



Candle Lighting Times

Friday, January 17	5:26pm
Friday, January 24	5:32pm
Friday, January 31	5:39pm
Friday, February 7	5:45pm
Friday, February 14	5:52pm
Friday, February 21	5:57pm
Friday, February 28	6:03pm

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Also Featured

Nostalgic for Deli? Michael Strear reviews a new cookbook that takes us back to the Jewish delis of yore. Like him, you'll be longing for some of these treats; p2

Israelis Featured in Music Festival: Famous for highlighting talent from all around the globe, the Savannah Music Festival this year will spotlight two renowned acts from Israel; p14

Popular Overseas Mini-Grant Program Renewed for 2014

The Savannah Jewish Federation has reauthorized the overseas "mini-grant" program initiated as part of the 2013 Campaign and Allocations process. The program allows members of the community to nominate organizations that have a direct impact on sustaining and improving the lives of Jewish people around the world to receive \$500 mini-grants from the Federation's annual campaign. Up to 20 of these grants may be awarded each year.

In 2013, 16 mini-grants were nominated and approved. Said one member of the community who made a nomination: "It's always nice to see where my Federation gift goes each year, but this year was especially meaningful, knowing that I helped direct some

much-needed funds from my hometown to a small organization whose work I personally am familiar with. It may not seem like much, but I know it will make a difference."

Allan Ratner, Chair of the 2014 Campaign and Allocations Committee, said: "The Savannah Jewish community is proud of its long heritage of commitment to the needs of our Jewish brethren in Israel and elsewhere around the world. We were thrilled at the strong response to this new program last year and are so pleased that members of the community once again will be able to individually influence the overseas allocations process. I encourage everyone to participate."

The programs benefiting from the



mini-grants are widely varied – from cultural centers to health services providers to senior citizen centers to programs for military veterans – and each month we have introduced you to a different grantee in this paper (see the story on Yad LaKashish in this issue). The impact of the program can be felt in the letters of gratitude

continued on page 5

Major Improvements Underway at the JEA

The Health and Fitness Center at the JEA has just installed nine new cardio fitness machines equipped with individual video screens. The machines — including treadmills, elliptical crosstrainers and recumbent elliptical trainers — are manufactured by Octane Fitness, consistently considered one of the top providers of this type of equipment. Users just need to plug in their headphones and choose from an array of cable television programming to watch while enjoying their workout – no more need to ask anyone else around them if it's OK to change the channel!

The new machines (see CenterPiece in this issue) are in addition to a number of other existing cardio machines that remain in place, as well as the Cybex Strength System circuit and a complete free weights system in the

Fitness Center. Stephanie Johnson, the JEA's Director of Health & Wellness, said, "The addition of the Octane Fitness equipment helps to make our Fitness Center one of the most up-to-date facilities in Savannah. Together with the varied selection of classes we offer, our premier personal trainers and the indoor and outdoor pools, JEA members have available to them some of the most diverse fitness options in the city."

Along with the upgrades to the Fitness Center, improvements are planned for the JEA auditorium, thanks to a grant the JEA received from the Alan S. Gaynor Fund at the Savannah Community Foundation. Anna Berwitz, the JEA's Director of Development and Special Events, recently announced that the JEA was awarded the \$15,000 grant from the

fund that was established to benefit Savannah non-profits after Mr. Gaynor died in 2010. The money will be used to update the audio-visual facilities in the auditorium, which is used for dozens of programs annually, including the MLK, Black Heritage and Miriam & Jack Levy Concerts, the Savannah Jewish Film Festival, Yom HaShoah Observance and many other community programs.

Alan Gaynor was a prominent Savannah attorney who was active in many local institutions including Congregation Mickve Israel, the Boy Scouts, Rotary Club, Georgia Historical Society, Mighty 8th Air Force Museum and the Telfair Museum among many others. The JEA is proud to be a recipient of a grant from this fund that is part of his legacy.



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2014 SJF Community Campaign Update



The Jewish Community exists for you and because of you!

As of January 3rd from 456 donors

\$730,834



Community Campaign 2014
The strength of a people, the power of community.

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To the Editor:

Regarding the Geneva agreement about Iran's nuclear development, under which the country agreed to curb elements of those activities in return for the easing of some economic sanctions against it, it looks like we completely forgot about history and are heading toward dissatisfying and even terrible consequences.

Let's go back to the year 1938 and the Munich Agreement, which was signed by Nazi Leader Adolf Hitler, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and others. Chamberlain was waving the document in the air in jubilation. Hitler had promised not to invade Czechoslovakia after he received concessions about the western part of that country, namely the Sudetenland, that would be annexed to Germany. It looks like we do not like to remember the result of that agreement – about 60 million killed in World War II.

Iran's so-called nuclear deal will result in war and/or the rush for the entire region of the Middle East to obtain atom bombs, in addition to bombs already in the area. Any war would create more Hiroshimas and Nagasakis.

We cannot trust a regime which supports terrorists who are killing, in addition to others, our soldiers in countries in which we invested our resources and blood; who on many occasions called for the annihilation of Israel; who called our allies "rabid dogs," and who even denied the Holocaust.

We do not have anything against the people of Iran, but until the regime is changed there, our future relations with this country will be very complicated.

George Dynin
Athens, GA

To the Savannah Jewish Federation:

On behalf of all the needy elderly artisans, I would like to thank you for the generous contribution we have recently received from the Savannah Jewish Federation. This support is truly appreciated, and will be used directly towards benefiting the hundreds of disadvantaged seniors who rely on the program and financial aid of Yad LaKashish.

You might be interested to know that the needy elderly artisans are busy making dreidels and chanukiot

in our varied artistic workshops in preparation for the Chanukah holiday. Chanukah is always a special time at Yad LaKashish, as the low-income seniors light candles as a community inside the workshops, usually together with young volunteers and visitors who come to share the experience with them. We are only able to offer our program thanks to the contributions of supporters like the Savannah Jewish Federation, and we are most grateful for your partnership.

Thank you again for your part in helping to improve the quality of life for the needy elderly artisans.

Best wishes,

Nava Ein-Mor, Executive Director
Yad LaKashish, Jerusalem

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your contribution to Kulanu.

Kulanu relies on donations like yours to assist isolated and emerging Jewish communities around the world in their desire to learn more about Judaism and to connect with the worldwide Jewish community. Your support is greatly appreciated,

both by us at Kulanu and by all who benefit from Kulanu's work.

Sincerely,

Harriet Bograd, President
Kulanu, Inc., New York

Dear Friends,

On behalf of RAIN-UGANDA, let me thank you and your organization for your generous donation. As you know, RAIN provides education and screening in villages in rural Uganda where Jews, Christians, and Muslims live peacefully with their neighbors. The issues of HIV, cervical cancer and breast cancer are often ignored by local villagers due to lack of education and resources. By stepping up with both information and screening, RAIN forces even the poorest rural inhabitants to consider their own health and the health and welfare of their families.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate with you in tikkun olam.

Gratefully,

Hedy Cohen
RAIN-UGANDA, Mbale, Uganda

Book Review

Deli Delights

by Michael Strear

Many of us grew up at a time when the delicatessen was one of the most important parts of our lives.

I was raised in Denver, Colorado, and lived a few blocks from a neighborhood "deli." There were no tables or chairs, only a long counter and cases filled with corned beef, pastrami, two large filets of smoked salmon (lox) — one Nova and one regular — cheeses and breads, including rye and pumpernickel. I used to go with my dad on Sunday mornings to pick up a quarter pound each of meats and/or lox, some bagels, a few slices of rye or pumpernickel and a few slices of cheese (it was not *actually* a kosher deli). After turning nine or ten years old, I was allowed to go by myself to pick up supplies on those Sunday mornings.

Most of those delis are gone now. There were dozens in the Denver area when I was a kid and now there are not more than five or six in the whole city.

In Savannah, there now are one or two delicatessens and they are not quite so memorable!

I was in my daughter's office at the JEA recently and spotted a review copy of *The Artisan Jewish Deli at Home*, by Nick Zukin and Michael C. Zus-



man. I took a trip down memory lane with it.

This is a well illustrated cookbook; the contents are a fabulous instruction manual on making in your home the deli foods you grew up with, and the book also is suitable for coffee table reading as there are many photos. Many of the recipes are traditional and many are updated to the versions appearing in the delis around the country today run by enterprising young chefs/business people.

The book covers everything from making your own schmaltz, kreplach, corned beef and pastrami to bagels, bialys, rye and pumpernickel breads. The section on desserts is definitely not to be missed. The only thing missing in this otherwise wonderful publication that I was sorry not to see is Pletzel, or Onion Boards, as I believe they are called in the eastern U.S.

The Pletzel in Denver looked like a ten or twelve inch pizza or focaccia encrusted with lots of onion bits, a little garlic and poppy seeds. They were baked until they were crisp, cracker-like and, oh, so good. You can't have everything I suppose.

One item not missing from *The Artisan Jewish Deli at Home* is the Egg Cream. These were not something we grew up with in Denver and I didn't have one until I visited New York for the first time in the early 80s. The recipe is near the back of the book.

The book includes a list of sources for some of the harder to find ingredients as well as a list of some of the artisan delis around the country.

I enjoyed this book immensely and while I have not yet attempted any of the recipes, I will be cooking several of them in the near future. I think you will enjoy it, too.

Savannah Jewish News

Published by the
Savannah Jewish Federation
5111 Abercorn Street
Savannah, GA 31405
(912) 355-8111
www.savj.org

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SJF President-elect: **Sherry Dolgoff**
SJF Vice President: **Allan Ratner**
SJF Secretary/Treasurer: **Margie Levy**
SJF Executive Director: **Adam Solender**

SJN Editor: **Lynn Levine**

The objectives of the Savannah Jewish News are to foster a sense of community among the Jewish people of Savannah by sharing ideas, information, experiences and opinions, and to promote the agencies, projects and mission of the Savannah Jewish Federation.

The Savannah Jewish News is published monthly ten times per year, with a deadline for submissions of the 3rd of the month before publication. There are no February or August issues. All articles for the Winter and Summer issues should be submitted by December 8th or June 8th, respectively.

All submissions must be in MS Word format (articles) or pdf format with fonts embedded (advertisements). All color must be in the CMYK color format; all type in true black; photos in .jpg format.

Please send all SJN materials to:
sjnews@savj.org

Please send eNews submissions to:
adam@savj.org

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Steve Greenberg.
President,
Savannah Jewish
Federation

WD 40

I once had a client named Roy. Roy was a salt of the earth kind of guy. Nice. Decent. Honest. He came in one day to sign some papers and our conversation went something like this:

"So, Roy, how are you?"

"Pretty good, Steve. But this frozen shoulder of mine is just giving me fits."

"Well, listen Roy, have you been to see a doctor about it?"

"Nope, no need to."

At this point I put the papers down, took a look at Roy and took the bait.

"And why is that?"

"Steve, each morning I take my can of WD 40, spray it on my shoulder, rub it around and before you know it that shoulder is working just fine."

Beyond my amazement, and with patience being a virtue, I ventured to say, "Look, Roy, WD 40 is not absorbed into the skin. What might be happening is that the rubbing is creating some friction and friction creates heat and maybe that is enough to loosen up the shoulder."

Roy then closed out the discussion by offering, "Steve, whatever you may think, I know that WD 40 works for me and that is all that matters."

Roy thought positive and against all odds, even science and medicine, he overcame any doubts he might have had.

The functioning of a Jewish community is not unlike a joint... lots of moving parts that have to work together for a good result. But unlike a joint that reacts automatically to brain signals, a community relies on humans and all the emotions, thoughts, opinions and experiences that we have.

In the world in which we live, there is often the tendency for the negative to be the default position. That is not surprising since we are inundated daily with news of what is wrong

with this or what is wrong with that. Bad news trumps good news. Our information is sliced, diced, stirred, blended and provided in small doses. But I think Roy teaches a good lesson that applies to our Savannah community. Negative may exist but positive makes a community.

We have increasing support for Jewish Family Services. It is a positive force that we must look out for those less fortunate than ourselves. We have to look out for each other. JFS is that avenue and there is no question that demands will increase as the years go by.

As evidenced by enrollment at the JEA Preschool, Rambam Day School and Shalom School, there is an increasing desire by parents for their children to not only know and understand Judaism but also to receive a Jewish education. If there is anything that guarantees the future of a Jewish community, whether it is Savannah or anywhere else, it is Jewish education.

The Savannah Jewish Federation and the Jewish Educational Alliance both offer a multitude of opportunities to participate in programs that are stimulating, enjoyable and have the most potent and positive force around — a human connection with a fellow Jew. A shared purpose. An identity. All of these connections make our lives richer.

I could continue the list but here is the point. Be proud and positive about our Savannah Jewish community. If we are positive, we can overcome differences. If we are positive, we can accomplish much in all sectors of our community... item by item... step by step. If we are positive, we can leave an even better community for the generations behind us. I know the people in this community and the capacity is there — but we have to do more than just think it or wish it. We have to devote the "elbow grease" to make it happen.

So, let us all go to our garages, get out our cans of WD 40 and do what Roy did. He believed.



Adam Solender
Executive
Director of
JEA/SJF

you," reached into her bag, and pulled out a Tervis tumbler. But not just any Tervis tumbler, it was one that was personalized with my name, a date, and a patch flag of Israel.

I was so honored that one of the participants of the Savannah "Geshet Mission to Israel" was so thoughtful to have done this. While Susan is a manager with Tervis Tumbler—it would be disingenuous to think "it was easy for her." Susan had to search the length of Ben Yehuda Street until she found the patch, knowing that she was going to make up the cup when she returned.

When she was in my office, I pointed to the conference table, specifically, the ceramic cup holding pens in the middle of the table, which was inscribed with my name and "NH Chai Mission 2006," a gift from a mission participant seven years ago. Like Susan, Barbara Scotch had wanted to give a gift that commemorated the experience: She went to a "do it yourself" pottery shop and painted and personalized a cup as a present after our New Hampshire community Mission.

Putting the two cups next to each other was like a metaphor of Israel and change over the last seven years.

When our group travelled in 2006, it was just after the Lebanon War when Hezbollah missiles had rained over the North of Israel, Israel's bombing of South Lebanon, and a UN brokered cease fire. The country was tense, security was everywhere; there was a malaise that affected everyone and everything.

When our group travelled this past November, it was after a protracted period of security. While the countries surrounding Israel are roiling, inside Israel it is a very different story.

A Tale of Two Cups

A few weeks ago, Susan Jaffie walked into my office with a smile on her face and a small bag on her arm. After a few pleasant-ries, she said, "I have something for

While security is always at the forefront, there were few people (if any) checking bags at restaurants and bars. There were many less Israelis in uniform. Some of the people on the Mission were disappointed that they never saw the ubiquitous 18 year olds carrying M4 rifles down Ben Yehuda Street of days passed.

Israel's economy has continued to flourish, unabated, over the past six years with hundreds of technology and medical patents being applied for each month. The country is grappling with sophisticated questions of equal rights, religious and secular definitions and how to make "city life" more affordable for the young. There is an ever-present culture of volunteerism with many young people working to improve the living conditions of new immigrants and those on the margins. And over the past few years



Putting the two cups next to each other was like a metaphor of Israel and change over the last seven years.

there has been an extraordinary movement towards textual studies, not only from those who view themselves as "traditional," but from those who look at themselves as "secular." For the first time, Israelis are beginning to develop a philosophical anthropological community. With the amazing wealth being generated in the high tech world, many entrepreneurs

are looking to leverage their new found wealth to address societal challenges.

While six years doesn't seem like a long time, in a country that only has 65 years of history, the changes have been spectacular. The change is palpable throughout almost every sector of society.

What hasn't changed is our responsibility to our brothers and sisters in Israel. Literally, half of world Jewry lives in Israel, while the other half (give or take) live in North America. We have so much to learn from each other and so much to share on issues of identity, connection, and commitment.

I look forward to my next visit, next cup, and the continual development of our Jewish homeland.

Upcoming Concerts at the JEA

Black Heritage Concert
Feb. 12, 2014 at 7:00 pm

"Future of Jazz" featuring local and regional legacies.
Open to the Public, Admission is FREE!

An Afternoon Concert featuring
Pianist & Composer, Benjamin Warsaw, DMA
February 23, 2014

1-1:45 pm Children's Program | 4-5:30 pm Afternoon Concert
\$10 - Community Member Price, \$8 - JEA Member Value Price
Children 12 and under FREE!

Wiesel Honored by Israel & ADL

NEW YORK – Israeli President Shimon Peres awarded The State of Israel's Presidential Medal of Distinction to Nobel Laureate and esteemed author and activist, Elie Wiesel. Soon after, the Anti-Defamation League honored Wiesel and his wife with its seldom-given Jabotinsky Award.

The medal, the highest civilian honor in the State of Israel, is bestowed by the President onto individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the State of Israel or to humanity.

"Elie Wiesel has made a mark on humankind through his international public service, making a unique contribution to safeguarding the memory of the Holocaust and the transmission of a powerful message of peace and human dignity to the world at large," President Peres said. "Elie made from a memory, a warning; from a tragedy, a hope. He said 'you can kill not just by rifles and not just by gas, but by indifference.' He is trying to save the world from indifference."

Wiesel is best known for authoring, *Night*, an internationally-acclaimed memoir that tells the story of Wiesel's incredible struggle to survive Nazi death camps during the Holocaust. *Night* is internationally renowned

as a ground-breaking account of the appalling, inhumane experience for millions of Jews and other victims of Nazi Germany during the Holocaust and has been translated into multiple languages and distributed throughout the world.

Wiesel has won numerous literary awards for both his fiction and non-fiction, and has established himself as a prominent voice in the international community, speaking out against human rights violations around the world. He has been granted the highest honors from several nations, including receiving the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1986, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and soon after founded the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity with his wife, Marion. The Foundation's mission is "to combat indifference, intolerance and injustice through international dialogue and youth-focused programs that promote acceptance, understanding and equality."

"I am deeply moved to be here with you," Wiesel said. "Now I feel like I am an honorary Israeli, with this honor that you have given me. Israel has been a center of my life. I don't live in Israel, but Israel lives in me, and has lived in me since my childhood.

And therefore to be with you on this special occasion, it is meaningful. I cannot tell you the depth of my gratitude."

The purpose of the award is to enable the President of Israel to express his appreciation and esteem to deserving individuals, while at the same time use the distinction as a means to motivate others to contribute their talents and efforts for the well-being of the State of Israel and to "Tikkun Olam," improving the world.

Separately, the Anti-Defamation League awarded Wiesel and his wife, Marion, with its distinguished ADL Jabotinsky Award for Courageous Jewish Leadership.

"Elie and Marion Wiesel are more than life partners, they are courageous crusaders against the forces of hatred and intolerance and have in so many ways powerfully influenced change around the world," said Abraham H. Foxman, ADL National Director. "Their courageous leadership is imbued and inspired by a love for the Jewish people and the Jewish State of Israel, which they have tirelessly advocated for many, many years. And they are voices of conscience in protecting the memory of the Holocaust and in ensuring the dignity of its vic-



Elie Wiesel (l) receives the Presidential Medal of Distinction from Israeli President Shimon Peres

tims."

The ADL Jabotinsky Award was established in 1980, when it was presented to then-Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and has been awarded to only two other individuals since then: the legendary Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, and former New York City Mayor Ed Koch.

The award is named after Vladimir Jabotinsky, the Zionist pioneer who helped lead the struggle for the establishment of a Jewish state. The recipients "all share one trait in common," said Mr. Foxman, "their love of the Jewish people and their dedication to its heritage, ethical traditions and creative survival."

Savannah Jewish ARCHIVES



JOH 003, ORAL HISTORIES

ALLAN COTLER, August 18, 2003

I was in World War II, and Uncle Sam sent me to Chatham Field, which was northwest of Savannah. It was an Army Air Base. I had been overseas and I had returned and I was an instructor at Chatham Field. This was in the latter part of '43. It was there in Savannah that I met Rosalie... Strangely enough, a number of the boys, I was an officer, a navigator, and we were walking by the DeSoto Hotel and the music was coming from the ballroom and a number of the boys and myself, maybe one or two, went inside and they were dancing. This pretty young lady was at the doorway there and they had a big sign, "USO Come On In." Rosalie's mother was a chaperone, which I didn't know at that time, didn't know who it was. She asked us, the boys, to come on in and dance. I did. And that is where I met Rosalie. At a dance. Could I dance? No. I might have had some rhythm but I don't think I could dance at that time. I say I can now. And that's the way we met... We married in June 1945... My home was in New York. And we were married in New York. At that time, I liked the way the South was, the living, and so forth. I didn't care for the hustle and bustle of New York any longer, so I, we decided to stay in Savannah...And a ballet teacher corrected those two left feet. Which you know, in our older age I teach line dancing.

The archives holds an excellent collection of oral histories. Each month we will showcase an excerpt from one. Other excerpts appear in our publication, *Voices of Savannah*. Questions, comments? Please contact archivist, Katharine Rapkin at 912-651-2125 or at rapkin@georgiahistory.com

The Savannah Jewish Archives will soon launch a new website. We are very excited to share more broadly the collections and resources of the archives. Thank you for your continued support and readership, and please stay tuned for the upcoming reveal!"

Your Campaign Dollars at Work Yad LaKashish

As part of the 2013 Campaign and Allocations process, the Savannah Jewish Federation approved a new Mini-Grant program whereby community members could recommend overseas agencies to receive \$500 mini-grants, with up to 20 being approved. Sixteen submissions were made in 2013 and this continues our introduction to you of the grant recipients.

Yad LaKashish: Lifeline for the Old gives more than 300 of Jerusalem's needy elderly and disabled a sense of purpose and self-worth through creative work opportunities, essential support services and a warm community environment.

The programs and services offered at **Yad LaKashish** take into consideration the wide array of needs of the elderly poor, while building upon the strength of their abilities. This deli-

cate balance between providing the elderly with much-needed financial aid, on the one hand, and empowering them to use their own natural abilities, on the other, is one of the unique aspects of their approach.

In line with the principle of the medieval Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides that the highest level of charity is to help people help themselves, the elderly artisans receive specific financial benefits in return for their work. As well as alleviating some of the stress of daily life with minimal income, these benefits also engender a feeling of being employed in a workplace, like other adults in society. Benefits include a monthly stipend, a monthly bus pass valid for all of Jerusalem, a snack and hot lunch on-site, subsidized eye and dental

care and holiday bonuses.

The elderly, most of them having no prior artistic experience, are placed in one of seven workshops: book-binding, packaging, metalwork, silk painting, ceramics, sewing and embroidery, or a special rehabilitation workshop for those with disabilities. They are trained by qualified workshop leaders who hail from schools of design such as the Bezalel Art Academy.

The majority of the participants are immigrants to Israel with little working knowledge of Hebrew and limited contact with family members outside of a spouse. At **Yad LaKashish: Lifeline for the Old**, the immigrant elderly can converse in their native tongue, whether it is Russian, Amharic, English, Spanish, French, Persian or (even) Hebrew. For many, the other participants as well as the workshop leaders, staff and volunteers, become



A Yad LaKashish artisan at work

their primary social network.

The elderly artisans feel the peak of their pride when visitors of all ages, from around the world, come to tour the workshops, to talk to them about their work and to purchase the beautiful handcrafted items they made at **Yad LaKashish**.

Mini Grant.....from pg 1

sent by the grant recipients to the Federation, some of which are published in the Letters to the Editor section of this paper (see page 2).

The Federation encourages you to be a part of the Community Campaign and Allocations process and nominate an overseas program that you know about for one of these mini-grants. The guidelines are:

- The organization being nominated must primarily have a direct impact on the lives of Jew-

ish people outside the United States;

- Grants will not be considered to other grant-making organizations;
- There is a limit of two nominations per person;
- Nominations are due no later than April 25, 2013.

You can nominate one of your favorite overseas organizations for a 2014 Savannah Jewish Federation mini-grant online at www.savj.org.

Time to Order Mah Jongg Cards!

Attention Mah Jongg Players! It's time to order your 2014 Mah Jongg cards. The standard card is \$8.00; the large card is \$9.00. The deadline for placing orders is January 24, 2014. Make checks payable to the Agudath Achim Sisterhood and send to:

Betty Lasky
402 Wheeler St
Savannah, GA 31405

No extra cards will be ordered after January 24th; be sure to place your order on time! For additional information, contact Betty at (912) 355-2017.



Anniversaries	Birthdays	Luncheons & Receptions
Award Dinners	Board Meetings	Proms
Baby Showers	Business Presentations	Retirement Dinners
Banquets	Celebrations & Ceremonies	Reunions
Bar/Bat Mitzvahs	Golf Outings	Weddings

Members & non-members are invited to book with us.
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Jessie Melamed Brinsfield at 843.681.2582 ext. 110

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2014 SAVANNAH JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL



SUNDAY, JANUARY 19TH

1:00 PM - FILM

Nono, The Zigzag Kid

~*A great film for all, including ages 8+ !*~

Nono wants to be like his father- the best police inspector in the world- but he constantly gets in trouble. Two days before his Bar Mitzvah, he is sent away to his uncle Sjmoeel, who is supposed to get him back on track. However, during the train ride Nono gets one last chance to prove himself... Together with master-burglar Felix Glick- an old acquaintance of his father- he stops the train and enters a world of disguises, chases, French chansons and Zohara, a mysterious woman whose secrets will change Nono’s life forever.

(Comedy, 2012, 90 min, In English, Dutch and French with English subtitles)



SUNDAY, JANUARY 19TH

7:00 PM - OPENING RECEPTION

7:30 PM - FILM

The Attack

Amin Jaafari (Ali Suliman, Paradise Now) is an Israeli Palestinian surgeon, fully assimilated into Tel Aviv society. He has a loving wife, an exemplary career, and many Jewish friends. But his picture perfect life is turned upside down after a suicide bombing in a restaurant leaves nineteen dead, and the Israeli police inform him that his wife, Sihem (Reymonde Amsellem, Lebanon) who also died in the explosion, was responsible.

(Drama, 2013, 102 min, Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles)

**** Special guest Melinda Stein will introduce the film and lead a discussion with Q & A afterwards. ****



THURSDAY, JANUARY 23RD

12:30 PM - LUNCH / 1:30 PM - FILM

Life in Stills

At the age of 96, Miriam Weissenstein never imagined that she would be facing a new chapter in her life. But when her late husband Rudi’s life’s work was destined for demolition, even this opinionated and uncompromising woman knew she needed help. Under the cloud of a family tragedy, a special relationship is forged between Miriam and her grandson, Ben.

(Documentary, 2011, 58 min, Hebrew and German with Subtitles)

January 23rd Lunch Menu:
Homemade Burgers with all the Fixins, French Fries, Cole Slaw and Dessert.



THURSDAY, JANUARY 23RD

6:00 PM - DINNER

7:00 PM - FILM

**Wherever You Go
&
Dove’s Cry**

DOUBLE
FEATURE!

DOUBLE
FEATURE!

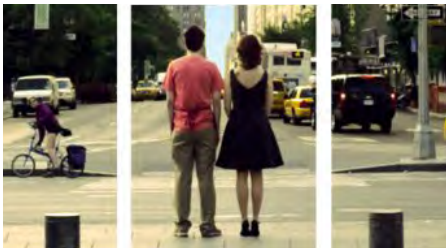
(Wherever You Go) Years after cutting herself off from her Orthodox family, Zohara (30) decides to show up at her younger sister’s wedding. On her way to the wedding she meets Neriman (20), a young Bedouin woman, who’s escaping an arranged wedding forced upon her with her cousin. This dramatic thriller creates a powerful encounter between two worlds, reflecting each woman’s struggle with self definition and the expression of self in a “predetermined world”.

(Drama, 2012, 40 min, Hebrew with English Subtitles)

Dove’s Cry tells the story of a young and charismatic Arab teacher from Wadi Ara, who teaches spoken Arabic in a Jewish elementary school in Israel as part of the special program created by Israeli NGO Merchavim’s “Let’s Talk” Arabic curriculum. The film speaks to both the possibilities as well as the limitations of implementing an intercultural Arabic learning program in a Jewish school.

(Documentary, 2012, 53 min, Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles)

January 23rd Dinner Menu:
“Middle Eastern” Chicken Kabobs, Grilled Veggies, Couscous and Dessert.



SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH

7:30 PM - DESSERT RECEPTION

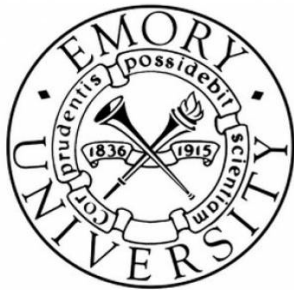
8:00 PM - FILM

Putzel

For some, life is an adventure filled with opportunities to excel and places to explore. For Walter Himmelstein, a young man endearingly known as Putzel, life literally doesn’t go beyond his family’s fish store and his community on the upper west side of Manhattan. In this heartwarming comedy, Walter’s aspirations of taking over his uncle’s smoked fish emporium are disrupted by the arrival of Sally, who becomes romantically involved with his about-to-retire and very-married uncle.

~*Special combined program, bring your kids to Saturday Night Out!*~

(Comedy, 2012, 88 min, English)



SUNDAY, JANUARY 26TH

6:00 PM - DINNER

7:00 PM - FILM

**From Silence to Recognition:
Confronting Discrimination in
Emory’s Dental School History**

From 1948 to 1961, a pervasive climate of anti-Semitism transfigured the young lives of Jewish students at Emory University’s dental school. ***This documentary is based on the investigative research of Dr. Perry Brickman who*** will introduce the film, and lead a post screening discussion panel including Dr. Harold Black, Dr. Bucky Bloom, and others who attended Emory Dental School during this time.

(Documentary, 2012, 35 minutes, English)

January 26th Dinner Menu:
Slow Cooked Brisket, Roasted Potatoes, Green Beans with Almonds and Dessert.



TUESDAY, JANUARY 28TH

6:00 PM - DINNER

7:00 PM - FILM

**Women Unchained
&
Aya**

DOUBLE
FEATURE!

DOUBLE
FEATURE!

(Women Unchained) Even though Leslee’s husband was having an affair with the babysitter, it still took ten years before her husband would grant her a “get,” or Jewish divorce. When Ariel sought a “get,” her husband demanded payment of half-million dollars from her father. These are just two of the stories chronicled in Women Unchained, a film documenting the experiences of modern-day “agunot,” or women whose husbands refuse to grant them a Jewish divorce.

(Documentary, 2011, 60 min, English and Hebrew with English subtitles)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19TH - SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST

Aya is waiting to meet someone at the airport, but finds herself picking up a complete stranger instead – Thomas Overby. Overby, believes Aya to be his assigned driver. The young woman, intrigued by his presence and the random encounter, does not reveal the mix-up and mischievously sets off with him for his destination- Jerusalem.

(Drama, 2012, 40 min, French, Hebrew, and English)

January 28th Dinner Menu:

Classic Southern Barbeque Chicken and Rice, Okra and Tomatoes and Dessert



THURSDAY, JANUARY 30TH

12:30 PM - LUNCH / 1:30 PM - FILM

**Broadway Musicals -
A Jewish Legacy**

A Jewish Legacy explores the unique role of Jewish composers and lyricists in the creation of the modern American musical and many of the songs that comprise "The American Songbook." Over the fifty-year period of its development, the songs of the Broadway musical were created almost exclusively by Jewish Americans.

(Documentary, 2013, 100 min, English)

January 30th Lunch Menu:

Stuffed Tilapia, Sweet Potatoes, Sautéed Veggies and Dessert.



THURSDAY, JANUARY 30TH

6:00 PM - DINNER / 7:00 PM - FILM

Fill the Void

Eighteen-year-old Shira is the youngest daughter of the family. She is about to be married off to a promising young man of the same age and background. It is a dream come true, and Shira feels prepared and excited. But disaster strikes when her older sister, Esther, dies giving birth to her first child causing her marriage to be postponed.

(Drama, 2012, 130 min, Hebrew with English subtitles)

January 30th Dinner Menu:

Sautéed Beef with Sweet Peppers, Tomato-Cucumber Salad, Vegetables and Dessert.



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST

7:30 PM - DESSERT RECEPTION

8:00 PM - FILM

AKA Doc Pomus

Doc Pomus was the most unlikely of rock & roll icons. Paralyzed with polio as a child, Brooklyn-born Jerome Felder reinvented himself first as a blues singer (renaming himself Doc Pomus) then as a songwriter, creating some of the greatest hits of the early rock and roll era. *AKA Doc Pomus* brings to life Doc's joyous, heartbreaking, romantic, and extraordinarily eventful journey.

(Documentary, 2012, 98 min, English)

**** Special guest Amy Linton, editor and associate producer of AKA Doc Pomus, will join us for a special "behind the scenes" look at the film and Q & A immediately afterwards. ****

**THE JEA AND THE SAVANNAH JEWISH FEDERATION INVITE
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Please contact Jennifer Rich at 912-355-8111 or programming@savj.org for more information about becoming a festival sponsor.



ADMIT ONE



TICKET INFORMATION

Full Festival Pass

(admits one person to all 10 films)

Community Members: \$85.00

JEA Members: \$65.00

Purchase your full festival pass online at www.SavannahJEA.org or at the JEA.

Single Ticket Prices (meal & movie)

Lunch & Movie

Community Members: \$17.00

JEA Members: \$13.00

Dinner & Movie

Community Members: \$24.00

JEA Members: \$20.00

Purchase your tickets (meal & movie) online at www.SavannahJEA.org or at the JEA.

Paid meal reservations must be made at least two (2) days in advance of the movie screening. (No meal walk-ins can be accommodated)

Single Ticket Prices (movie only)

Community Members: \$10.00

JEA Members: \$8.00

Purchase your tickets (movie only) at the JEA beginning 45 minutes prior to each screening.

Additional Information

- The Full Festival Pass is for MOVIES ONLY. Payment for dinner reservations are made separately.
- All movies are screened at:
Jewish Educational Alliance
5111 Abercorn Street
Savannah, GA 31405
- All meals are kosher
- Orthodox supervised kosher meals available upon request.
- Visit www.SavannahJEA.org for details about the Savannah Jewish Film Festival.



ADMIT ONE



Four Questions for the Rest of the Year

Benjamin Warsaw



Benjamin Warsaw will give two solo piano performances at the JEA on Sunday, February 23 – at 1pm for families with children and at 4pm for a general audience.

Benjamin, 32, is temporary assistant professor of music for piano at Armstrong Atlantic State University. Originally from Atlanta, he has undergraduate and master's degrees from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, and a Doctor of Musical Arts from Boston University. But Benjamin always had strong ties to Savannah – his mother, Sherrie Safer Warsaw, grew up here, and Benjamin, who attended the Greenfield Hebrew Academy of Atlanta from pre-K through 8th grade, had his Bar Mitzvah at Congregation Bnai Brith Jacob under the tutelage of Rabbi Jeffrey Gordon. He is happy to be back in the South and in Savannah where he has become reacquainted with cousins and has fond memories of visiting his grandmother and Tybee.

Benjamin is interested in and active in all aspects of the music world – education, performance, composing and private instruction. There's much more to him than our *Four Questions*; you can learn more at www.benjaminwarsaw.com.

How old were you when you began playing piano and composing?

I first started playing when I was eight years old on a tiny keyboard in the music program at Greenfield Academy. My parents bought me a Cassio keyboard. Someone suggested to them that I was pretty good and maybe they should get a piano so they bought an upright and I started taking lessons with the neighborhood piano teacher. She taught me how to

read music, but then I would just go home and play for hours. It wasn't really 'practice' or a guided plan. I took lessons from her for five years. Finally she said I needed to go to someone who could teach me more. I started with a Russian woman who taught me well but then I got burnt out on the piano so I quit for almost five years and didn't play piano or listen to classical music at all during that time. It wasn't 'cool.' When I was almost 19, I had just started playing again and got in touch with an old friend from music camp who was going to Eastman. I visited him and hearing the music all around gave me a burning desire to play again. I practiced for a year and managed to get into Eastman. I began writing music while working on my master's and did much more writing while working on my doctorate. Now I am the resident composer for a dance group in Atlanta.

We understand that you've started a new performance series at Armstrong. Please tell us about that.

I started at Armstrong in the fall and one of my first tasks, outside of teaching, was I appointed myself to start a concert series called *Piano in the Arts*. We had one concert in the fall, we're having three more in the spring semester and I'm already planning 2014-2015. It features piano used in a variety of different settings, not just as a classical instrument. For example, the group Velvet Caravan, who performed at the Jewish Food Festival, will perform Jewish music in the second half of our March program on ethnic music. The January program is a jazz performance with Brian Buch from the New England Conservatory and in April we are featuring Zoetic, an all-female modern dance group. We're trying to mix things up a little bit and start bringing in some artists who've maybe never been to the

Armstrong campus. All of these programs are at 8pm on Saturday nights, are open to the public and almost all are free. All of them are preceded by master classes the day before with the Armstrong students. [The Armstrong Fine Arts calendar is available online.]

What should we know about your business, Musical Cuisine?

My brother, Ari and I, have this side business, where we do fine-dining catering and concerts in your home or an event space. Ari is the most amazing chef – he now works at Bacchanalia, one of the best restaurants in Atlanta. We prefer to do events for 10-25 people, but we've done one as large as 50 people. Ari prepares a four to five course meal; he does a lot with molecular gastronomy so the dishes are so artistic you don't even want to eat them. He studied under some of the great chefs in the country. I create a concert to complement the meal. I'll split the concert up – I like to talk about the music with the guests and they enjoy that aspect. If the host doesn't have a piano or isn't looking for a classical program, we have other artists we work with to put together

the musical program. We've done events in Atlanta, Boston and Washington, DC, and are available for Savannah.

Given that you are a professor, a performer and a composer, who would you say have been the biggest influences on you?

I never want to box myself in; I never just want to be a pianist or a teacher or a composer. There will always be musical influences, like Bach or Beethoven; but it's also how they wrote and lived that inspires me. When I was in Vienna studying a few years ago I went to Heiligenstadt where Beethoven spent summers and I walked along the same river he did and tried to think about what inspired him. I was in Mexico for a wedding, out on a boat, and got inspired to write a piece because the ocean was so beautiful. It might be watching the Alvin Ailey Company (who I got to work with!) or a video of the original Nijinsky choreography for the *Rite of Spring* that's inspiring. Inspiration is everywhere; it's mostly up to me if I'm going to accept it. And my teacher Rebecca Penneys, at Eastman, changed my life, I feel very indebted to her. So much more than just playing piano, she introduced me to yoga, breathing, a healthier lifestyle, consciousness and philosophers.

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Garden Inn
Savannah Midtown





The Jewish Educational Alliance presents a monthly program guide:



CENTERPIECE

Jewish Educational Alliance

Jan./Feb. 2014

Great Start to a New Workout for the New Year and New You

As we promised, the Health and Wellness Department installed nine new pieces of cardio equipment, all of which have personal televisions. The response from our membership has been amazing! Everyone that gets on the equipment has found it very easy to use. While you work out you can watch TV or listen to your music or audio book while running through a beautiful mountain pass or maybe the streets of Chicago. And while doing so the equipment lets you add various workout intensifiers.

All of the equipment has a plug that fits most Apple products giving you the capability to play your own music or audio books through the cardio equipment. Or just plug in any regular headphones to access the television channels.

On the TRUE manufactured equipment (treadmills and upright bike), you can personalize

your workout with your music, literature or videos. Simply plug in, select play and then begin your workout. The Octane Fitness equipment (seated elliptical, standing ellipticals and the lateral) all have personal televisions and plugs for your Apple devices. The Octane line has many different workout options, as well as many different options to enhance the set programs.

Elise Shernoff said that she loves the new equipment and that she will be using it more often than before.

Much hard work and dedication was put forth for the JEA to acquire this state-of-the-art equipment for our facility. Come in and try it out! It takes less than two minutes to learn how to use the new equipment and you will really enjoy your new workout on it.



Mark Your Calendar

January 23

Savannah Jewish Film Festival
Life in Stills. 1:30 pm
Wherever You Go and *Dove's Cry*. 6:00 pm

January 25

Saturday Night Out - "Arctic Plunge." 7:00 pm

Savannah Jewish Film Festival
Dessert Reception - 7:30 pm
Putzel. 8:00 pm

January 26

Savannah Jewish Film Festival
Dinner - 6:00 pm
From Silence to Recognition: Confronting Discrimination in Emory's Dental School History. 7:00 pm

January 28

Savannah Jewish Film Festival
Dinner - 6:00 pm
Women Unchained and *AYA*. 7:00 pm

January 30

Savannah Jewish Film Festival
12:30 Lunch
Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy. 1:30 pm

SJFF Dinner - 6:00 pm
Fill the Void. 7:00 pm

February 1

Savannah Jewish Film Festival
Dessert Reception - 7:30 pm
AKA Doc Pomus. 8:00 pm

February 9

Art Gallery Reception
Deborah Raines. 3:00 pm

February 10

Black Heritage Festival Concert. 7:00 pm

February 22

Saturday Night Out - "Polar Bears vs. Penguins." 7:30 pm

February 23

Benjamin Warsaw Concert. 1:00 pm

February 28

PJ Library Tot Shabbat. 5:30 pm

March 8

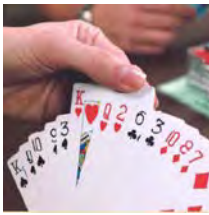
S'day Night Out. "Just Dance Party" 7:45 pm

March 9

Community Purim Carnival. 12:30 pm



Adult Programming



Bridge - Wednesdays 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Scrabble - Wednesdays 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Mah Jongg - Mondays 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Thursdays 10:30 am to 12:30 pm



Lunch Bunch - Every Thursday 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm
Join us for Thursday Lunch Bunch! Visit with old friends and meet new ones, enjoy lunch followed by an educational speaker or performer.



Community Garden
Love to garden, but don't have the space? Be part of the JEA Garden Club and help work one of the 18 garden boxes at the new Midtown Miracle Community Garden, three blocks north of the JEA. Excess produce and herbs will be donated to Second Harvest to aid them in their mission to feed up to 6000 children daily. For more details, "like" **Midtown Miracle Community Garden** on Facebook or email Carol Greenberg MStarArts@gmail.com.

More Improvements for Even Our Youngest Members



Justin Robertshaw
Facilities Director

A few months ago Adam asked me to get the babysitting room in the Fitness area spruced up to look more inviting and appealing. Some of my first ideas were that we could repaint the walls in a more pleasing color, sort the toys, look into getting a new TV for the children's videos and finally, get rid of the old brown reclining chair; I thought it made the room feel so dirty and messy.

I spoke with Stephanie, the Fitness Director, and we came up with some great ideas that wouldn't cost much and would bring the room up to twenty-first century standards. The JEA already had the wall paint, new ceiling tiles, and white paint for the handicap rail and mirror trim. The only things we needed to purchase were the baseboard trim paint, some brushes and rollers.

It took about an hour to remove all the items from the room, even taking nails, tape and thumb tacks off the walls. Fortunately, the walls did not need any prep work as they were in very good condition. But then we removed the floor rugs. My jaw dropped when I saw the floors had not been properly taken care of over the years. I knew it was going to take Mr. Jeff, my right hand person, at least three full days to fix this when normally it should take two hours from start to finish.

I then had a little painting party. Stephanie, Brittney (the back desk assistant) and I painted the entire room in less than five hours on the Friday after Thanksgiving. As the painting progressed, the transformation to the room was like night-and-day. Then I finished up the trim paint and the

white paint. That took a little longer because I was working to 'Make It Right' the first time.

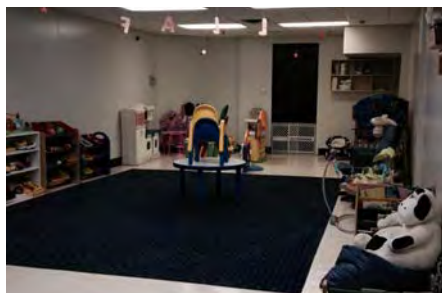
The following Monday through Wednesday, Jeff worked on the floor. It was so much cleaner after he was done.

Wednesday afternoon I started working on the ceiling tiles around the outside of the room. They had paint on them. Some were beaten up from being moved in and out of the grid to fix things above the lights. Some had water damage. Most needed to be replaced.

Stephanie purchased a diaper shelf and a coat rack wall shelf. These were installed at the entry to the room and the back of the room. We even added a brand new glider rocking chair with rocking ottoman.

Stephanie gave me a floating shelf for the DVD player and asked that the TV be wall-mounted above it. (With this extra feature, the power and cable lines needed to be placed right behind the TV. It was very simple, but I will talk about how to do that another day.)

Then I turned the room over to Stephanie and the Fitness Department babysitters. We were all so pleased with how it looked. We hope the parents are just as impressed after seeing how new and fresh the room has become for their children.



JEA Donations

(November 5, 2013-December 16, 2013)

ARKIN-CLARK GARDEN FUND

In memory of Ruth Stein
In honor of Arthur Horovitz
Nancie & Fred Clark
In honor of Eva Odrezin
In honor of Larry Lasky
Sharon & Bill Sand

JEA BUILDING FUND

In honor of Joanne Hochman
In honor of Biff Montana
Arlene Ratner
In memory of Anne & Harry Richman
Arlene & Allan Ratner

JEA GENERAL DONATIONS

In honor of Paul Robinson
Sarabel & Ross Stemer
In honor of Arthur Horovitz
Thelma & Frank Hoffman
A donation by Abei Irowa

JEA GENERAL DONATIONS – ECE

In honor of Larry Lasky
Harriet & Paul Kulbersh
A donation by Sandy Goodman

PHILLIP HOFFMAN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Herbert Blumenthal
Thelma & Frank Hoffman

RAYMOND & MORRIS ROSEN MEMORIAL FUND

In honor of Michael Schwartz
Marilyn Seeman

HARVEY RUBIN MEMORIAL FUND

In honor of Robert Guggenheim
Brenda & Patrick Salter
Bernice Elman
Marsha & Chuck Bernstein
In memory of Celia Weiner
In memory of Harvey Rubin
In honor of Chuck Bernstein
Elise & Victor Shernoff
In honor of Bernard Wilker
Bernice Elman
Brenda & Patrick Salter
In memory of Lawrence Elman
In memory of Sam Elman
Marsha & Charles Bernstein

JEA FITNESS FUND

In honor of Walter Lowe
Harriet & Paul Kulbersh

BERTHA & HYMAN KANTER YOUNG AT HEART FUND

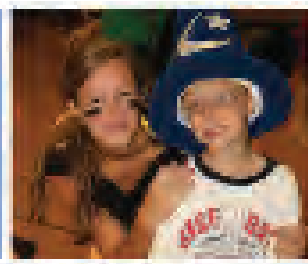
In memory of Eleanor Levin Cohen
Regina Platock & Harvey Kanter

HENRY W. CENTER COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Donald Anderson
In memory of Leonard Lorberbaum
Vicki & Harry Center



Children's Programming



SATURDAY NIGHT OUT

Parents enjoy a night out and children age 4 years through 6th grade have a night of fun! RSVPs and advanced payment are a MUST by the Thursday prior to the event! Dinner is included! Space is limited to the first 30 children.

Saturday, January 25th, 6:30 pm - "Arctic Plunge"

As the temperature drops the excitement at the JEA continues to rise with our Arctic Plunge Pool Party! From cannonball contests to relay races, we'll have every kid wanting more! Dinner will be served and don't forget your bathing suit and towel.

Saturday February 22nd, 7:30 pm - "Polar Bears vs. Penguins"

There is a friendly battle brewing to see who is true King or Queen of the Arctic. Silly games and competitions will culminate in the final showdown, proving just who runs the Arctic. Dinner will be served.



Saturday, March 8th, 7:45 pm - "Just Dance Party"

We have saved the best for last as we say L'hitraot to another wonderful season of Saturday Night Out. Pack your dance shoes as we bust moves all night long with several Just Dance games on the big screen, as well as learning a few new dances to prepare us for Camp Savannah 2014! This is a night you most definitely don't want to miss! Dinner will be served.



Price: \$25/child, \$50/family

Member Value Price: \$20/child, \$40/family

Register in person, online at www.SavannahJEA.org, call us at 355-8111 or email DJ Horton at kids@savj.org

Black Heritage Festival Concert Featuring Teddy Adams

"Future of Jazz"

**Monday, February 10th
7:00 PM**

Free and open to the public.

Community Purim Carnival!

**Sunday, March 9th
1:30-3:00 PM**

Enjoy face painting, costume contests and more!

Contact DJ Horton for more information and prices - 912-355-8111 or email at kids@savj.org.

Winter Fitness Classes

Sunday

9:15 am - Pilates Basic
10:30 am - Total Body Blast
1:00 pm - Extreme Toning

Monday

5:00 am - Master Swim
8:30 am - Firm It Up
10:00 am - Aquasize
10:00 am - Vinyasa Yoga
10:30 am - SilverSneakers Classic
6:00 pm - Evening Water Aerobics

Tuesday

8:30 am - Pilates
9:30 am - Pilates Barre
10:00 am - SilverSneakers Splash
10:30 am - SilverSneakers Circuit
5:45 pm - Zumba
6:00 pm - Savannah Kenpo
7:00 pm - Savannah Fencing Club

Wednesday

5:00 am - Master Swim
8:30 am - Firm It Up
10:00 am - Yoga Pilates Fusion
10:30 am - SilverSneakers Classic
6:00 pm - Billy's Boot Camp
6:00 pm - Evening Water Aerobics

Thursday

8:30 am - Pilates
9:30 am - Pilates Barre
10:00 am - Aquasize
10:30 am - SilverSneakers Circuit
6:00 pm - Savannah Kenpo
6:00 pm - Evening Water Aerobics
6:30 pm - Yoga Flow
7:00 pm - Savannah Fencing Club

Friday

5:00 am - Master Swim
8:30 am - Firm It Up
10:00 am - Aquasize
12:00 pm - Noon Basketball

Join the JEA!

Join the JEA and you will be glad you did when you take advantage of our special member pricing, FREE classes and events! The JEA provides many different types of memberships to accommodate everyone.

Types of Membership include:

Family Plans
Couple Plans
Individual Plans
Military/Law Enforcement (active duty only)

Visit us at 5111 Abercorn Street or online at www.SavannahJEA.org for more information!



JEA Art Gallery

January Artist: Raymond Gaddy



Says Raymond Gaddy, “I never intended to be an artist. Growing up, I’m not even sure I knew that you could be a ‘professional’ artist. I wanted to be the best surgeon there was. I could think of nothing more amazing than cutting someone up and putting them back together again even better than they were before. In school Biology, chemistry and physics were all fascinating and challenging, but none of them compared to the difficulty of the ‘easy A’ painting class I took three years into my undergraduate education.”

It has been fifteen years since he took that life altering class. Gaddy completed his MFA in Painting in 2000 and began aggressively pursuing both his art career and his teaching career. He continued making his work and exhibiting it nationally and internationally. He has exhibited in many museums and galleries including the Exit Art Gallery, NY; The Tampa Museum of Art, FL; The Attelboro Museum of Art, MA; and the Art Center of Design in Pasadena, CA. His work has been included in many public and private collections including the College of Notre Dame of Maryland; The Savannah College of Art and Design; and the Library of Congress.

Gaddy teaches painting and drawing at the University of North Florida. Teaching has given him the opportunity to grow in ways he never expected. Because of teaching he has been able to travel widely including spending the last three years teaching in Rome, Italy, in the UNF Study Abroad program. He recently was able to study Dutch painting techniques in the Conservation Department of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

Gaddy believes in the societal importance of the arts. He is a member of the City of Savannah Cultural Affairs Commission. He has spent the last three years as the Director of the UNF Gallery of Art. In this role he also serves as a curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville. As part of these organizations he is able to exhibit the work of artists who he believes will enrich the lives of his students and the larger UNF community and the City of Jacksonville, Florida.

Artwork available for viewing January 1-31, 2014
Art Gallery Reception January 5, 1:00-3:00 pm

.....

February Artist: Deborah Raines



Originally from Huntington, WV, Ms. Raines received both her BA in Art Education and Masters in Sociology/Anthropology from Marshall University. She recently retired from 31 years of teaching art education, both in West Virginia and Georgia. She has worked on state and national committees for the support of the arts and co-founded a support system for Appalachian artists, but her proudest artistic accomplishment has been the four STAR Teacher awards she received while teaching art in Georgia.

Her art work has been exhibited in local, regional and national exhibitions.

Deborah’s art has evolved over the years until it comes as a surprise to her when she describes herself as a painter. In the past, she worked with pencil/Prismacolor and in clay. Even with these media, she would apply them in layers, cut the paper or clay and add other elements. A few years ago, she found herself more and more intrigued by complex, textural surfaces.

She began using magazine collage materials, added painted elements, cut the paper and layered more paper behind and on top. Then she began experimenting with textural elements on canvas, slicing the surface and weaving raw-edged fabric through it. She continued to add other things like raffia, cord, scrapbook paper and foil, and then began beading the surface. The beading took on a life of its own, growing from an added accent to an integral part of the painting.

What she wants the viewer to gain from her work is a sense of mystery and intrigue. She wants her work to become a personal experience for the viewer.

Artwork available for viewing February 2-28, 2014
Art Gallery Reception February 9, 3:00-5:00 pm

New JEA Members

The JEA would like to thank our members. Without your membership and support, we would not be able to offer all the services that we do. Our members are our most important asset!
(New Members as of 11/5/13-12/17/13)

- Jason & Andrea Algreen
- Larissa Allen & Amber Fulford
- Shorena Burns & Mariam Khutsishvili
- Jennifer Daniels
- Albert DeLeon
- Timothy Freeman
- Anne Hodges
- Barbara Hogan & Delia White
- Bonnie Million
- Christopher Ogolla & Dorine Omondo
- Angus & Jennifer Sawyer
- Jay & Gayle Selcow
- Lawrence Winsor



Join us at the JEA for an
Afternoon Concert
featuring
Pianist & Composer
Benjamin Warsaw, DMA
February 23, 2014

1 - 1:45 pm Children’s Program

Featuring:
Popular melodies and Hebrew songs

4 - 5:30 pm Afternoon Concert (including intermission)

Featuring:
Etudes, Opus 10 by Frederic Chopin
Preludes by Benjamin Warsaw
Rhapsody in Blue by George Gershwin

Prices:
\$10 - Community Member Price
\$8 - JEA Member Value Price

Children 12 and under FREE!



JEA Preschool Savannah News

January/February 2014

Enrollment Now Open for Fall 2014!

Early Bird Registration - Register by March 31st and receive \$100 off tuition fees.

Watch for Details about JEA Preschool Savannah Summer Program

To schedule your introductory appointment, contact Jodi Sadler at (912) 355-8111, or email preschool@savj.org. Tuition information and registration forms are available for download online at www.SavannahJEA.org.

JEA Preschool Savannah offers convenient Core Program and Extended Hours:

Core Program: 8:30am – 12:30pm

Extended Hours: 7:00am – 8:30am
12:30pm – 6:00pm

Serving children ages 16 months to 4 years old.

Contact us about our 2 & 3 day-a-week Programs!



Children become little engineers as they pour sand through objects they have arranged on the magnetic sand wall at JEA Preschool Savannah!

Engaging children in a nurturing, safe and inclusive environment, based in Jewish values.

A Look at What is Happening at JEA Preschool Savannah!

Highlights from each classroom.

Ayalim-Rams

The Preschool classroom continues to have fun putting Mat Man together as part of the Handwriting Without Tears program. Mat Man teaches important readiness skills: body awareness, drawing & pre-writing, counting, building, socializing and sharing.



G'daim-Lambs

The 2 year olds did a "cool" activity when they painted with ice. They had fun swirling the colored ice and watching it melt on the paper. This was a fun sensory activity and a beautiful wall hanging was produced for the classroom!



Yonim-Doves

The toddler class loves music with Ms. Megan! They play with musical instruments, tap their sticks to the rhythm, and jump up and down to one of their favorite tunes, Jump, Jump, by Maryann Harman. Used creatively, the sticks can contribute to perceptual motor and learning objectives including eye-hand coordination, following directions and directionality.



Check it Out!

How Much Sleep is Enough?

Here are some interesting facts about children's need for sleep:

- Studies show that 60% of a child's growth hormone is secreted during sleep.
- Getting too little sleep appears to have a role in obesity. One Israeli study found the effect in babies as young as 6 months.
- Australian children sleep almost a full hour per day more than American kids, who sleep less than kids in nearly all other countries.
- The National Sleep Foundation recommends 14 to 15 hours of sleep for babies, 12 to 14 for toddlers, 11 to 13 for preschoolers and 10 to 11 for elementary schoolers.

Read more about this at <http://kidshealth.org/parent/general/sleep/sleep.html>

Your Campaign Dollars at Work

‘An Amazing Year So Far’

by Bassie Gold

I would like to thank the Savannah Jewish Federation for helping to make my year in Israel possible. I am truly enjoying studying and living in this incredible, special land. I have had the opportunity to be at the Kosel often. I love going to daven in the place where the Bais Hamikdash (Holy Temple) stood and where those before me have davened (prayed) for hundreds of generations. The Kosel is truly one of my most favorite places. I love being there and seeing every walk of Jewish life feeling comfortable with their surroundings and with the opportunity to be right there, close to the Wall, touching the wall. It is one place where we are truly one people, one nation. It is the one place where you feel like one family; Jewish sisters and brothers side by side.

I had a similar feeling to this when I attended the funeral of the Sephardic Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. His funeral was attended by thousands of people who were all there to pay their last respects to this great Rabbi. People from all backgrounds of Jewish life attended the funeral: Chassidim, Ashkenazim, Sephardim, religious and not religious. We stood together

in the same place, each of us for the same reason, yet each of us internalizing the moment privately.

I traveled to the southern part of Israel and saw the Yarden. I saw the most beautiful fish swimming among the coral reefs in water that was so clear you thought it was glass. One couldn't help but see the magnificence of creation. While standing there it occurred to me this is the very same body of water that split when the Jews left Egypt. Wow! I swam in the very waters that saved my ancestors.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to go to the Dead Sea. All the shaliachs that came to the JEA camp would tell us how people float in the Dead Sea while reading the newspaper, but I never believed that it was really possible. But let me tell you – I was floating and wished I'd had a newspaper.

I have been to the shuk in Machane Yehuda numerous times this year. My school brought us to show us around and to give us a better understanding of what goes on in the shuk on a daily basis. I love going on a Thursday afternoon or a Friday morning and watching everyone running around to quickly buy food they want for Shab-

bos. Mothers are able to buy fresh fruits, chicken, and fish while the children are able to pick from an array of candies and baked goods. When I go and watch this scene unfold before me it gives me an excitement for the Shabbos that is quickly approaching.

I am having an amazing year so far and I love being in the very land that I learned so much about in Rambam. I know I am feeling what hundreds of others, both young and old have felt while here; I am walking on the same stones that my ancestors walked upon.

I am enjoying my classes very much. I have a class in which we learn about all the women in Tnach (our history) and learn about what incredible individuals they were and how they impacted the Jewish people. In this class I have gained a new understanding of our matriarchs and how they rose to greatness. Another amazing class that I am taking this year delves into the Jewish months. These lessons teach me interesting facts and details about each month including the Jewish holidays. I have the privilege of taking three Halacha (Jewish Law) classes all given by a prominent Rabbi. He teaches us the halachos (laws) of kashrus, Shabbos and Bain Adom Lechavaro (laws between us and our fellow man); all three of these subjects are incredibly interesting and very practical for my everyday life.



Bassi Gold near the Kotel
(Western Wall)

With the assistance given to me from the Savannah Jewish Federation, I have been able to have the experience of a lifetime that will indeed remain with me my whole life.

I hope y'all have a great year and I can't wait to come back and tell you about the rest of my year.

Bassie Gold is attending school in Israel this year at Keser Chaya with the assistance of a Teen Jewish Experience grant from the Savannah Jewish Federation. Bassie is the daughter of Rabbi Yisrael and Elisheva Gold.

Israeli Artists to Appear in Savannah Music Festival

The Savannah Music Festival this year will feature prominent performances by renowned Israeli artists: Award-winning chamber musicians, Jerusalem Quartet, and GRAMMY-nominated mandolinist Avi Avital.

Harold Yellin, Chair of the 2014 Festival, commented: “The mission of the Savannah Music Festival is to present ‘a world-class celebration of the musical arts by creating timeless and adventurous productions that stimulate arts education, foster economic growth, and unite artists and audiences in Savannah.’ We are thrilled to bring musical talent from all over the world and, in particular, to bring from Israel both Avi Avital and the Jerusalem Quartet.”

Hailed as “one of the young, yet great quartets of our time,” the Jerusalem Quartet has garnered international acclaim for its rare combination of passion and precision. The ensemble has won over audiences around the world, both for their concerts and their recordings. The quartet is a record three-time recipient of BBC Music Magazine's Chamber Music Award, most recently for their CD

of Mozart quartets (2012), as well as for their recordings of Haydn (2010) and Shostakovich (2007).

The Jerusalem Quartet formed while its members were students at the Jerusalem Conservatory of Music and Dance and is comprised of Alexander Pavlovsky, first violin, Sergei Bresler, second violin, Ori Kam, viola (who replaced founding member Amihai Grosz), and Kyril Zlotnikov, cello. The quartet performs regularly in Europe and also has appeared in many major U.S. cities, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington.

The Jerusalem Quartet appears Wednesday, March 26, at 6pm, at Trinity United Methodist Church.

Recognized by The New York Times for his “exquisitely sensitive playing” and “stunning agility,” Avi Avital is considered one of the world's most exciting young musicians. He is deeply committed to building a new appreciation for the mandolin through virtuosic performance and exciting new repertoire. Boston Musical Intelligencer has described Avital's playing as “electrifying to watch and



(above) Avi Avital
(left) Jerusalem Quartet

hear... [He] takes the listener to the brink of wildest expectation and then leaps over those boundaries.”

Avital is the first mandolin player to receive a GRAMMY nomination in the category “Best Instrumental Soloist” for his recording of Avner Dorman's Mandolin Concerto with Andrew Cyr and the Metropolis Ensemble. He is a graduate of the Jerusalem Music Academy and the Conservatorio Cesare Pollini of Padova, Italy. Avital has released numerous recordings in the diverse genres of klezmer, baroque and new classical music. He has appeared as a soloist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, I Pomeriggi Musicali di Milano, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and Berliner Symphoniker; has collaborated extensively with artists

such as clarinetist Giora Feidman, soprano Dawn Upshaw, trumpeter and composer Frank London; and has been a guest at the Tanglewood, Luzern, Spoleto and Ravenna summer music festivals, as well as for Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project.

Avi Avital appears Tuesday, April 1, at 6pm, at Temple Mickve Israel.

Yellin, the Festival chair, added, “The music festival is the largest musical arts event in Georgia. By hosting talent from Israel, we once again demonstrate our tireless commitment to offer our community one of the most distinctive cross-genre festivals in the world.”

Tickets for these performances may be purchased on the Savannah Music Festival's website, www.savannahmusicfestival.org, or at the Box Office, 216 E. Broughton St., Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm (912-525-5050).

A Learning Opportunity



Jodi Sadler,
JEA Director of
Early Childhood
Education

It was a cool brisk morning when I walked down 37th Street in New York on my way to the New Early Childhood Directors Seminar sponsored by the JCC Association. The rush hour streets of Manhattan were a noisy, busy, and hectic start to the seminar experience. But as I entered the building of the JCCA's headquarters and made my way to the 4th floor, a quiet and calm environment began to take hold.

When the elevator doors opened, I was standing in front of the JCCA donor wall. Jennifer Rich had told me to take notice of this entryway. My eyes immediately went to the names of Betty Melaver and Norton Melaver (z"l). It was very meaningful to see the names of fellow Savannahians (and cousins) who had dedicated themselves to Jewish communal work at

the national level for the Jewish Community Centers of North America. Betty served on the National board of the JCCA for many years and contributed her time and financial resources to the organization.

I was greeted warmly by the Vice President of JCCA Early Childhood department, Mark Horowitz. He was holding the door open to welcome me, along with 18 other directors, for the beginning of this learning experience. I saw Alison and MacKenzie, Mark's coworkers in the department, whom I had seen a few months ago. It was nice to catch up and then to meet the other directors from New York, Minnesota, Memphis, and Ohio.

We began our work together studying Jewish text about Moses and the burning bush and its relationship to leadership in early childhood education programs. As we read the text in pairs, we asked questions dealing directly with the content and its meaning. We talked about Moses and his role as the leader of the Jewish people at the time and his vision for the Jewish people. What were our visions for

our preschool programs? As leaders, how do we convey those concepts and ideas to our teachers? In turn, how do our teachers become leaders in our programs?

Then we pulled out core values to Judaism and made personal reflections as to how those values are taught in our programs. For example, we often have visitors to JEA Preschool Savannah. These visits present a great opportunity to teach the Jewish traditions of welcoming guests.

The follow-up was to bring text study back to our individual preschool teachers. At staff meetings with our faculty here, we already have begun to use the technique of text study and reflection.

We discussed topics which included how JCCA can support our work with national resources, what we should include in our professional libraries, and how to be effective supervisors. Personally, I got the most benefits from networking and learning with my colleagues. We shared thoughts about summer programs, fundraising ideas, and special activities, all in the context of Jewish programs in Early Childhood. I learned that all programs are different and that there are many ways to structure



Jodi at JCCA headquarters

and organize them. We each will use our skills to figure out what works best for our program's children, families and community center.

As we concluded our learning experience, we made plans to have cyber meetings to continue these important conversations and to maintain these special relationships. Thank you to Adam and the JEA Board of Directors for affording me this opportunity for continuing education and professional growth.

Rambam on the Move



Ester Rabhan,
Principal
of Rambam
Day School

We've been busy these past few weeks. On Thanksgiving Day at 8:30am on a great morning to sleep late, about eighteen RDS runners ran in the United Way of the Coastal Empire Turkey Trot. These dedicated students had been running three times a week and some participated in KiDS ROCK and the Crab Crawl 5K in Richmond Hill as part of their "do-or-die, zero to 4 mile" training program. It took about an hour of endurance for the Turkey Trot; facing the cold, the other thousand people running and the will to keep on Truckin'. Those of us on the sidelines just had to endure the cold... a bit easier than running. Afterwards the RDS runners were rewarded with hot chocolate, bagels and other yummy foods.

Kindergarten through eighth grade put on a wonderful Chanukah Program. Kindergarten put everyone in the Chanukah mood with several Chanukah songs. The elementary and middle school students presented a skit and the main story line was a student who went to take a break from

it all and plopped down into a chair that ended up being a time machine. He goes back in time and then way into the future. He saw Christopher Columbus, The Fonz, George Washington and more. Intermittently, the elementary students sang songs that depicted the various scenarios that were presented by the time machine. The evening concluded with Tater Tots and doughnuts. The costumes were also wonderful and many were hand sewn!

Several teachers attended a CPR/First Aid course and we plan to have the remaining faculty attend another course in the near future.

Several teachers, a couple of students and a volunteer parent attended an in-service on how to best utilize the iPad. Rambam Day School purchased 90 iPads from St. Andrew's, who contacted us to offer our school a wonderful deal on iPads they were replacing. Within the next few weeks RDS hopes to have the iPads in the classrooms.

Ben Warsaw has joined with Rambam to both enlighten and educate our students in the world of music. Ben is a concert pianist. The elementary students had their first class today and they loved it.

Every month the entire school concentrates on a specific character trait and its negative counterpart: Last

month the character trait was patience and its negative counterpart impatience. This month the traits are genuine and phony. The children sing songs about the various traits, role play, write sentences and stories and have lots of discussions; all age appropriate.

Rambam participated in the coat drive and we were overflowing with coats for those in need. Our elemen-

tary classes participated in Adopting a Grandparent from the community. None of the grandparents were Jewish. We reached out to the community at large. The children bought specific items desired by specific individuals, wrapped them up and had them delivered.

Learning, doing chesed and having fun continues in Rambam Day School.



The Savannah Jewish Federation proudly provides space for a half-page ad to each local congregation in each issue of the Savannah Jewish News.

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10am - 12:30pm and 2pm - 3:30pm during the week.
Don't miss our Super Museum Sunday on February 9!

*We will be closed on Wednesday, 1/1 & Monday, 1/20.

Check out our e-news, Contact, & Winter/Spring
Program Guide for more details on our
upcoming events!

Services

Friday, January 17 - Kabbalat Shabbat Service with Julie
Hirsch & the Mickve Israel
Choir, 6pm.
24 - Tot Shabbat Service, 6pm. Kabbalat
Shabbat Service & Oneg, 8pm.
31 - Kabbalat Shabbat Comedy Service,
Live! in Savannah, 6pm.

Friday, February 7 - Friday Night Fever Shabbat Service,
6pm.
14 - Family Shabbat Dinner, 6pm. 7pm
Service.
21 - Kabbalat Shabbat Service with Julie
Hirsch & the Mickve Israel Choir.
28 - Tot Shabbat Service, 6pm. Kabbalat
Shabbat Service & Oneg, 8pm.

Saturday, January 18 - Shabbat Morning Service,
11am. MLK Observance.
25 - Shabbat Morning Service, 11am.

Saturday, February 1 - Shabbat Morning Service,
11am.
8 - Shabbat Morning Service, 11am.
15 - Shabbat Morning Service, 11am.
22 - Shabbat Morning Service, 11am.

Educational Opportunities

In-Depth Judaism at 9:15am & Torah Study following Kiddush Lunch on January 18,
& 25 and on February: 1, 8, 15 & 22.
Text, Schmooze & Jews on Tuesday, January 21 & Tuesday, February 18 at 12pm.

Everyone is welcome to join us for our services and events! Sign up for our weekly schedule of events e-mail by contacting kayla@mickveisrael.org, or by texting CMI to 42828. For more information or to RSVP to an event: call 912.233.1547 or visit mickveisrael.org

It's A Funny Thing



Melinda Stein

by Melinda Stein

An Orthodox man was traveling on El Al, when his seat-mate asked what he did for a living.

"I'm a rabbi."

"Well," said the man condescendingly, "I was born Jewish. I don't know much about it, but I presume you could sum it up in one sentence: 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.'"

The rabbi smiled, then said, "And what do you do for a living?"

"I'm an astrophysicist," he replied smugly.

"Well," said the rabbi, "I don't know much about it, but I presume I too, could sum it up in one sentence: 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star — how I wonder what you are.'"

Adam and Eve are sitting in the Garden of Eden, holding hands and watching a beautiful sunset. As a soft breeze gently sweeps over them, Eve tenderly turns to Adam and asks: "But, Adam dear, do you really love me?"

To which Adam replies, "Who else?"

David receives a parrot for his Bar Mitzvah. This parrot had a bad attitude and a worse vocabulary. David tries to teach him manners, but the bird just gets ruder and cruder. Desperate, David puts him in the freezer to cool off. He hears squawking, then quiet. Frightened, David quickly opens the freezer.

The parrot calmly walks out and says: "I'm sorry I offended you, David. I shall go to synagogue, pray, and modify my behavior."

Before David can ask about this astounding change, the parrot continues: "May I ask what the Empire chicken did?"

Schwartz, an elderly man, is relaxing on the porch of his small hotel outside Boca Raton when he sees a cloud of dust up the road. He leans out to see who could be approaching: It is a local farmer with a wagon.

"Good afternoon," says Schwartz.

"Afternoon," says the farmer.

"What do you have in your wagon?"

"Fertilizer."

"Fertilizer, eh? What do you do with it?"

"I spread it over the fruit."

"Well," says Schwartz, "you should come over here for lunch someday. We use sour cream."

A Catholic, a Protestant, a Muslim and a Jew were in a discussion during a dinner.

The Catholic: "I have a large fortune. I am going to buy Citibank!"

The Protestant: "I am very wealthy and will buy General Motors!"

The Muslim: "I am a fabulously rich prince. I intend to purchase Microsoft!"

They all wait for the Jewish man to speak.

The Jew stirs his coffee, places the spoon neatly on the table, takes a sip of his coffee, looks at them and casually says:

"Well, fellows, I'm not selling!"



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Our Tu'B Shevat Program (*Friday, January 17, 2014*)

Backpack Buddies

Torah Discussion Groups

Hebrew Classes

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Friday Kabbalat Shabbat 5:15 pm, Saturday 9:15 am Shabbat Service & Kiddush Luncheon
Mincha/Maariv & Havdalah, Saturday Evening

DAILY SERVICES:

Sunday 9:00 am & 6:00 pm, Monday & Thursday 7:00 am & 6:00 pm

Friday 7:00 am

Tuesday 7:30 am & 6:00 pm, Wednesday 8:00 am & 6:00 pm

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Contributions to the Savannah Jewish Federation may be made on our secure website at www.savj.org or by calling (912) 355-8111.

Condolences

We express our sympathy to the families of:

Ashley Morais White Samuels
Who died December 31, 2013

She is survived by her husband Scott M. Samuels; one daughter, Allison Samuels; one son, Jared Samuels; her parents, Leonard L. and Daryl Sue White; and one brother, Jason White.

Remembrances: Congregation Agudath Achim, 9 Lee Blvd., Savannah 31405; Jewish Educational Alliance, 5111 Abercorn St., Savannah 31405; the Anderson Cancer Institute at Memorial Health University Medical Center, 4700 Waters Ave., Savannah 31404.

Sidney Cohen
Who died December 7, 2013

He is survived by his nephew, Myron (Nancy) Gaspin.

Harvey Israel Pam
Who died December 3, 2013

He is survived by his wife, Joan Krieger Pam; his son, Mark Gregory Pam of Kathleen, GA; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and one sister, Arlene Kramer of Brooklyn, NY. He was

preceded in death by his daughter and son-in-law, Donna Lynn Pam & Ronald Buckner and his grandson.

Remembrances: Congregation Agudath Achim, 9 Lee Blvd., Savannah 31405.

Frieda Korman Smulevitz
Who died November 30, 2013

She is survived by her daughter, Pearl Smulevitz; her son, Joseph Smulevitz; and her brother, Schmulek Lassman. She was preceded in death by her husband, Hilel Smulevitz.

Remembrances: A charity of the donor's choice.

Elaine Rubnitz
Who died November 23, 2013

She is survived by her aunt and uncle, Jean and Sonny Rubnitz of Savannah; and numerous cousins.

Celia Plotkin Weiner
Who died November 19, 2013

She is survived by her daughter, Roslyn W. (Michael) Barney of Virginia Beach, VA; her son, Larry A. (Linda) Weiner of Raleigh, NC; four grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; two sisters, Miriam P. Stein and Bertha P. Freedman, both of

Savannah; and a number of nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Elliot Weiner, and two brothers, Samuel "Sam" Plotkin and Jacob Plotkin.

Remembrances: Congregation Bnai Brith Jacob, 5444 Abercorn St., Savannah 31405; or Hospice Savannah, P.O. Box 13190, Savannah 31416-0190.

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Call Jean Weitz 912-354-2409 to get involved.

Higher Ground

A New Growing Season

by Carol Towbin Greenberg



Carol Greenberg

Her story is not easy to tell nor is it easy to hear, but it is a story that needs telling and she does it well... and in the telling she renews my faith and teaches me a lesson for the new year in rebuilding community from the ground up.

Veronica (Vera) Hoffman is a local treasure. She did not seek fame and notoriety, nor sadly is she the only one whose life path was altered and irrevocably changed by the Holocaust. But Vera Hoffman several times a season tells her story to people of all ages and backgrounds. The characters and situations of her story are almost unbelievable as if it was a plot of a film – the increasingly restrictive laws in her native Hungary against Jewish businesses and then Jews themselves, the failed attempts to leave, the death marches, the cattle car train rides, her grandmother saved by a mother's love, the pillow that became a doll that then became a source of hidden jewels used to bribe a Russian soldier, the camps, acts of courage, survival and desperation—facts all told simply and straightforward with no embellishment, just the worn tired voice that makes one wish she did not have these stories to tell.

I had heard her story before but on this day I had the honor of accompanying her to Woodville-Thompkins

High School where she sat on stage in a room with more than 100 youth, some there without their teacher. I taught inner city high school for years, and I worried about the students' response to her stories; I worried about their behavior so close to the end of their school day; I worried they would neither respect nor understand such stories told without power point, graphics or tweets.

She remembers she hated the yellow star and wanted to know if her grandmother could color her coat to match the color of the star so it would not stand out. Her grandmother could not. No one could.

She and her husband Joseph (of blessed memory) were both survivors and told their very different, yet strikingly similar stories because in the repeating they painfully invoked the memories of those they lost while artfully impressing upon others that life and love remain while there is hope. In her story, she is a child that must grow up all too soon and be responsible in part for her own survival, and yet the very telling reminds the audience that there is a moral imperative to share with one another, to understand the other's perspective and to fight together against hate and those things that divide us as people. She, as so many, was left with nothing. But she found love, she found friends and family and became part of a community and helped to build a Jewish future not only because she survived, but because she shared so much of

herself with others.

My worries were unfounded: her words drifted over the crowd like a gentle rain. The teenagers were spellbound; they were transfixed on this diminutive woman who spoke softly about violent memories for forty minutes. They came up to her afterward to thank her, to touch her hand, to take a picture with her and to get her autograph as if she were a rock star. The image of the very tall member of the basketball team working his way on stage to bend over and give her a silent hug took my breath away.

I remember how this Higher Ground column started. There is so much we as a community share. A few years ago, with our Israeli shaliach Tal, the JEA ordered daffodil bulbs to honor the memories of the 1.5 million children who perished during the Holocaust. Over 100 people from all three synagogues, Rambam, Shalom School, the JEA winter camps, and local businesses all came to help and in the spring, the yellow flowers bloomed. A local artist, Rochelle Frank, who as a child also survived the Holocaust, created a memorial for the effort.

Recently, in honor of Savannah Jewish Federation's 70th anniversary, this community reestablished the Chanukah Torch Relay and associated mitzvah projects. People from all three synagogues and the



Vera Hoffman with two of her student admirers after speaking at Woodville-Thompkins High School

general community participated in a great event. I know that the traditions that bind us are stronger than those that would tear us apart and I have faith our community story will build on our past to make sure we provide a solid Jewish future for all our children.

Vera's story is not easy for her to tell, nor is it easy to hear, but it is a story that needs telling and she does it well... and in the telling she renews my faith in our capacity to heal, to forgive, to survive. The Savannah Jewish community has changed, but I believe that this spring again the yellow flowers will bloom to remind us not only of what we lost but what we gain by working together. May this New Year provide many opportunities to collaborate and grow.



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