now part of our core. We look forward to continuing these friendships, reminiscing about BIE, and taking these experiences forward. As one of our phenomenal guides Shira would lovingly say, "Happy days!" Happy days, indeed, *chaverim*!



GET YOUR HANUKKAH ON!

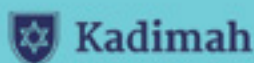
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022 | 4:30 - 6:30 PM
STO LAT BAR EVENT SPACE
4475 Transit Road | Williamsville

(Next door to Chrusciki Bakery, Simply Pierogi, and Sto Lat Bar in the Eastern Hills Mall)

MAKE A BEAUTIFUL TILE & GLASS MOSAIC MENORAH TO
LIGHT UP YOUR HOME AND THE WORLD.
ENJOY DELECTABLE GLOW IN THE DARK DONUTS, SPARKLY
ADULT COCKTAILS AND GLOW IN THE DARK DRINKS FOR KIDS.
DANCE PARTY WITH DJ GREG CYPIN.
AND MORE!



RSVP: [BIT.LY/GETYOURHANUKKAHON](https://bit.ly/getyourhanukkahon)



in partnership with
Jewish Federations of
North America

Engaging in Racial Justice with Community Partners

BY RACHEL BEERMAN

Members of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) Executive Committee and Racial Justice Subcommittee had the honor of being in attendance at the Buffalo Branch NAACP 2022 Medgar Evers Awards Dinner on October 22. It was a powerful evening which included a meaningful acknowledgement of the families of those lost in the Tops shooting on May 14 and a thought-provoking keynote speaker presentation by acclaimed national journalist Roland S. Martin.

Martin encouraged those in attendance to be reflective of their actions and look for ways to act to help move our society to be more equitable for all. This certainly resonated, as the recent 2022 JCRC survey identified racial justice as a major priority for our Buffalo community. Corey Auerbach, chair of the Racial Justice Subcommittee and member of the Executive Committee of the JCRC captured the spirit of the evening when he said, "Being here together in support of the NAACP reinforces the JCRC's dedication to helping create a more civil and just society for all."



Pulling the Race Card event

During the program, multiple members of the Jewish community were acknowledged for their dedication to helping create a more civil society. Nina Lukin, former Chair of the JCRC and member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board was publicly acknowledged for her support of the NAACP. In addition, Samantha White, a co-chair of the Minority Bar Association of Western New York Criminal Justice Task Force and board member at Temple Beth Zion,



NAACP dinner picture: top row l-r: Corey Auerbach, Deborah Goldman, Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein, Rachel Beerman, Grant Golden and Daniel Brink-Washington. Bottom row l-r: Meg Auerbach, Molly Lennon, Adam Fogel, Nina Lukin and Elliot Gabelnick

accepted the Daniel Acker Community Service Award on behalf of the WNY Minority Bar Association Task Force. (Read more about Sam on page 14.) The Buffalo Jewish Federation was also acknowledged as a 2022 Honorary Dinner Chairperson for their support.

In addition to showing support and participating in the NAACP dinner, the JCRC was also honored to be a cosponsor of the League of Women's Voters "Pulling the Race Card" event, on October, 26 at the SANYS (Self Advocacy Association of New York) Western New York headquarters on Broadway. The two sisters who created the "Pulling the Race Card," Kezia Pearson and Sarah Pearson-Collins, moderated the program. With nearly 70 people in attendance both virtually and in person, it was a powerful evening where participants sat at tables engaged in meaningful, and at times uncomfortable, conversations around questions related to race and identity here in the United States. As one participant said "I feel that if you're not willing to have uncomfortable conversations, that



JCRC at Pulling the Race Card event

you're not willing to change."

In her own experience at a previous "Pulling the Race Card" event, Nina

Lukin, who helped organize the event, talked about her group's response to the prompt "Do most people prefer to be white and poor or Black and middle class?" She said that it was an uncomfortable but necessary conversation as it gave space, as Nina said, to talk about how "racism is not just hard to talk about. It also goes unnoticed or unrecognized by white people."

Nina Lukin further reflected: "I worked with the Jewish Federation to establish the JCRC to promote civil and just conversations and to build bridges across our communities by offering awareness, education, advocacy. Programs like "Pulling the Race Card" are important tools for the JCRC to endorse, participate in, and plan along with our religious, municipal, educational, and non-profit partners. Where else would you see a High School Principal, Baptist Pastor, NAACP Civic Engagement committee member, Self-Advocacy President, Ahmadiyya Muslim, JCC Director, and a college Provost gather to talk about race?"

Rachel Beerman is JCRC Manager at Buffalo Jewish Federation.

HAPPY CHANUKAH!

As we prepare to light the first candle, may the lights shine brightly in the darkness, reminding us that all it takes is one flame to dispel the darkness of despair, the darkness of hatred, the darkness of injustice, evil, violence - any type of injustice.

Each of us has the ability to be that 'flame' to dispel the darkness in our world, kindling the flames of those around us so this world will be a brighter place for all.

Temple Beth Zion wishes all of you a "Chag Urim Sameach" - A light-filled and Happy Chanukah!

Rabbi Brent Gutmann, Senior Rabbi
Ken Polk, President



Mazel Tov
Jonah Teva Nisengard
On Your
Bar Mitzvah
 4 Cheshvan / October 29, 2022
and
Yasher Koach
For your Hard Work and Commitment



We Love You So Very Much
Sabah and Safta

Mazel Tov



to
RABBI SARA RICH
 on being lauded with
 Buffalo Jewish Federation's
 Kantor Professional
 Service Award
 and
EZRA RICH
 on being named a
 Buffalo Business First
 40 Under 40!



HANUKKAH in 716



Below are many of the Hanukkah events in Buffalo (those that we have when we went to press this month). Please check with each organization for details.

December 6
TEMPLE BETH TZEDEK
 Women's Network Hanukkah party
 11:30 a.m.
 Latke lunch lunch \$20
 1641 North Forest Rd., Williamsville
RSVP Linda Steinhorn - 716-634-6330

December 8
CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE
 Jewish Women's Circle
 7:30 p.m.
 Celebrate the Miracle of Oil
 Create an oil bottle, enjoy latkes
 757 Hopkins Rd., Williamsville
RSVP at jewishbuffalo.com
or call 716-639-7600

December 11
GET YOUR HANUKKAH ON
PJ Library & PJ Our Way
 4:30- 6:30 p.m.
 Family fun at Sto Lat Bar Event Space
 (see page 10)
 4475 Transit Rd, Williamsville

JRT HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER
 5:00-8:00 p.m.
 2640 North Forest, Getzville
RSVP to ayellen@jcbbuffalo.org

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM
 Hanukkah Candle Lighting via Zoom
 6:00 p.m.
Use this link:
us02web.zoom.us/j/6r9DwsHtD6SNGWrONZ_MS700G5adzI

December 12
CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE
 Kosher Mini Chefs for Kids 3-12
 4:30- 5:30 p.m.
 \$ 10 per child
 757 Hopkins Rd., Williamsville
Questions? Call Rabbi Laizer Labkovski at 716-639-7600

December 17
NCJ HANUKKAH PARTY
 8:00- 11:00 p.m.
RSVP to 716-463-5061 or
Mike@buffalojewishfederation.org



December 17
TEMPLE BETH TZEDEK
 Havdalah, Hanukkah & Hash Browns
 5:00-6:30 p.m.
 1641 North Forest Rd., Williamsville

December 18
THE COMMUNITY RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
 Student Hanukah Celebration
 9:00 -11:30 a.m.
 4660 Sheridan Drive, Williamsville

CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE
 Tie Dye Chanukah
 For children ages 5-13
 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
 \$10 per child/Free for Chai Hebrew
 School students
 757 Hopkins Rd, Williamsville
RSVP at jewishbuffalo.com
or call 716-639-7600

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
 Here Comes Hanukkah Family event
 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
 11:30 a.m. Children's film
 1:00-2:00 p.m. crafts & food
 2:30 p.m. Concert with Ithaca Klezmer Quartet (see page 13)
 2640 North Forest Rd., Getzville

BUFFALO JEWISH TEEN INITIATIVE
 Bright Night on Ice Hanukkah Party
 4:00-6:00 p.m.
 Northtowns Ice Center
 Join us for a fun-filled evening of skating and dinner with friends!
 Cost: \$18 and a non-perishable item to donate
Register at: bit.ly/BRIGHTNIGHTONICE

CHABAD OF BUFFALO
 Chabad Grand Menorah Lighting
 5:00 p.m.
 Tops International Parking Lot, Maple Rd., Williamsville
 Latkes, donuts, kids prizes and more
For more information, call 716-688-1642

December 18
CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE
 Community Chanukah Party with Buffalo Bills
 5:00- 7:00 p.m.
 Adults \$13/ Children \$7
 757 Hopkins Rd, Williamsville
RSVP at jewishbuffalo.com
or call 716-639-7600

December 20
JEWISH DISCOVERY CENTER
 Chanukah Family Festival
 5:30 p.m.
 Chocolate gelt drop & parachute glowing menorahs
 831 Maple Rd., Williamsville

CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE
 Light Wars- Teen Chanukah Party
 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
 757 Hopkins Rd, Williamsville
RSVP at jewishbuffalo.com
or call 716-639-7600

December 23
CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM
 Hanukkah in the Upside Down World of Chelm
 7:00 p.m.
 4660 Sheridan Dr. or via Boxcast, Facebook or YouTube
 Followed by a festive Oneg Shabbat & Latke Bar
RSVP by 12/16/22
to joanne.marquisee@gmail.com



JCC Cultural Arts

Hanukkah Celebrations

In preparation for Hanukkah, the JCC is hosting its first *Sip and Pour Candle Workshop* on December 15 from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Benderson Family Building. In conjunction with The Drunkin Candle Shop, participants will get to make and take 2 candles from a choice of 6 different scents. Wine bingo will be played to win prizes while candles solidify and light snacks will be served. Registration required by December 1. JCC member \$45 | Guests \$60.



Ithaca Klezmer Quartet

After a triumphant Buffalo debut at Kleinhans Music Hall, the Ithaca Klezmer Quartet returns for a Hanukkah concert, Sunday, December 18th in the Maxine and Robert Seller Theater at 2:00 p.m. Featuring Yiddish Hanukkah classics, soulful Hasidic Hanukkah melodies, klezmer dance tunes, and some Hebrew favorites, this is the best way to ring in the first night.

Led by Buffalo native David Zakalik (piano/accordion), the quartet features Ithaca-based *Klezmorim* Jennie Lavine (clarinet), Ryan Zewel (trombone/tuba), and Greg Ezra (drums). These four *Klezmorim* have been playing traditional Ashkenazic music (Klezmer) together for over a decade, and are thrilled to be returning to Buffalo to celebrate the Festival of Lights. Following the concert, enjoy Hanukkah

treats. This event is free and open to the community with a suggested donation of \$10. Registration is required at www.jccbuffalo.org.

Continuing the Holiday Celebration, on Tuesday, December 20, from 7-8:30 p.m., the JCC and Congregation Beth Abraham (celebrating its centennial year) present a multi-media program, **“They Don’t Write em’ Like That Anymore — the Great Jewish Song Lyricists of the 20th Century”**, conceived by Marty Kerker. Happening at the JCC Benderson Family Building in the Seller Theater, the program spans the American musical eras from Tin Pan Alley through rock and roll and will include biographical information interspersed with live musical performances by jazz vocalist Barbara Levy Daniels. Songs by the likes of Ira Gershwin, Lorenz Hart, Gus Kahn, Sam Lewis, Dorothy Fields, Hal David, Gerry Goffin, and Bob Dylan will be projected on a screen for you to be able to sing and tap along to. Hanukkah-themed reception to follow! This event is free and open to the community with a suggested donation of \$10. Registration is required at www.jccbuffalo.org.

JCC Studio Art Students Exhibit



The JCC Adult Studio in Art Class is excited to once again have an exhibit of their work in the Bunis Family Art Gallery at the Benderson Family Building. The once-annual exhibit took a few years off during the pandemic and is now back with new pieces from past and current students. The exhibit will be on display in the gallery through the end of December, with an artist reception which is free and open to the public on Tuesday, December 6 from 5-7 p.m. in the Lippman Lounge on the second floor of the Benderson Building. Meet the artists, tour the gallery, and enjoy light refreshments.

CEPA: Photos & the Holocaust



Faye Schulman practicing with a rifle as a member of the partisan Resistance in Eastern Poland in 1943. Thousands of the fighters were, like her, Jews. “Jews did not go like sheep to the slaughter,” she said. “I was a photographer. I have pictures. I have proof.”

Photography and the Holocaust, Then and Now

11 Botsford Place (off of Hertel, between Elmwood and Delaware)
December 1 5-8:00 p.m.

Join CEPA Gallery at Mirabo Press on December 1 for a fundraiser supporting *Photography and the Holocaust, Then and Now*, a major exhibition and community outreach project under development. *Photography & the Holocaust* will investigate tribalism—the inability of many to accept those who are different from themselves—its links to antisemitism and other forms of racism, and how that mindset results in the oppression and violence we consistently witness.

This comprehensive exhibition will feature over 15 contemporary artists whose practice incorporates new and reimagined works that grapple with the Holocaust and its enduring impact today. The project will include a virtual walkthrough and online community gallery, public art installations, a virtual and live speaker

series, community conversations, youth and adult workshops, and community programming, as well as a virtual Holocaust timeline and publication with essays by historians and scholars.

You’re invited to preview some of the works that will be included and to learn more about the many partners and array of community outreach activities being planned. Meet and hear from Claire Leggett, CEPA’s Acting Executive Director; Robert Hirsch, project curator and producer; Robert Fleming, Mirabo co-founder; and Noah Breuer, new UB art professor and featured project artist.

You are invited to join in supporting this project. An anonymous donor will be matching all gifts up to \$5,000! While you’re at Mirabo, double your experience and enjoy the 2022 *Screenprint Biennial* currently on display. **For more information call: 716-856-2717**

Kol HaKavod: Well Done!

Anna Kaplan, Ezra Rich and Alan Rosenhoch: 40 Under 40

Three prominent members of Jewish Buffalo, **Anna Kaplan**, **Ezra Rich** and **Alan Rosenhoch**, were celebrated November 10 as members of the *Buffalo Business First* 31st class of 40 Under 40. This unique distinction is conferred annually on those who are making their voices heard in their workplaces and the community. Chosen from over 250 nominations, Anna, Ezra and Alan lead with passion and are the ideal representatives of this outstanding group of young professionals.



Anna Kaplan, a native Buffalonian, is the Executive Director of Frank Lloyd Wright's Graycliff Conservancy. She grew up in the Elmwood Village and is a proud City Honors alumna. Her family was part of the Temple Beth Am community (now Congregation Shir Shalom) where she became a Bat Mitzvah and was later confirmed. Anna also spent a few summers of her childhood at Camp Lakeland.

With her education – a dual bachelor's degree in history of art and architecture from Brown University, and a master's degree in history of decorative arts, design history, and material culture from Bard – Anna's passion for her work at Graycliff was immediate. She fell in love with the site, and knew it as her true respite at the pandemic's height. Anna became Graycliff's Executive Director in December 2019, a few months before she would have to divert their standard operations due to the pandemic. Though the pandemic brought difficulty, she believes the opportunity found her. With Kaplan's team, the Graycliff Conservancy aims to achieve all its original preservation and restoration goals, returning the houses and grounds to their original condition when built in 1931.



Ezra Rich is the Marketing Communications Manager at Uniland Development Company. While not a Buffalo native, Ezra exudes Buffalove and pride. He and his wife Rabbi Sara Rich moved to Western New York in June 2017 for Sara's position as Hillel of Buffalo's Executive Director; they currently reside in Williamsville with their three daughters. Hailing from Connecticut, Ezra grew up embraced by the Jewish community and has now embraced his new Jewish Buffalo. His passion for Judaism pours into his volunteer work as member of Federation's Board of Governors where he also cochairs the Overseas Allocation Task Force and serves on Federation's Life and Legacy team; he is also a board member at Temple Beth Tzedek and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Hebrew Benevolent Loan Association of Western New York.



Alan Rosenhoch is the Managing Director for Endeavor Western NY, a position he's held since April of this year. Prior to Endeavor, Alan was a key leader at Invest Buffalo Niagara. Endeavor is leading the high-impact entrepreneurship movement around the world with a presence in markets across Latin America, Asia, Africa, Middle East, Europe and the United States. Established in 1997, Endeavor supports over 1,800 high-impact entrepreneurs at the "scale-up" stage, offering them a best-in-class seal of approval, an unrivaled personal and professional network, frictionless co-investment capital, and peer-to-peer idea exchange in a global setting.

A native of Buffalo, Alan returned to his hometown nearly a decade ago and currently resides in Buffalo with his wife Gabby and their two daughters. He channels his passion not only in his work, but also to the causes he takes up into effective action and leadership. Alan has been a passionate advocate and leader of the Kadimah Academy, serving as President in 2017-2019, is devoted to leadership and hands on action to SABAH, serves on the Board of Trustees with the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, and has continued to be involved in a project-based leadership capacity with Nickel City Jews



Samantha White

Attorney and community activist **Samantha (Sam) White** recently received the Root/Stimson Award from the New York State Bar Association in honor of Elihu Root and Henry L. Stimson, whose careers personified the profession's commitment to public service in recognition of outstanding volunteer service to the community which has reflected honor on the legal profession. She received her J. D. from the University at Buffalo School of Law and her B.A. in Political Science from the University of Rochester.

Sam is committed to a lifestyle of service. She serves as VP of her block club on the East Side of Buffalo and manages the block club's community garden. She also chairs the East Side Garden Walk (ESGW) and she is a vocal advocate for the revitalization of the East Side of Buffalo. One effort resulted in a \$743,000 grant to repair the streetscape surrounding the Freedom Wall. Additionally, Sam founded the ESGW Children's Garden Festival, a free festival serving the children of the East Side of Buffalo. She can also regularly be found gathering and distributing resources to those in need throughout the City of Buffalo. Sam also recently served on the Buffalo 5/14 Survivors Fund Steering Committee helping to identify and distribute donations to victims and survivors of the May 14, 2022 Tops racist massacre.

Sam's community service has been recognized by the Minority Bar Foundation, Bar Association of Erie County, Women's Bar Association of the State of New York WNY, Grassroots Gardens WNY, as well as Buffalo Common Council members and State Sen. Timothy Kennedy



Seth Blum

Last semester **Seth Blum**, a UB MBA student, won the people's choice award for his company, Networthy, through UB's highly competitive and prestigious Henry A. Panasci Technology Entrepreneurship competition. He was also named a fellow for the Western New York Prosperity Fellowship for the 2022 - 2023 academic year. Supported by the Prentice Family Foundation, this highly regarded fellowship is comprised of University at Buffalo and Canisius College students committed to contributing to the WNY region's economic vitality.

This semester, he was recognized as one of *Buffalo Business First's* annual Buffalo Inno 5 Under 25, which finds a new crop of young adults working vigorously on their startup companies. Seth entered UB's School of Management's MBA program when he was 22. Most of his master's degree counterparts were smart kids. Few of them understood personal finances. Those two experiences formed the philosophical basis for Blum's start, NetWorthy, a web-based platform that aims to support young adults as they balance their personal goals and financial needs.



Shelley Drake

Shelley Cole Drake was recently honored by the Buffalo History Museum with its Red Jacket Award, which recognizes individuals for their unbroken devotion to the civic progress of Western New York. The tradition of the Red Jacket Award is inspired by the imperative to continue acknowledging individuals who, through continued and devoted service, strive to support the connections in our region with our heritage. Shelley recently retired as M&T Regional President and M & T Charitable Foundation President.

Over the decades, Shelley has been active on the boards of many notable organization in Western New York, including chairing the Board of Trustees at The Burchfield-Penney Art Center, Buffalo Seminary, the Board of Regents at Canisius College, and the Sister's Hospital Foundation Board. She is also a past board member of Maria M. Love Convalescent Fund, Bornhava, Ronald McDonald House, CatholicHealth, and the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies. In recognition of her exemplary leadership and service to the Buffalo community, Shelley has received numerous awards including an honorary degree from Canisius College.



Michael Weiner

Michael Weiner, President and CEO of United Way of Buffalo & Erie County since 2009, will retire this month. Michael came to Buffalo to attend the University at Buffalo where he earned his Bachelors in Psychology and Master's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling and Business Administration.

Michael is a proven change leader, relationship builder and influence manager. During his tenure, the agency has grown its endowment from \$900,000 to \$18 million, while shifting its community funding model to focus on programs in three core areas. Michael is also credited with helping to diversify funding streams coming into the agency, including growing government and foundation grants and new fundraising programs beyond traditional workplace giving campaigns.

This fall, Michael joined other volunteers as part of a group of daredevils who are raising funds for United Way and John R. Oishei Children's Hospital through the urban rappelling "Over the Edge" fundraising challenge. Michael and the other fundraisers rappelled down 21 stories at One M&T Plaza, exceeding his fundraising goal, and continuing to support the work of United Way and Oishei Children's Hospital.



Hadar Borden

Hadar Borden, director of the University at Buffalo's Blackstone LaunchPad, recently won a prestigious InfoTech WNY's BETAS Award for Innovative Educator. InfoTech WNY is a rapidly growing consortium of multi-sized software, hardware, telecommunications companies, government and economic agencies, and educational institutions. The purpose of the organization is to address various industry-specific issues such as workforce availability, industry image, technology transfer, networking, access to financing, and attracting new business to the region.

Blackstone LaunchPad, powered by Techstars, is a campus-based entrepreneurship program. Hadar serves as the director of the WNY Prosperity Fellowship Program, a leadership development program that seeks to recruit and retain entrepreneurial-minded students to contribute to economic development in WNY. A mother of two sons, Hadar is married to David Borden and resides in Amherst. She serves on the Buffalo Jewish Federation board; contributes to LiNK Jewish Buffalo; is a member of the board of Explore Buffalo, The Tool Library, and was previously recognized by *Buffalo Business First* as of Forty under 40 leader.

Happy Hanukkah

From Your Friends at
THE JEWISH JOURNAL
A publication of The Buffalo Jewish Federation



Temple Beth Tzedek Lights Up for Hanukkah

Cantor Mark Spindler and Cantorial Intern Zahava Fried will entertain and lead a Hanukkah sing along at the TBT Women's Network Hanukkah Party, Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 11:30 a.m. *RSVP to Linda Steinhorn at 716-796-7941.* The Judaica Shop will also be open that morning. Please come with a wrapped pair of mittens or gloves or a scarf to be donated to those in need in our community.

Families are invited to TBT's second annual Havdalah, Hanukkah & Hash Browns (Latkes) on Saturday night, December 17 at 5:00 p.m. Please dress in PJs and enjoy songs, food, crafts and light! TBT's Keshet Inclusion Committee will be hosting its Outstretched Arm Hanukkah 2022 Celebration on Sunday, December 18 at 10:30 a.m. and the TBT Men's Club will be hosting a fun dinner on December 25.

For more information, please visit btzbuffalo.org.



Celebrating Hanukkah at TBT

KOT Spotlight: Veteran Gabe Ferber

Honoring veterans for their service to our country has always been important to Kehillat Ohr Tzion (KOT) member, Gabe Ferber. Since 2004, Gabe has planned a special Shabbat service on or near Veteran's Day. Members of the Jewish community who served in any branch of the military are invited to participate in this Shabbat service.

Over the years, this celebration expanded to honor the children of veterans. At each Veteran's Shabbat, Gabe reads the names of each veteran, the branch of the military in which the veteran served, and their relationship to the member of KOT. Following the Shabbat service, Gabe and his wife Andrea always sponsored an elaborate sit-down Kiddush. Although the Ferbers were not able to attend this year, the tradition they started is now a part of



the fabric of KOT. Kehillat Ohr Tzion members are so appreciative of Gabe's efforts all these years to remember and honor our veterans.

SAVE THE DATE



NEON LIGHT PARTY

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 | 8 - 11 PM



From our families
to yours,
we wish you a
Hanukkah filled
with light and joy.

Hanukkah Sameach!



FOUNDATION
FOR JEWISH
PHILANTHROPIES
Giving. Growing. Together.



Year-End Tax Planning with Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies



As the year draws to a close, the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies shares some advice: Support your favorite charitable causes by donating appreciated stock; doing so may optimize your year-end donations and tax savings:

- The charity will benefit financially
- You may minimize your tax liability and avoid capital gains
- The cost basis for future purchases of the stock will be at the new stock purchase price

This benefit does not exist with charitable donations made with cash or credit.

Consider Qualified Charitable Distributions if you're 72

When you reach age 72, you must begin taking a required minimum distribution (RMD) annually from your IRAs. If you're not itemizing your deductions and you're at RMD age, you may want to donate your RMD to a qualified charity through a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). It'll satisfy your RMD and, up to \$100,000 annually, won't count as taxable income.

The Bottom Line: You may reduce your taxable gains by an amount that's greater than your charitable donation resulting in a lower tax obligation while supporting one or more charitable causes.

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies can help you meet your philanthropic goals while saving on your income taxes. Call us a 716.204.1133 to discuss.

Irv Levy

Executive Director
irv@jewishphilanthropies.org

Lorne Steinhart

Senior Manager, Client Relations
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Rededicating the Ohel

BY CHARLOTTE GENDLER

The 13th day of Cheshvan (November 7 for the current year) marks the annual Yahrzeit remembrance of Rabbi Joseph Rabinowitz (z"l), who is buried in the B'nai Israel Cemetery on Pine Ridge Heritage Boulevard. However, this year, the celebrants began gathering a day earlier to recognize the completed renovation of the Ohel, a unique brick structure over the Rabbi's gravesite, built as an indication of the esteem and honor in which he was held.

It is estimated that the Ohel was erected about 1920. The Ohel was closed during much of this summer while undergoing major changes to enlarge the structure and to make it more accessible for the Cohanim who are not permitted to enter a cemetery. The architect, Robert Kasprzak, designed fencing according to *Halachah* to provide a separate entrance from the cemetery proper.

On Sunday, November 6, our community along with followers of the Rabbis from around the country gathered for a short dedication ceremony. Jonathan Schechter, President-elect of the Cemetery Corporation introduced Federation President Shelly Yellen who brought greetings from our community and welcomed visitors to the newly restored Ohel. Rabbi Daniel Shuman shared family memories of his grandparents who lived and prayed in the same shtetl alongside the late Rabbi Rabinowitz. And Matisyahu Swerdloff, a major fundraiser for the project, shared his family's three generation history with the late Rabbi. Cantor Irwin Gelman beautifully chanted the *El Rachamim*



Rabbi Dan Shuman speaking at the Ohel dedication

prayer to conclude the ceremony.

While the Ohel has profound reverence within the Chasidic community, others also share in private meaningful experiences from the Ohel. Eli S. of Boise, ID, flew in for the weekend to rekindle memories he had as a UB student twenty years ago and the influence the Ohel had on him.

Charlotte Gendler is completing her term as president of the Jewish Federation Cemetery Corporation this month.



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Keeping our Chanukah Lights in our Eye's Sight

BY RABBI HESCHEL GREENBERG

Chanukah Lights and Infested Pits

The Talmud quotes Rabbi Tanchum's statement that Chanukah lights may not be placed at a height greater than 20 cubits. Immediately after this directive, the Talmud quotes another teaching of Rabbi Tanchum: that the pit into which Joseph was thrown was infested with snakes and scorpions. Commentators have grappled with the juxtaposition of these two totally unrelated statements. What connection is there between the placement of a Chanukah Menorah and Joseph being thrown into a pit infested with snakes and scorpions?

Snakes and Scorpions

To understand the connection, we must preface a discussion of why Reuven, who tried to save Joseph, suggested throwing him into a pit infested with snakes and scorpions. If Reuven's intention was indeed to save Joseph's life, what did Reuven think he was gaining by surrendering Joseph to these deadly creatures? The fact that Joseph was thrown into a pit of deadly snakes and scorpions and emerged unscathed is emblematic of his uncanny moral and spiritual strength. It was strength that his brothers did not possess and for which reason they so misunderstood him. Joseph, unlike most others, could be cast into a pit of snakes and scorpions, literally and figuratively, and still be immune to their venom. And here is the connection to Chanukah



Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Door Removal Service

The Chanukah lights emerged out of the attempt by the Syrian-Greeks to contaminate the soul of the Jewish people. It has been suggested that the reason we place the Menorah at the entrances of our homes as a remembrance of how the enemy removed the doors of the homes of the Jewish people so that they could not hide their observance of Judaism. In other words, the Syrian-Greeks did everything in their power to ensure the infiltration of malign outside influences into every Jewish home and heart. There were to be no barriers to block the "snakes" and "scorpions" from entering.

The Chanukah lights that we place at our entrances or our windows cannot be contaminated, just like the lone cruse of uncontaminated oil that lasted for eight days. This parallels Joseph's quality: that he was impervious to outside influences. Moreover, Joseph possessed another unique quality. It was his ability to influence others to follow in his footsteps.

Joseph was so named because his mother said at the time of his birth: "May G-d add [Yoseph] another son for me." The third Rebbe of Chabad, known as the Tzemach Tzedek, retranslated the verse as: "May G-d add, i.e. make an 'other' (an outsider) into a son." Joseph was capable of reaching even the Jew who considers himself or herself to be an outsider, an "other," and transform him or her into a son, the ultimate insider.

Similarly, the Chanukah lights illuminate the darkness of the night. It has the power to transform night into

light; the "other" into a "son." However, in order for the Chanukah lights to have their intended effect they cannot be placed beyond eye contact. A Menorah placed so high that the eye does not easily notice it cannot illuminate the darkness.

Chanukah and Moshiach

We can now also understand the connection of these statements to the author of the abovementioned teachings; Rabbi Tanchum. Tanchum is related to the concept of consolation associated with *Moshiach* who is referred to as the "consoler." *Moshiach* is known as a warrior against the influences that threaten the integrity of the Torah, Jewish people and the Land of Israel. But *Moshiach* is more than that. He will influence every Jew to follow in the ways of G-d and indeed, he will even reach out and perfect the entire world, thereby bringing true peace and unity.

Moshiach will transform the snakes and scorpions into positive forces. Indeed, the word snake in Hebrew (*Nachash*) has the same numerical value as *Moshiach* (358). And the word scorpion in Hebrew (*Akrav*) equals the numerical value of "*Moshiach*" combined with "David." The only impediment for *Moshiach's* coming is if we place the symbol of *Moshiach*, the Chanukah lights, so high that our eyes do not see them. This echoes the Rebbe's repeated exhortation to us that we must "open our eyes" to see the energy and light of *Moshiach* and Redemption in front of us.

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



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Give Yourself a Break

BY STACEY SCHMID, LMHC

As the days grow darker and shorter, and in Western New York, colder and snowier, the list of things "to do" may feel longer and more urgent, and it just may feel more difficult. Maybe unplugging for a few hours or a day, a "Mental Health Day" as we call it, would help to reset.

After more than two years of a pandemic, staying home sick because of physical health symptoms is normal and acceptable. People are not expected to work through illness unless it is emotional in nature. We still struggle to recognize that mental health is a health concern that we need to address with the same level of compassion and care.

Mental Health Days are not the day you take to catch up on errands because you feel overwhelmed, or the weekend you spend cleaning and shopping and cooking for the week. And although many of us are guilty of it, guilt over what you could be doing is not time out



for a mental health day. How you speak to yourself matters and it's important to give yourself a break. That's the point of the day.

Ideally, Mental Health Days are days when you can identify and compassionately care for yourself when

you see you are not okay. Maybe you are overwhelmed by the stress of life and need some extra support from a therapist. Or maybe you need support from family or friends. Perhaps it's about just taking a break in general; your brain and your body actually need down time. Research shows that people are more productive in the long run when they get enough rest, down time, and breaks in their day from work. In a world where we are "on call" with emails, texts, and instant messaging, setting strong and healthy boundaries around your availability and time is one way to limit interruptions on personal time. All of this to say, everyone feels less than great sometimes and that is perfectly okay.

So, give yourself that block of time to be kind to yourself and to allow your mind, soul, spirit, and body to reset. Being intentional about your down time and setting that boundary will benefit you and improve your life satisfaction.

Stacey Schmid is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) and Manager of Clinical Services at Jewish Family Services of WNY.



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For more information, please contact Linda Barat, LIFE & LEGACY® Coordinator for the Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies at linda@jewishphilanthropies.org or 716-204-2259.

ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

TEMPLE BETH TZEDEK

This month, we are pleased to highlight Temple Beth Tzedek, one of the collaborating partner organizations in the LIFE & LEGACY @ Buffalo initiative.

Temple Beth Tzedek (TBT), the only conservative congregation in Greater Buffalo, is a place where many families mark the most profound events in their lives as they celebrate and mourn with one another, find friendship, camaraderie, support and understanding; TBT is a place where individuals find strength as a community.

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

TBT is a congregation committed to the worship of God, the ideals and precepts of Torah and inspiring meaningful study and lifelong learning. TBT is a welcoming Jewish community that promotes the observance of sacred times, the celebration of life cycle events, the perpetuation of the State of Israel and acts of loving kindness that expand well beyond their walls. These are the values and beliefs that guide this congregation as they serve the spiritual and social needs of members and work to make the world a better place.

TBT's legacy donors are those who are making a promise to their children, grandchildren, and generations to come that they will have a thriving Jewish community to embrace and enrich their lives as Jews. They acknowledge the value, importance, and centrality of their synagogue in the lives of its congregants and choose to join in creating a legacy to ensure its future.

For any questions about Temple Beth Tzedek and how you can leave your legacy with them, please contact most immediate Past Temple President Marcia Goldstein at [cappuccino.marcia@gmail.com](mailto:marcia@gmail.com).

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Dedicated Lives

BY CHANA R. KOTZIN, PH.D.

The Jewish Buffalo History Center adds new profiles monthly and new materials regularly to existing sections. This month's brand-new additions include a new biographic profile and an organization which intertwine: The Buffalo Section of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) and a profile of Shirley Troyan Joseph, an international advocate for women and a national and local leader within NCJW.

The NCJW was founded in 1893 in Chicago by Hannah Solomon and created a network of local sections. Both national and local sections worked in the areas of immigration, child welfare, poverty, health care, women's rights and status, as well as environmental and individual rights. As a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates, the Council infused their work with Jewish values and strove "for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children, and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms."

In Buffalo, the first Section of the NCJW was founded on December 27, 1895. Cecil B. Wiener was installed as president and within five years the branch had 150 members. (Judge Wiener is also profiled on the Jewish Buffalo History Center website.) The group focused on education and offered a Women's Bible class that attracted Jews and non-Jews alike, establishing its cross communal activity from inception. This initial group folded just before WWI. When the section was revived in the 1930s as a "junior" under 30's grouping, it focused on community service, and in the 1940s, a senior section was formed. Both were short-lived and it was not until 1953 that a full section re-launched. During this time, the NCJW was active in a host of outreach projects including Buffalo Public School libraries, the Veterans Administration Hospital, Family Courts, and the Rose Coplon Old Folks Home (currently the Weinberg Campus).

Few NCJW archives for the Buffalo Section remain for the 1890s-1960s and we are actively seeking these records. For the 1970s to 1980s, due to the efforts of Muriel Goodman (z"l) to maintain records, we have a snapshot of the Buffalo NCJW's broad and active agenda across Jewish and non-Jewish communities. The Council participated in the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) campaign and the White House Conference on Families as well as campaigning for the release of Soviet Jews, supported the distribution of local kosher meals on

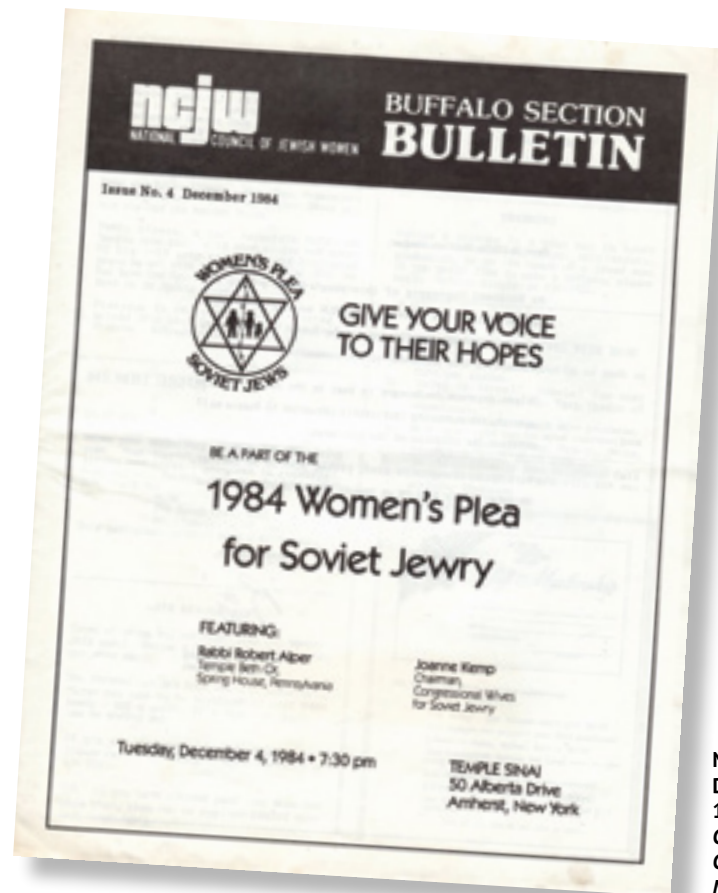


1991 Shirley Joseph

Photography Courtesy of the Buffalo Jewish Federation.

wheels, and social work through the Rosa Coplon (Weinberg) home. Members were also active in children and family initiatives and especially environmental campaigns in the 1990s. Across the active years of the Buffalo section NCJW from the 1950s to the 1990s, a significant number of women who participated in Council work went on to have other leadership and volunteer roles in the Jewish community and Buffalo. Indeed, Buffalo gained national exposure in the NCJW organization when Shirley Joseph was appointed Vice President to the national NCJW. Despite this, the NCJW in Buffalo, like many other Jewish organizations, closed as a result of local and national changes in demographics, economics and changing women's working patterns.

Shirley Troyan Joseph was a feminist Jewish activist and a Jewish women's rights leader who worked in community organizations and advocacy groups at local, national and international levels. The highlights in this article can only point to a small range of her activities. Born in Buffalo in 1925, she was a charter member of the 1950s rebirth of the Buffalo Section of NCJW after returning to Buffalo from college as she began her family. She worked in a NCJW project that established libraries in inner city public schools and this led to further leadership roles within NCJW at regional levels. She served as president of the Northeastern District from 1968 to



**NCJW Bulletin
December
1984
Courtesy of
Cofeld Judaic
Museum.**

1970 and as national vice president from 1975 to 1983. Moving in and out of Jewish organizations and national organizations, some of which held a global focus, Shirley Joseph went on to serve as vice chair of the United States National Commission for UNESCO in the mid-1970s. She was a delegate to the National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977 and became a board member of the National Women's Conference Committee in 1979.

From the 1980s to the 1990s, Shirley Joseph participated in three United Nations' World Conferences on Women. In 1980 she was a journalist for the NCJW Journal covering the UN World Conference on Women in Copenhagen, Denmark. She went to the UN World Conference on Women in 1985 in Nairobi, Kenya for *Moment Magazine*. In 1995 she attended the World Conference on Women in Beijing, China as Chair of the Jewish Women's Caucus, and as a member of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's Beijing Conference Circle.

Back in Buffalo, in 1985, she joined the Erie County (N.Y.) Status of Women Task Force in 1985 and became the executive director of the Erie County Commission

on the Status of Women in 1988 for just under five years. Shirley Joseph also served as president of the Jewish Federation Housing, chaired the Commission on Aging under the Buffalo Jewish Federation as well as chairing the Federation's Community Relations Committee and Women's Division of the UJF campaign. From 1989 to 1993, she served as vice chair of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council. Over her fifty years of service, she was recognized with several awards locally, notably the Hannah G. Solomon award from the Buffalo section of NCJW and the Jewish Federation of Greater Buffalo's Nathan Benderson community service award. Discover her many more roles in our profile at the Jewish Buffalo History Center.

To find out more and see how you can help expand our knowledge of the National Council of Jewish Women, visit the Jewish Buffalo History Center website at: jewishbuffalohistory.org. Our next feature will focus on the interconnected histories of Buffalo with Sokolivka family histories. If you have any information and images or documentation you'd like to share, please contact Dr. Chana Kotzin at chana@buffalojewishfederation.org.

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

Congregation Havurah Celebrates 50 Years

BY RICK KOLLINS

When a small group of Buffalo area families came together to form Congregation Havurah in 1972, they were considered by many to be renegades, mavericks, even “conscientious objectors” to accepted Jewish practice. Now, 50 years later, Havurah is still going strong and celebrated its golden anniversary at Templeton Landing October 23.

At the event, Dr. Leonard Katz, a retired gastroenterologist and first president of Havurah, gave a brief history of Havurah and described how pessimistic some people were of the chances of the congregation lasting more than a few years. Even many of its own members believed that Havurah would serve an immediate spiritual need but likely fade away as the membership aged.

“In the beginning, we were looking for a religious experience that was more personal than was possible at the larger synagogues, so we actually limited the membership to about 60 families,” Dr. Katz explained. “At times we even had a waiting list so the congregation could maintain its sense of belonging. And since we didn’t have a rabbi, our members have been required to prepare and lead services and organize events.”

“We have also maintained our policy of not having a set dues schedule as members determine their own financial level of commitment based on what they believe to be the value they receive from the congregation,” he added.

While there are no longer programs and religious instruction available for the children or grandchildren of members, the congregation has managed to maintain



a membership of around 60 families by attracting empty nesters, newcomers to the area, and non-traditional individuals and families. Even members who have moved away from Buffalo to be closer to children and grandchildren continue their connection to Havurah.

Rich and Sandy Bisesi, who drove to Buffalo from the Boston area for the 50th anniversary, said they could not see themselves giving up the long-term relationships they have within Havurah. Despite her relocation from Orchard Park to Woburn, MA, Sandy still takes responsibility for “*Nachas and Tsuris*”, informing Havurah members of milestones, celebrations, illnesses and passings, and providing support where needed.

While the pandemic curtailed many of Havurah’s traditional programs, the congregation has maintained its commitments to social justice, human rights, community involvement, adult education, and the arts. In testimonies shared at the anniversary, members spoke proudly of initiatives involving interfaith cooperation, support for refugee families, volunteering at soup kitchens, and an annual Rosh Hashanah retreat at the Chautauqua Institution.

Rich Bisesi recalled a time in the 1970’s that he and a group of Havurah volunteers moved a refrigerator down three flights of stairs from the apartment of Michael Tilson Thomas, music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, who had donated the appliance for a refugee family.

“The job almost killed us, but it was worth the effort to help the refugees and also get a glimpse of Thomas’s apartment with several grand pianos on the top floor,” Bisesi said.

Abigail Unger, a second-generation member and song and prayer leader, spoke about the importance of Havurah in establishing her own Jewish identity, and the challenge of attracting other younger people to join the congregation.

Now that the pandemic is over, Havurah has resumed its holiday services at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Main Street in Amherst, where the congregation rents space. Shabbat services and adult education programs are also conducted in members’ homes.

For more information about Havurah, please contact president Dan Mink at president.havurah@gmail.com or membership chair Enid Edelman at membership.havurah@gmail.com.

Rick Kollins is a member of Congregation Havurah.

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Jan Liebowitz leads Hadassah's Mitzvah Committee

Buffalo Hadassah's Mitzvah Committee collects and delivers gently used household items and outerwear to Jewish Family Services of WNY, which are then given to newly arrived immigrants and other needy individuals and families.

Jan Liebowitz, chair of this committee, grew up in Ravenna, a little town just south of Albany. After graduating from the State University of NY at Plattsburgh as a registered nurse and health educator, she became an RN at Mount Sinai Hospital where she met her husband, Joel, whose father was a patient and their matchmaker.

They married and moved to Great Neck, Long Island, where they raised their two children, Alan and Karen. Jan, who earned a Master's Degree in Health Education at Adelphi University, was a school nurse and health educator in the Port Washington School District for 31 years. Joel, an accountant, was a consummate volunteer in their community, where Jan learned the importance and love of sharing and



Jan Liebowitz and her granddaughter

giving. Joel passed away in 2010 of pancreatic cancer.

Jan moved to the Buffalo area eight years ago, when her daughter Karen, a Buffalo teacher, was about to give birth to her first child. Jan is now "Bubba" to Karen's three children, ages 8, 5, and 1. Alan's family, including an adult daughter, still live on Long Island.

Besides helping to care for her grandkids, Jan keeps busy with her Hadassah Mitzvah Committee and with Congregation Havurah. She encourages everyone to give, to share, and to help.

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My Italian Secret: Heroes of the Holocaust

BY VILONA TRACHTENBERG

On October 20, The Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo partnered with The Italian Cultural Center for a film screening of "My Italian Secret: The Forgotten Heroes," produced by Vincent Marmorale, who was in attendance for the screening.

Marmorale discussed his 18-year process of creating this film, depicting heroes in Italy who risked their lives to save Jews and refugees during the Holocaust. He made it known that for the Italian people, even one Jew dying was a tragedy for them. The Italians were able to save 32,000 out of the 40,000 who lived in Italy at the time.



Vincent Marmorale at the film screening

As a former history teacher with an Italian heritage, Marmorale conceived of the idea to create the film in 1994, and then traveled all over the world to obtain firsthand accounts from the heroes themselves, as well as those who they helped to survive. "I made this film because we wanted to show the world the people we are," Marmorale said. "This is who we are."

The film features testimony from Gino Bartali, an Italian cyclist who won the Tour



The HRC's Lauren Bloomberg (left) and new friends at the event

de France and transported documents to save Jews, and who was recognized by Yad Vashem as a "Righteous Among the Nations." The film also featured Ursula Korn Selig and Charlotte Hauptman, Jews who were both hidden and saved by heroic Italians.

Riccardo Pacifici, president of Rome's Jewish community, told one of the most memorable stories in the film. He described how selfless nuns hid his father Emanuele in a convent near Florence. To keep his father's identity hidden, the nun told him to kiss the cross. But, the nun helped maintain his father's Jewish pride and Jewish identity. Though she offered him the cross, she put her thumb on the cross and told him to kiss her finger on the cross instead. The nun also told him to say the *Shema*, a prayer that Jews typically say in the morning and at night, while everyone else said Catholic prayers.

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.

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Hanukkah Menorahs in the diversified Jewish Diaspora

BY URIEL HALBREICH, MD

The eight days of the feast of Hanukkah are celebrated by lighting the *Hanukkah* (*menorah*) which is an eight-candle lamp with an additional “shamash” or server which is used to light the other candles. This is different from the seven candlesticks of the *Mikdash* that also inspired the state of Israel emblem.

In most Israeli and Jewish-American congregation institutes and homes, the Hanukkah lamp is shaped according to the Ashkenazi Eastern and Central European tradition (*Picture 1*) probably because Ashkenazi Jews were most significant in the establishment of these communities.

However, Jewish communities in the Middle-East and North Africa (MENA) shaped the Hanukkah lamps according to local traditions and cultures, mostly using olive oil and wicks candles, which were used and described in Biblical, Talmudic and medieval writings. An example of that style is the *Hanukkah* from the old synagogue



1

of Aleppo (*Haleb* in Arabic and Hebrew) in northern Syria (*Picture 2*). Aleppo was home to a centuries-old thriving Jewish community that was expelled shortly following the establishment of the independent State of Israel in 1948. Syrian Jews managed to bring some of their most significant possessions to Jerusalem, including the synagogue Menorah. That *Hanukkah* expresses the yearning for Jerusalem-the Western Wall, as well as other typical engravings. Typically, it has separate but integrated candlesticks for



2

Shabbat candles. Similar smaller-scale metal *Hanukkah* lamps were found in Morocco, Egypt and other MENA countries.

Some Jewish-Italian homes had their own cultural interpretation exemplified by the painted wooden *Hanukkah* (*picture 3*) which is integrated with a handy box for prayer books and a frame depicting Moses and Aaron.

Culturally-sensitive creativity is demonstrated by the whimsical integration of Mediterranean shape with Eastern-European-shtetel motives (*Picture*



3

4) created by an artist in Concord, Massachusetts.

In lighting our own personal Hanukkah lamps, may we celebrate independence, an optimistic point of view, and even against-all-odds triumph.

Dr. Uriel Halbreich is Director, Biobehavioral Research, and Professor of Psychiatry, SUNY-At Buffalo Medical School and Founding Chair, WPA Section on Interdisciplinary Collaboration. The hanukkiot pictured in this story are from his collection, purchased during global travel.



4

Torah & Tea at the JDC

A group of 50 Buffalo women enjoyed an inspiring morning of “Torah & Tea” in the *Sukkah*. Hosted and led by Rivky Greenberg, they explored the juggling “game” of life, how “uptime” differs from “downtime” and how-to bring heaven down to earth even while doing the most mundane of tasks. Women were able to study, schmooze, sip tea and taste some delicious refreshments. They also had a chance to fulfill the special Mitzvah of shaking the Lulav and Etrog. “Torah & Tea” is a program of the Jewish Discovery Center. For more information, contact Rivky at TorahandTea@gmail.com.





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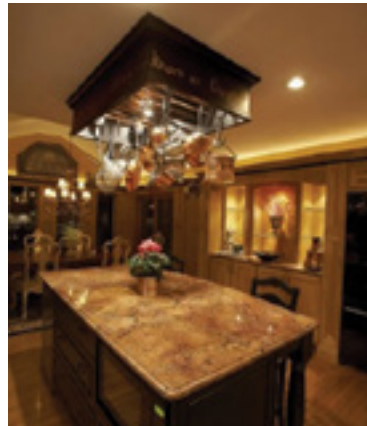
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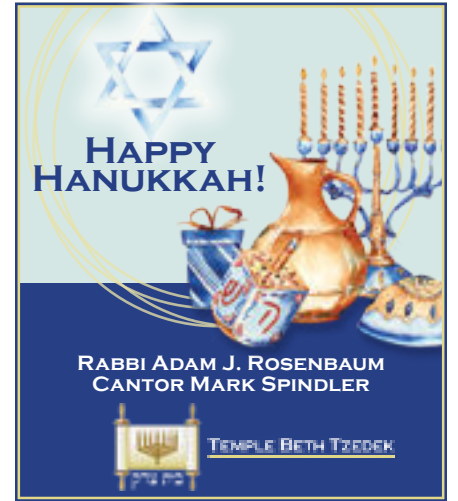
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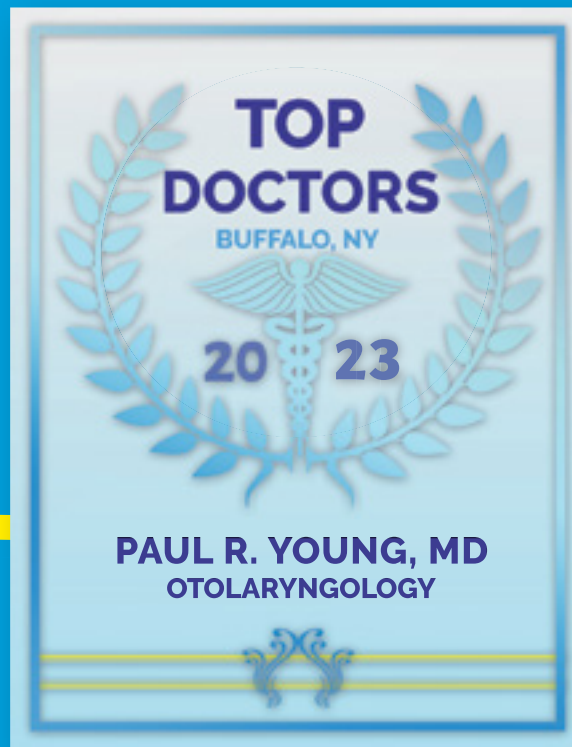
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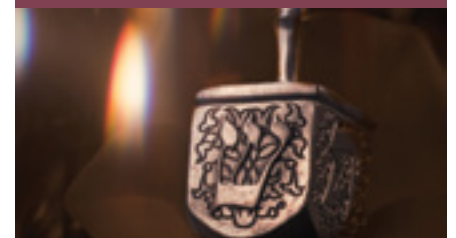
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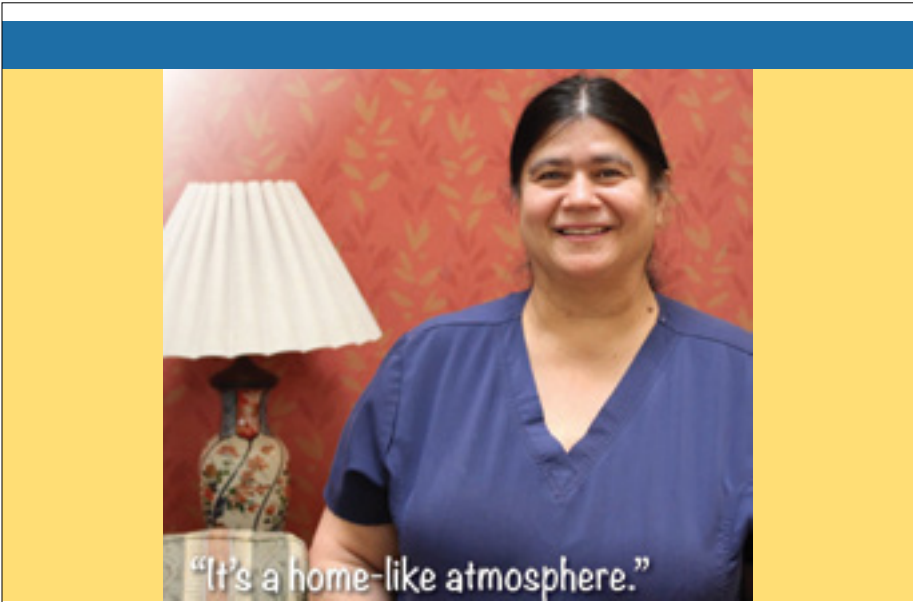
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The Community Religious School

BY EINAV SYMONS

As Hanukkah is just around the corner this month, there are many lights shining at the Community Religious School (CRS). Our Hebrew 1-1 tutors are advancing at a great pace with their students, and parents are raving about Sunday's in-person teachers. Our grades 6 and 7 curricula are enriched with 5-week intensives throughout the year, led by Rabbi Alex Lazarus Klein, Rabbi Brent Gutmann and Rabbi Adam Rosenbaum.

Tikkun Olan continues to be an important component throughout the school. Students and staff participated and collected wool socks and winter



Having fun at CRS



A sunny Sunday at CRS

coats for the homeless and donated food and money for the Thanksgiving Food Drive. The grades 5, 6 and 7 students who are participating in the Better Together program, had the opportunity to see play *The Chosen* at the Jewish Repertory Theater at the JCC and also enjoyed a Veteran's Day brunch with seniors at Amberleigh. The students had an opportunity to exchange stories of growing up and learned from the seniors how they experienced antisemitism in their life.

The *Madrichim*, our 26 high school students, continue setting a wonderful example to the younger children. This month, six students in our Better 2 Learn Program will be travelling to Brandeis (all-expense paid) to participate with teens from around the country in a 4-day intensive study. The students have been taking an in-depth Jewish history course and a values course which explores some of the hottest topics in contemporary political life through the lens of Jewish texts.



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein teaching

CRS is excited to partner with LiNK and PJ Library for a PreK-Grade 2 PJ's Havdalah at TBZ's Broder building December 3 at 5:30 p.m. **Please RSVP using this link: bit.ly/PJPJOW2223.**

The school-wide Chanukah celebration will be in partnership with LiNK and Kadimah Scholars at Sto Lat Bar (Banquet Room) 4475 Transit Rd at Eastern Hills Mall on December 11th from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Wishing all a Happy Chanukah! Please check out our website crsbuffalo.com.

Einav Symons is Director of The Community Religious School, which serves the students of Temple Beth Tzedek, Temple Beth Zion, Congregation Shir Shalom and unaffiliated families. CRS provides engaging curriculum on Sundays and convenient private, remote Hebrew lessons to students from 1st through 7th grade. For more information, contact Einav at BuffaloCRS@gmail.com.

Kadimah Scholars in Full Swing

The Kadimah Scholars are in full swing at Park School of Buffalo, with our full-time teachers Michal Shmuel-Lewis and Einav Symons leading the way.

Lower School students are learning the *Alef-Bet*, vowels, numbers, color, weather, seasons, parts of the body, pets, and verbs, while celebrating Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot and Simchat Torah earlier this fall. Once again, we put up a Sukkah on the Park campus, full of decorations celebrating this year's theme of world peace, with the words "peace" and "welcome" written in over 20 languages.

Our Middle-School students are practicing their Hebrew reading and writing, expanding their vocabulary and other skills, exploring the value of courage, and comparing Queen Esther with Natan Sharansky. And our 8th and 12th graders are studying hard in preparation for taking the Hebrew Regents exam at the end of the school year, while also learning *Tanach*.

Morning prayers continue twice a week, with younger students learning and developing



Kadimah scholars celebrating Hanukkah

their skills with help from parent volunteers Renee Herman and Rabbi Brent Gutmann. And all students study the weekly *parsha* in our after-school supplement once a week.

We have also begun an incredible initiative with the Holocaust Resource Center and the JCC's Cultural Arts program to explore past and current antisemitism with



Enjoying the Park School Sukkah

our sixth through 12th graders. Led by Artist-in-Residence Jennifer Judelsohn, who is also a licensed social worker, Kadimah Scholars engage with Holocaust survivors and interview each other, as they jointly consider key themes, historical perspectives, lessons learned, and future resilience. The initiative will lead to community-service efforts to address antisemitism today, and will culminate in a collaborative art piece and presentation that will examine the stories and themes.

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1» Join your Federation and Foundation friends at the **2022 joint Annual Meeting Wednesday, December 7** beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Congregation Shir Shalom, 4660 Sheridan Drive. Wine & cheese at 5:30; program followed by dessert & coffee at 6:00 p.m. RSVP to: bit.ly/celebratejewishbuffalo2022.

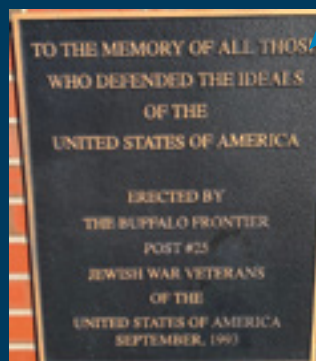
2» Celebrate Hanukkah this year with Buffalo friends. Check out page 12 of this issue of *The Jewish Journal* to see Hanukkah events around town.

3» Join your friends from PJ Library and PJ Our Way for “Get Your Hanukkah On!”, Sunday, December 11 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Sto Lat Bar Event Space, 4475 Transit Road in Williamsville. It’s ideal for families with kids 12 and under. *See the ad on page 10, and RSVP to bit.ly/GETYOURHANUKKAHON.*

4» Join the JCC and Congregation Beth Abraham for the multimedia program, “They Don’t Write ‘em Like That Anymore – the Great Jewish Song Lyricists of the 20th Century” Tuesday, December 20 @ 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the JCC. The program spans the American musical eras from Tin Pan Alley through rock and roll with biographical information interspersed with live musical performance by Barbara Levy Daniels. Hanukkah-themed reception to follow. *Registration Required at jccbuffalo.org.*

5» Give a year-end gift or pay your 2022 pledge to the Buffalo Jewish Federation’s Campaign for Jewish Buffalo to get a 2022 tax deduction and the feeling of making a difference for your Jewish Community, because you have! *Go to buffalojewishfederation.org/donate and click on Campaign for Jewish Buffalo or call Assistant Executive Director Randi Morkisz at 716-463-5051 before the end of December.*

Where in **JBFLO**



Where is this found exactly in Jewish Buffalo?

The first 5 people to correctly identify the location will be mentioned in next month’s *Jewish Journal*.

Email your answers to ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org.

For the November issue, Cheryl Tobias once again identified the photo, which is a plaque at Temple Beth Tzedek that notes the architect, Maurice Finegold, left a “section of the building incomplete as a memorial to our people’s past.”

Hanukkah Donuts

BY ROBIN KURSS

Because Hanukkah celebrates the Miracle of the Oil, most of the holiday's most beloved foods are fried. Fret no more, now you can have delicious donuts for Hanukkah this year....baked, not fried!

Delicious Glazed Baked Donuts

makes 15 plus donut holes!

For the Dough:

3/4 c warm milk
1 package active dry yeast
1 Tbsp. butter, melted
1/3 c sugar
1 egg
2 1/2 c flour
pinch of nutmeg
pinch of cinnamon
1/2 tsp. salt

For the Glaze:

1/4 c milk
1 tsp. vanilla
2 c confectioners sugar



To make dough:

1. In bowl of mixer, place 1/4 c milk and yeast. Let stand 5 minutes. Add remaining milk, sugar and butter. Stir to combine. Add the egg, flour and spices. Mix to combine. Knead in bowl until the dough becomes smooth...add a little more flour if necessary.
2. Turn onto a floured board and knead 5 minutes. Place in oiled bowl, cover and let rise in warm place for 1 hour.
3. Roll out dough on floured board to 1/2" thick. Cut out the donuts with a 3" cutter and the hole with a 1" cutter...place these on a greased baking sheet 2" apart and cover lightly with a clean towel...let rise for 45 minutes.
4. Pre-heat oven to 375. Bake donuts for 7 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool.
5. Mix together the glaze and dip the cool donuts....enjoy. Serve with a jelly chaser if you feel the need for a true Jelly Donut!

Dining Guide

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IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering Richard Hirsch: 1932- 2022

Richard (Dick) Hirsch died October 1. He was the husband of Lynn Hirsch, father of Jeffrey (Deborah) Betsy Hirsch, and Nancy (Brian) Hirsch-Ackerman; grandfather of Jacob (Rachel) and Nathan Hirsch; great-grandfather of Layla Rose Hirsch; and brother of Barbara (Leslie) Kaplan. This remembrance is excerpted from a eulogy given by his son Jeff at Dick's funeral October 4 at Temple Beth Zion.

Dick Hirsch was a good man, a gentle man, a family man, and a respected journalist and broadcaster in Buffalo. We will miss him terribly. How do you summarize in 5-10 minutes almost 90 years of a person's life? It is not an easy task, believe me... but, that it my privilege today....

Let's start with the family. Dad and mom had their 66th anniversary on August 26, 2022. They dated for about 4 years before getting married, so they were together for 70 years. Pretty impressive. Dad was a dependable, dedicated and loving husband. Dad was also a wonderful, supportive and wise father to Nancy, Betsy and me. Growing up, he was always interested in our education and other activities. Whether playing catch in the backyard, shooting baskets in our driveway (Betsy was a better shot than me) or going for bike rides around the neighborhood, we kids enjoyed being together with our parents and had fun. We enjoyed vacations in Michigan, Cape Cod and the Adirondacks. Of course, we always got to ride in the "way back" of the station wagon on long trips ... can you imagine that? And the answer to that question is "yes" since anyone between 55-65 today experienced exactly the same unsafe travel routines.

Of course, there was that one time in 1972 when mom was away and the first "Godfather" movie came out. Dad



took me (age 15) and Betsy (age 12) to see it, and dad got in trouble with mom, because Betsy had nightmares about the severed horse's head for weeks.

Dad always took great interest in his work and in our work or other creative projects. Dad encouraged Nancy with her impressive crafts projects and had many in-depth discussions with Betsy about sales and marketing as Betsy navigated through 26+ years representing Steinway and Company.

When I started practicing law 40 years ago in Buffalo, for several years dad and I would meet for dinner downtown at various restaurants and enjoy a meal out and catch up on various topics- current events, politics, family. That was very nice at the time, and as I think about it today, how cool for a parent and young adult child to be able to have dinner together after work?

Dad was very proud of his kids-- proud of all of our various accomplishments.

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And that pride was contagious. My sisters and I often “cheer each other on” and provide encouragement to each other. For example, when Nancy hears that I might be working too hard, she’ll say something like, “Jeff, honey, take some time and smell the roses.” We Hirsch kids are very close and mom and dad laid the foundation for that closeness.

Dick Hirsch was a good man, a gentle man, a family man, and a respected journalist and broadcaster in Buffalo.

Now a few words about dad’s interesting career: he was an award-winning young reporter for the *Buffalo Courier Express*, which was the morning paper in Buffalo. However, \$80 a week was not enough to support a growing family, so dad transitioned into the printing business. At the same time, WNED-TV, the local PBS Station, approached him to host a weekly local public affairs TV program called “Man in the News” that aired at 8:30 p.m. on Monday nights. That show which had a “Meet the Press” format lasted about 18 years and of course, would never have such a title in 2022.

A few times I got to go down to the TV station and watch while the show was broadcast live -- that was very cool. A second program “Call-17” succeeded “Man in the News”. “Call-17” was a call-in show with a famous local guest taking

questions from callers and dad was the moderator.

In addition to WNED-TV, dad wrote a weekly column for 35 years for the local business paper, *Buffalo Business First*. Can you imagine, thinking of a topic for a 650-700 word column each week? That takes a great deal of thought, creativity and perseverance. Dad welcomed the challenge.

Have I mentioned yet that our dad was “curious?” Dad always asked a lot of questions. Indeed, my wonderful wife of 39 years, Deborah, recently revealed that she was a bit intimidated by dad when they first met, because he asked so many questions. Of course, that feeling quickly melted away. Dad became one of Deborah’s biggest fans.

The period of time during the High Holidays between Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is referred to as “The Days of Awe.” Dick Hirsch passed away during that week this year. My dear friend and law partner shared with me yesterday, that there is a belief that God’s favorites are taken from us during this High Holiday Season. I believe that is true.

In Remembrance

The following individuals in our community passed away during the period from October 17-November 18, 2022*. May their memories forever be a blessing, and may their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

Helen Ablove
Sonya Breitbart
Dr. Neil Dashkoff
Neil Ehrenreich

Dr. Irwin Friedman
Andre Kallus
Renee A. Knight
Myrna Morris
Matilde (Mimi) Neuwirt
Barbara Goldstein Pumm
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**If we inadvertently missed printing the listing of your loved one, please write to ellen@buffalojewishfederation.org and we will include the name next month.*

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(NOT) THE LAST WORD

THE CHICAGO GA: CREATING A MORE CIVIL AND JUST SOCIETY

BY DEBORAH GOLDMAN



Deborah Goldman

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) General Assembly (GA) is the annual gathering of the Federation system and its North American and global partners. For the first time in three years, leadership came together in person to gather and work collaboratively at the GA in Chicago from October 30-November 1. The goal was to explore the complex issues facing our communities in terms of our shared communal agenda for the year ahead.

I was honored to join Buffalo's delegation that included Irwin Gelman, President of the JCC, Mara Koven-Gelman, JCRC Director and Rob Goldberg, Federation CEO. I have been active in Jewish and secular communities for many years. I am fortunate to serve as co-chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council and as a member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors.

This was my first GA. While I didn't know what to expect, I hoped to learn from other communities and speakers about creating a more robust and sustainable Jewish community, and how we can be better partners in our communities. In other words, what are strategies to support the Jewish community and creation of a more just and civil society?

Rabbi Hillel's words of wisdom

provide me with the perfect structure to reflect on my experience in Chicago: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?" (*Pirkei Avot* Chapter 1:14)

We are for ourselves when we have strong and secure Jewish communities and when we work against antisemitism. The goal of security is to allow for communal Jewish life and not to limit it. Several speakers we heard discussed ways to create more secure Jewish Communities such as "The Power of Hello" training (cisa.gov/power-hello) as a resource, the importance of belonging, collaborations with Community Relations Councils (JCRCs), and relationship building in the general community. Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt, Department of State Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, cautioned us to modulate our reactions to antisemitism:

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sometimes quiet conversations working with relationships in our communities are more helpful in building support and allies.

We are for others when we support our neighbors, speaking out against hate. We are for others when we continue working against racism as a Jewish community. We are for others when we are present as Jews making our Buffalo community a better place and help resettle refugees/immigrants. While these actions are not meant to be a “quid quo pro,” they do make us safer. We need allies and friends – Jews cannot solve antisemitism without them.

If not now, when? We are fortunate to have endless “now” opportunities. We can share lessons that we have learned such as providing technical assistance for churches and mosques to increase their security. We can continue finding commonalities with our neighbors while understanding that we have some areas of disagreement. And we can continue finding ways for Jews to engage in their Judaism, understand their heritage, and build the community of the future.

The scheduled speakers in Chicago were great – the most well-known were Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, Ambassador to Germany Amy Gutmann, Israel’s Ambassador to the US Michael Herzog, Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt, Andrea Mitchell, author Eboo Patel, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker, Rabbi Meir Soloveichik, Rabbi David Wolpe, and the cast and creators of “The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem.” There were many more national experts and community representatives who spoke at plenary sessions and at program panels, including our own JCRC’s Mara Koven-Gelman.

What can’t be scheduled are the spontaneous interactions. While every community is unique, attendees from across the US and Canada shared their approaches to common issues. It was great to re-engage with former Buffalonians Darcy Hirsch, Jim Lodge, and Ben Wolfson, and meet Gil Wolfe’s stepsister Cyd from Dallas. I particularly enjoyed spending time (and having meals) with my Buffalo team – Irwin, Mara and Rob - I am incredibly grateful to them for their generosity of spirit and commitment to our community.

Deborah Goldman is co-chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council and a member of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Board of Governors.

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Registration is required for all events, please visit jccbuffalo.org
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