



THE JEWISH JOURNAL

OF SAN ANTONIO

NISSAN - IYAR, 5777

Published by The Jewish Federation of San Antonio

April 2017



**NEXT YEAR
IN JERUSALEM!**
Community Passover
events

PAGE 22



SAVE THE DATE
Join in the
celebration of Israel
Independence Day

PAGE 3

UIW hosts exhibit on the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons Camp

The Torch of the San Antonio Holocaust Memorial Museum (HMMSA), The Institute of Texan Cultures (ITC) and The University of the Incarnate Word (UIW), will host *Rebirth After the Holocaust: The Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons Camp, 1945-1950*. The exhibit will run March 1st - June 23, 2017, in the Student Gallery, Kelso Art Center, The University of the Incarnate Word, (Broadway at Hildebrand).

This exhibition depicts an inspiring and untold chapter in Jewish history, when upon the British Army's liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, the survivors began to rebuild their lives in the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons (DP) Camp which became a vibrant center of rehabilitation, reconstruction, and rebirth.

See **HOLOCAUST**, page 5

David Stern becomes third-generation president of Reform rabbinical group

(JTA) — Rabbi David Stern of Dallas has been installed as president of the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis, the third generation in his family to hold the title.

Stern, 55, the senior rabbi at Temple Emanu-El, was installed by the rabbinical group as its 61st president on Monday during its annual convention in Atlanta. He succeeds Rabbi Denise Eger, who served as CCAR president

See **STERN**, page 23

New program offers interest free loans to Jewish veterans and their dependents

New program offers interest free loans to Jewish veterans and their dependents

Area Jewish veterans and their dependents can now apply for interest free loans through the Hebrew Free Loan of San Antonio, thanks to a generous gift from the Jewish War Veterans Post 753 and an HFLA-SA



753-HFLA-SA Veteran
and Dependent Loan Fund
Program is available to all
eligible Jewish men and
women residing in San

commitment of
funds.

The new
*Jewish War
Veterans Post*

See **LOAN**, page 19



Celebrating the new loan program for veterans and their dependents are (l to r): Tom Grossman, President of the HFLA-SA Board of Directors; (back) Herschel Sheiness, Commander JWV Post 753; (front) Garland Scott, JWV Post 753 Senior Vice-Commander; Irwin Barath, JWV post 753 and Board Member HFLA-SA; and Laura Zausmer Richardson, Executive Director, HFLA-SA.



WHAT'S COOKIN'
Rodfei women explored
the Joy of Kosher
Cooking. See what else
has been happening,

PAGE 12-19

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Also read the Journal online at: www.jfsatx.org



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EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS:

The submission deadline for the May 2017 issue of the Jewish Journal is APRIL 10, 2017 at noon.
All materials submitted after this date will be considered for the following issue.
How to submit: Email submissions to jewishj@jfsatx.org
• Articles & Announcements - Email as word documents. Articles submitted for consideration are subject to editing.
• Photos - Email high resolution images (300 dpi) in jpg attachments only.

ADVERTISING:

To place an advertisement or request ad rates, contact Sandy Leigh at (240) 498-8999 or advertising@jfsatx.org.
Ad deadlines for May 2017 ISSUE:
• Ad space reservations due no later than APRIL 12, 2017 by noon
• Press ready ads due by APRIL 16, 2017.
Please include a contact name and phone number with all submissions.
The Jewish Journal is a free publication of the Jewish Federation of San Antonio, and is published in print and online 11 times a year as a public service to the community. Donations to offset production and mailing costs are always welcome.

JEWISH JOURNAL EDITORIAL POLICY

The Jewish Journal of San Antonio is a monthly publication created and paid for by the Jewish Federation of San Antonio. The Journal's primary focus is creating awareness and engagement within the local Jewish community about activities, programs and issues with which the Jewish Federation is involved.
As a service to the broader Jewish community, area synagogues and organizations are invited to submit content relevant to the Jewish community at large for publication consideration.
Items selected for publication are done so solely at the discretion of the Journal Editor and the Jewish Federation. Submissions may be edited and/or re-written for content and length.
We aim to fairly reflect the breadth and depth of activities and Jewish life taking place in the San Antonio Jewish community.

CANDLE LIGHTING

Friday, Mar 31
Light Candles at: 7:34 p.m.
Shabbat, Apr 1
Shabbat Ends: 8:28 p.m.

Friday, Apr 7
Light Candles at: 7:38 p.m.
Shabbat, Apr 8
Shabbat Ends: 8:33 p.m.

Monday, Apr 10, Eve of First day Passover,
Light Holiday Candles at: 7:40 p.m.
Tuesday, Apr 11, Eve of Second day Passover,
Light Holiday Candles after: 8:35 p.m.
Wednesday, Apr 12
Holiday Ends: 8:36 p.m.

Friday, Apr 14
Light Shabbat Candles at: 7:43 p.m.
Shabbat, Apr 15
Shabbat Ends: 8:38 p.m.

Sunday, Apr 16, Eve of Seventh day Passover,
Light Holiday Candles at: 7:44 p.m.
Monday, Apr 17, Eve of Eighth day Passover,
Light Holiday Candles after: 8:39 p.m.
Tuesday, Apr 18
Holiday Ends: 8:40 p.m.

Friday, Apr 21
Light Candles at: 7:47 p.m.
Shabbat, Apr 22
Shabbat Ends: 8:42 p.m.

Friday, Apr 28
Light Candles at: 7:51 p.m.
Shabbat, Apr 29
Shabbat Ends: 8:47 p.m.

Friday, May 5
Light Candles at: 7:56 p.m.
Shabbat, May 6, Shabbat Ends: 8:53 p.m.

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SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR COMMUNITY WIDE

ISRAEL

INDEPENDENCE DAY
יום העצמאות
CELEBRATION

&

MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE
יום הזיכרון

MONDAY, MAY 1, 2017

**At the The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Campus
of the San Antonio Jewish Community
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5:30 pm
Yom Hazikaron Service
Holzman Auditorium

6:15 pm
Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration
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**A portion of the event will be held in the
JCC Wulfe Gymnasium. Please avoid
wearing high heeled shoes; as they will
not be permitted on the gym floor.**

IN LOVING MEMORY

Alan Bruce
Greenberg

Heather
Michelson

Gail Motelson

Anne Roth

Cecil Schenker

Irene Slapper

Helen Stein

YOUR FEDERATION DOLLARS AT WORK

Together in Israel

I have travelled to Israel at least ten times in my lifetime. The first time was as a five year old child, along with my mother and siblings to spend the summer in my mother's hometown of Bat Yam. I still vividly recall those long days on the beach, full of sea shells and empty Coca-Cola bottles in Hebrew text. The most recent was this past February, along with forty others members (and a few honorary members of our Jewish community). Each of my trips has been special in their own way, and this trip was very special because I travelled with our community.

Under the lay leadership of two of our community's most beloved couples: Drs. Susan and Allen Noorily and Pat Kalmans and Dr. Mike Ozer, our community mission to Israel was indeed very special. We were a diverse group,



Letter from
our CEO

RONIT
SHERWIN

reflecting varied synagogue affiliations, backgrounds, ages and perspectives. We also met with a wide array of individuals, such as journalists, technology entrepreneurs, military intelligence, lawyers, academics and even a hydroponic non-farmer. We discussed religious observance, human rights, security, pluralism, cooking, engineering, fashion, architecture and more food, of course. There was not a single day of the trip that did not include a moment of inspiration and an idea that was challenging. And we experienced it all together.

Shabbat in Jerusalem was extra special, of course.

Together we visited the *Kotel* before sharing a beautiful *Kabbalat Shabbat* as one community. We ate an exquisite meal in the company of a group of San Antonio young adults who are living in Israel for various reasons. Their stories and smiles were infectious, and they soon became part of our group as well. The presence of Divine was clearly amongst us.

Upon reflection, the most special moments for me were simply the mundane. I walked alongside someone in Tel Aviv

and we talked about our kids. I shared a coffee with someone else and we talked about our university days.

I sat with someone at breakfast and we talked about our work. These are mundane topics, but the time was sacred because we made time for the moments.

Enjoy the photos in the centerfold of this issue that share a taste of what an amazing trip we had together.

L'shalom,
Ronit

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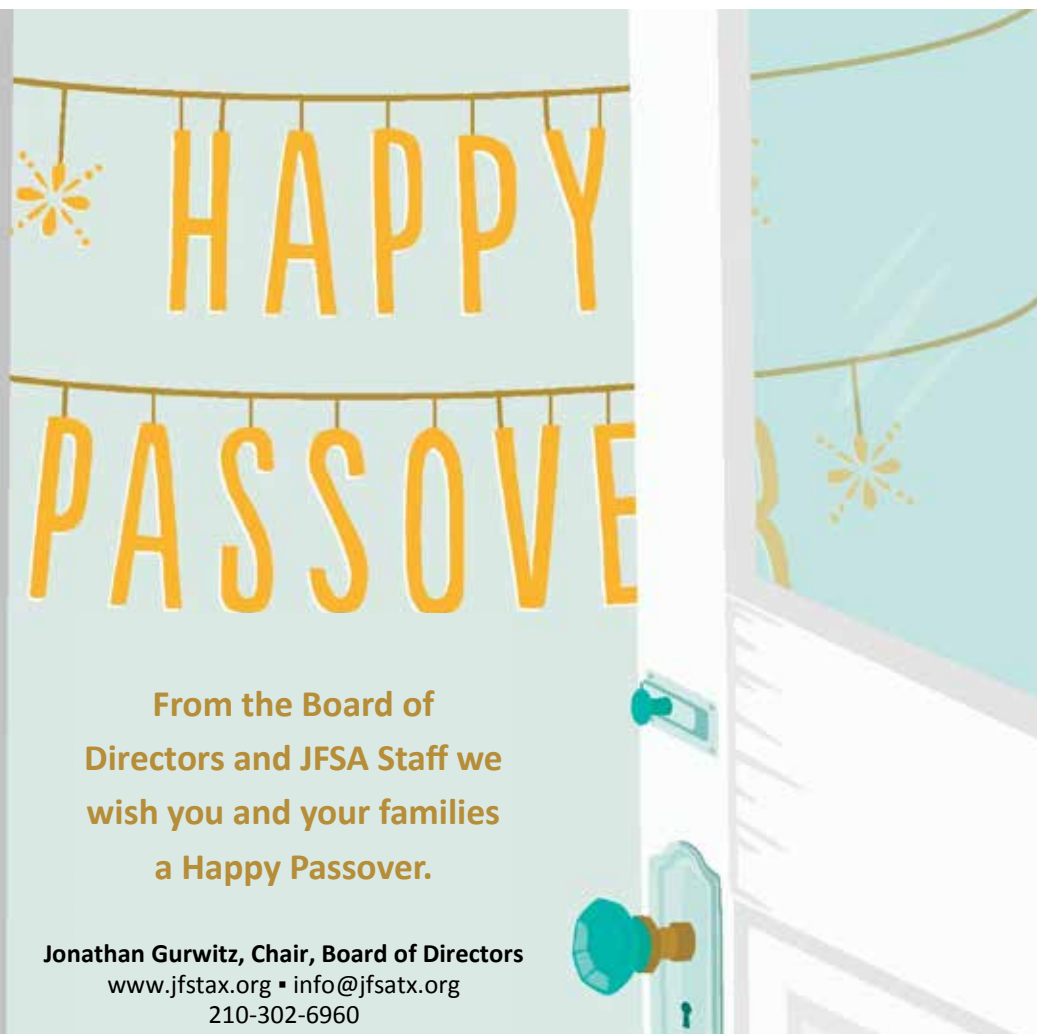


By helping to enrich Jewish life and lending a hand to those in need—we'll be opening our Jewish future too.

Every Passover, Elijah has a standing invitation; we open our door, set a place at our table, and fill his cup. This year, let's do the same for those in need. No matter what!

Thank you for supporting the Federation's Annual Campaign. Together we change lives.

We are Jewish San Antonio... We are **STRONGER TOGETHER!**



From the Board of
Directors and JFSA Staff we
wish you and your families
a Happy Passover.

Jonathan Gurwitz, Chair, Board of Directors
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210-302-6960

YOUR FEDERATION DOLLARS AT WORK



FEDERATION JOINS A DAY OF ADVOCACY IN AUSTIN

Representatives of the Jewish Federation of San Antonio traveled to Austin for A Day of Advocacy.

Jewish Communities Day at the State on February 22. Attendees included (from l-r) Philip Moss, Community Relations Council (CRC) Chair; Deb Field, Delegation Lead; Samantha Mazuz, Federation's Young Adult Division Director; Jane Briggs Gamez, CFO of Federation; and Kevin Epstein, CRC Vice-Chair.

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HMMSA receives grant for interactive and animated maps

In late November 2016, the Holocaust Memorial Museum of San Antonio (HMMSA) applied for a grant from the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission and received funding for *Geography of the Holocaust*. Through this grant, the museum will replace the current map in the Museum with an interactive whiteboard that will have several animated maps. These maps may be used by the docents during tours and visitors on self guided tours. In addition, HMMSA is presently creating biographical sketches of San Antonio survivors that will be incorporated into lessons using the animated maps.

Special visitor from PJ Library

San Antonio was proud to welcome Paul Lewis of the Grinspoon Foundation, which funds PJ Library in partnership with the Jewish Federation of San Antonio. Lewis' visit from the Foundation's headquarters in Boston included meetings with the Federation board, PJ Library and PJ Our Way moms, other community leaders, and a visit to the Torah Academy of San Antonio.



Paul Lewis of the Grinspoon Foundation visited with PJ Library moms and with the Kindergarten Class at Torah Academy of San Antonio during his trip to San Antonio.

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HOLOCAUST

continued from page 1

"Having this at UIW exposes our students and faculty to the Holocaust era and to history of the Jewish people and the State of Israel," said Dr. Roger Barnes, Chair of the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice.

"This exhibit shows the spirit and strength of Holocaust survivors, finding dignity, freedom and love in a refugee camp post World War II. It is relevant when considering the current refugee crisis," said Sharon Greenwald, Exhibit and The Torch Co-Chair and Holocaust Commission member.

YOUR FEDERATION DOLLARS AT WORK



YAD Dinner for Eight

The Young Adult Division hosted its popular *Dinner for Eight* at The RIM Shopping Center. Fifty young adults participated in the event, eating dinner at various restaurants and coming together for after dinner drinks at Stone Werks.

For information on the next YAD event, contact Samantha Mazuz, Young Adult Division Director, at (210) 302-6970.



YAD PURIM BASH

On Saturday night March 11, after Shabbat, the Young Adult Division along with all of the synagogues in town, held a Purim Bash at Stone Street Pub. Masa Israel Journey, long term programs in Israel, helped sponsor the event. Sixty young adults gathered together in costume to celebrate the holiday. Rabbi Levi Teldon read a speedy Megillah, and prizes were awarded for best costume.



Seeking Volunteers to Teach in the Museum

Are you or someone you know interested in the Holocaust Memorial Museum's collections and exhibits?

Do you enjoy learning and working with the public?

Are you seeking a rewarding volunteer experience?

Consider becoming a docent at the Holocaust Memorial Museum of San Antonio. A history background is not required... just an interest in learning and a high level of enthusiasm. A new partnership with Yad Vashem has allowed us to create an ongoing docent training program which will kickoff on February 1st through an online digital portal. Training will continue with our Museum staff and experienced docents.

If you are interested, please contact Juana Rubalcava, Director of Education at 210-302-6812 or docents@hmmsa.org



YOUR FEDERATION DOLLARS AT WORK

SPOTLIGHT ON . . .

Rebeca Gonzalez



Rebeca with her husband Jaime

Rebeca Gonzalez grew up in Mexico City, and later studied at the University of San Francisco. She moved to San Antonio because of her work. She was teaching at a language

institute in California, and was asked to teach language courses for the Department of Defense.

What is your strongest Jewish

memory?

I would say 3 years ago our grandson's naming and Bris. That is when I decided to join and attend synagogue. Before that I attended with our

orthodox daughters.

What volunteer activities do you find the most rewarding and why?

I love to organize events and to cook. Now my husband and I volunteer with senior services. But, the most important volunteering I do is for the Holocaust Memorial Museum of San Antonio. Why? It's so meaningful to talk to the children and to help them understand history, anti-Semitism, and encourage them to act to eliminate

hatred and prejudice.

Please share you favorite Jewish holiday. Why?

Simchat Torah, because you can dance with the Torah.

Name a hope or aspiration you have for the San Antonio Jewish community?

Coming together from different synagogues to get to know one another, to be closer to one another, travel together, like the recent Federation Mission to Israel.



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Jewish Federation
OF SAN ANTONIO



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- Bring you closer to our Jewish communal agencies
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- Inspire you to grow along with like-minded individuals
- Grow your leadership skills to succeed in volunteer roles and in your workplace
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Applications are available on the Jewish Federation Website for anyone from 22-45 years of age. For more info please contact Samantha Mazuz at (210) 302-6960 or mazuzss@jfsatx.org

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f JFSATX

JCC Fore! the Kids Golf Classic this May

The JCC's annual Fore! the Kids Golf Classic, which benefits youth and inclusion programs at the Barshop Jewish Community Center, will be held Friday, May 5 at SilverHorn Golf Club. The Golf Classic provides meaningful, essential programs for preschool through high school-aged youth.

There are several opportunities to get involved in this event:

- Individual golf opportunities and sponsorships are available. A golfer registration includes a goody bag, lunch, dinner, contests on the course, and a day of golf.

- Become a hole sponsor, and receive signage on the golf course, as well as recognition in the event program and the JCC's June *Center Peace*.

- Contribute to the silent auction. In addition to a day of golf, the Golf Classic includes a silent auction that also benefits youth and inclusion programs.

To learn more about the Fore! the Kids Golf Classic, or any of these opportunities, call Tracy Hungate at (210) 302-6810, or visit www.jccsanantonio.org/forethekids.

Aviva Hadassah gets things going and growing

More than 25 women attended the Tu B'Shevat Terrarium event hosted by Hadassah's new younger women's Aviva Group on February 16.

During the event, former San Antonio Chapter of Hadassah President, Kathy O'Neill, presented the charter for the newly created Aviva Group, for women in their 20s through 50s.

Upcoming Aviva Group events include regular monthly lunches as well as pop-up events.



(l to r) Leslie Hickey, Jessie Glasser, Laurel Gandler, Katie Barenberg, Suzanne Patrick, Lisa Abramson, Sara Lerich, Mariana Weinstein, Andrea Benatar, Sara Efune joined in the fun at Hadassah's Aviva Group event in February.

Check the Aviva Group Facebook page for the latest – www.facebook.com/

hadassahavivasa, or contact Leslie Hickey at lcarsman@hotmail.com or Suzanne

Patrick at suzannepatrick@gmail.com.

Temple Chai to welcome Texas Jewish Historical Society

Temple Chai, San Antonio's small Reform congregation on the Northwest side, will host the Texas Jewish Historical Society at the Shabbat service on Friday, April 21 at 6:45 p.m.

"Texas' rich history of Jewish life is evident in our congregation," said President Jimmy Toubin. "We have people from all of the major metropolitan areas in Texas plus small towns like Brenham and

Marshall. We're proud of our Lone Star diversity."

Guests from around Texas will be in San Antonio for the Society's meeting. Information about the Society is at www.txjhs.org.

The Shabbat service will highlight the contribution of Texas' Jewish communities to religious life in the state. The community is welcome to attend. For more information, visit www.templechaisa.org or call (210) 340-2090.

Texas Jewish Historical Society to meet in SA

Texas Jewish Historical Society will host its annual meeting at the Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade from April 21-23. Among the items on the agenda is the election of officers.

Shabbat Eve services Friday night will take place at Temple Chai with Rabbi David Komerfsky.

Participants will visit the Institute of Texan Cultures to view the Jewish exhibit the group helped fund. They will also visit the San Antonio Library to see the city's Jewry collection.

Saturday night's featured speaker will be Rabbi Sam Stahl. The annual business meeting is Sunday morning.

Jewish Family Service (JFS) Needs Volunteers

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Global Unity Sefer Torah

Congregation Rodfei Sholom is joining Jews around the world in an inspiring joint initiative of The Afikim Foundation and Israel's Ministry for Diaspora Affairs, to write a Global Unity *Sefer Torah* celebrating the 50th Anniversary of a Reunited Jerusalem.

Jews everywhere can inscribe letters in this Torah, NOT with money, but with simple acts of

chesed, everyday kindnesses that positively impact the lives of others. To see more info about this global initiative, see 1-minute video at: <https://vimeo.com/195382006>

This being the 50th year of the reunification of Jerusalem, Rodfei Sholom reserved a block of letters from *Parashat Behar*, the Torah portion in which the Jewish people are



commanded to sanctify the 50th year, the year of the Yovel, or Jubilee year and proclaim freedom

throughout the Land and its inhabitants.

There are 304,805 letters in the Torah that can be "bought" with acts of "chesed." Anyone in the Jewish community wishing to "buy" a letter may visit Jerusalem50.org.

A digital file of all names and deeds will remain permanently with the Torah, which will be dedicated in Jerusalem on May 24,

2017 and 3 winners will be selected to receive round-trip tickets to attend the ceremony in Jerusalem.

Young and old are invited to participate in this one-time event to honor the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem. For more information on how to get involved, contact Congregation Rodfei Sholom at (210) 493-3557, ext. 212.

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JCC Author & Speaker Series presents Dr. Melissa Weininger

The Barshop Jewish Community Center will host Dr. Melissa Weininger for a lecture Monday, May 8 at 7 p.m.

The lecture, titled *Women and War in Israeli Culture* will examine contemporary representations of women in the Israeli military and the challenge they present



WEININGER

is the Anna Smith Fine Senior Lecturer in Jewish Studies at Rice University, specializing in the study of Modern Hebrew and Yiddish Literature, with

to Zionist ideals of masculinity.

Dr. Weininger

is the Anna Smith Fine Senior Lecturer in Jewish Studies at Rice University, specializing in the study of Modern Hebrew and Yiddish Literature, with

an emphasis on gender, nationalism, and ideology.

Admission for the lecture is \$10, and is open to the community. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.jccsanantonio.org/authorspeakerseries, or contact the JCC at (210) 302-6820 or rustinr@jcc-sa.org.

Temple Beth-El welcomes Rabbi Jamie Korngold as Spring Scholar

As part of Temple Beth-El's 5777 adult education theme, *Questions of Faith*, on April 21-23, Rabbi Jamie Korngold will engage the community in conversations and experiences geared towards expanding the boundaries of how we think about and experience G-d in our lives.

Korngold has been nationally recognized for her innovative work combining Judaism and nature, and is considered to be an expert at reaching the unaffiliated

Jewish population via cutting-edge, out-of-the box Jewish programming and her use of technology.

In addition to speaking about her book, *The God Upgrade: Finding your 21st Century Spirituality in Judaism's 5000 year old tradition*, Korngold will lead a Shabbat morning nature walk *t'filah* experience at McAllister park (Turkey Roost Pavilion) on April 22 at 10 a.m. (geared to 4th-6th graders and their families. She'll also lead a Saturday

evening nature walk and Havdalah program at 6 p.m. at the Phil Hardberger Park Urban Ecology Center, 8400 NW Military Highway.

Korngold will also spend time with religious school classes on Sunday morning. For more information go to www.beth-elsa.org/adulted2016-2017. Rabbi Korngold's visit is made possible through the generosity of the Jean and Jesse Wolfe Religious Enhancement Fund.

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IN THE COMMUNITY

KESHER CHAI kids bake hamantashen for tzedakah

KESHER CHAI, Temple Chai's Shabbat education program for children and their parents, fulfilled the Purim commandment of "matanot levyonim / giving gifts to the needy," with its first hamantashen sale.

Led by educator Lisa Goldstein, the kids learned about the holiday of Purim and decided to bake hamantashen, sell them by the dozen, and donate the proceeds to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. The twenty KESHER CHAI students made more than 700 cookies and raised over \$400 for the charity.

KESHER CHAI meets Saturday mornings at 9:45 at Temple Chai. The curriculum



KESHER CHAI students bake hamantashen to raise money for charity

is appropriate for grades pre-K through middle school. All are welcome. For more information, visit www.templechaisa.org/KESHER-CHAI or call (210) 340-2090.

JWV to host first annual Jewish Warrior Weekend: Aggieland

Jewish cadets will host the first annual Jewish Warrior Weekend: Aggieland from April 14-16, 2017 in College Station for Jewish cadets from military academies and individual Jewish cadets in ROTC programs from around the nation.

The information packed weekend will feature

Jewish military leaders including General Norton A. Schwartz, USAF (Ret)., Former U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff and Major General David Rubenstein, FACHE '77 (US Army, Retired), Former Deputy Surgeon General and Chief, Medical Service Corps.

Registration is free and travel subsidies may be

available. All food will be kosher for Passover. The program is sponsored by Hillel, the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets, and Jewish War Veterans of the United States. If you know of a Jewish cadet who may be interested in registering, please contact JWWAggieland@gmail.com.

Hebrew Free Loan - San Antonio

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A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a denim jacket, looking out a window with a thoughtful expression. Her hand is resting on her chin.

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Transportation for Passover for seniors

Jewish Seniors needing a ride to services for Passover or a Community Seder can call Golden Manor Jewish Senior Services (GMJSS).

In part of the effort to fight isolation of Jewish seniors, GMJSS strives to make sure that no Jewish senior who is wanting to attend religious services or Jewish community events is left at home without the means for transportation to the event.

Please pass along the word to any Jewish senior that you may know that may need to utilize this service.

To set up a transportation reservation, please call Lety P. Vargas at (210) 616-4811.

Mother's Day Sunshine Club Luncheon

Seniors are invited to attend the May Sunshine Club luncheon, an afternoon of food and friends on Tuesday, May 9, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Chabad Center for Jewish Life & Learning, 14535 Blanco Road, 78216.

The program will feature a bagels, lox and cream cheese luncheon, a Mother's Day

activity and time to schmooze.

To RSVP, contact Nancy at Chabad: (210) 764-0300 or email info@chabadSA.com. For free transportation, please call Lety at (210) 616-4811. The Sunshine Club offers seniors the opportunity to meet, kibitz and enjoy a delicious lunch together. Monthly guest speakers, film screenings and

entertainment compliment the program which includes craft opportunities and occasional outings.

The Sunshine Club is a joint program of the Chabad Center for Jewish Life & Learning & Golden Manor Jewish Senior Services. For more information please visit www.ChabadSA.com/SunshineClub.

Eat and schmooze while supporting GMJSS

Support impactful services for Jewish seniors like trans-

portation and programming by dining in or taking out at Willie's Grill & Icehouse, 4051 NW Loop 1604 (at NW Military Hwy).

On Wednesday, April 26 between 4 p.m. - 10 p.m., mention you're there for *Spirit Night*, and

15% of your check will be donated to Golden Manor Jewish Senior Services (GMJSS).

No reservations needed. Contact Eva Laporte at (210) 616-4811 or eval@goldenmanor.net for details.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING



TEMPLE BETH-EL ON THE TOWN

Early in March, Temple on the Town participants from Temple Beth-El enjoyed a family evening at the Spurs v. Rockets game, along with a courtside pre-game show.



GAN GANI PRESCHOOL'S PURIM CELEBRATION

Gan Gani Preschool students celebrated Purim with a masquerade and a Purim spiel put on by the Morahs. For more information please visit www.GanGani.org or call (210) 492-1085.



RODFEI SHOLOM'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Congregation's Annual Fundraiser gala on February 12 honored Daniella and Dr. Tibor Ritter, pictured here with guest speaker for the evening, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, Chief Rabbi of Israel.

JCC HOSTS JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL



The Barshop JCC's 2017 Jewish Film Festival committee, including, (from left,) Jolene Davis, Alice Thorner, Alan Petlin (Co-Chair), Sandy Levenshus, Clarence Dickinson, Susan Blumenthal (Co-Chair), and Carol Sugarman, screened more than thirty films beginning in late June 2016. The group selected a total of twelve films, which included comedies, dramas, documentaries, and even a short, which were screened at Santikos Palladium IMAX in February.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING



LOCAL AUTHOR VISITS TORAH ACADEMY

Local author Madeline Bradley visited with TASA's first and second grade students to share with them the book that she wrote and illustrated, *Please Take Us Home!* The book relates the true story of her cross-country move with her three pets. The story illustrates how each one of her pets dealt with change differently.



PURIM PALOOZA AND MEGILLAH MAGIC AT AGUDAS ACHIM

Agudas Achim celebrated Purim in style at two events, Purim Palooza and Megilla Magic. At Purim Palooza (pictured), costumed children and adults were entertained by face painters, a magician, and music. The Megillah Magic event was followed by the traditional megillah reading, led by Agudas Achim teenagers.

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SAN ANTONIO COMMUNITY MISSION TO ISRAEL 2017

“The sights, the smells, the energy and the way being in Israel made me feel was unlike any other experience I have ever had in my 61 years. I feel like I left a little bit of myself there and I will yearn to return again to our Israel.”

- **Linda Moad**,
*Executive Director at
Congregation Agudas
Achim*

“Shabbat in Jerusalem is always wonderful, but it was even more special with the company of 10 young adults from our community. It was lovely to see how these “children” - whom we have watched grow up - share our love for Israel. An added bonus was witnessing a reunion with their kindergarten teacher, Gail Markson.”

- **Drs. Susan
and Allen Noorily**,
**SA Mission to Israel
trip co-chairs**



A true trip highlight was the visit to our Partnership region's renowned Western Galilee Hospital.



10 young adults from San Antonio who are now living in Israel visited and enjoyed Kabbalat Shabbat and Shabbat dinner with us. In addition, they reunited with their kindergarten teacher, Gail Markson.



Lettuce samples from a hydroponic farm visit.



Former Jfsa president Meyer Lifshitz visits with our trip group upon arrival to Jerusalem.



Drs. Susan and Allen Noorily, upon arrival.



The mission group met with the panelists from Israel's High Tech industry in Jerusalem.

SAN ANTONIO COMMUNITY MISSION TO ISRAEL 2017



Petach Tikvah Yeda School photo led by Dr. Mike Ozer and Pat Kalmans, Israel Mission co-chairs.



“The most meaningful part of our trip for me was meeting the Israeli people and learning about their lives. They are smart, brave, innovative and compassionate. We came away with renewed admiration for Israel and commitment to support our Jewish homeland.”

- Drs. Lewis and Laurie Greenberg



During an arts and culture track in Tel Aviv, a group visited the Florentin neighborhood graffiti walls.



Israeli performer Avi Dayan and his daughters meet and get to know trip members.



Five of our Israel Mission participants (left to right - Mary Weiner, David Markson, Shari Pulman, Rikko Ollervidez, and Maurice Furman) climbed the snake path of Mount Masada.

During the final day in Israel, trip members gave back to help pack beans for Israelis in need.



“When I descended the airplane steps in Tel Aviv a strange calm feeling came over me, one I have never experienced before...when my feet touched Israeli soil I felt I was finally home.”

- Steve Sherman

“We loved all the sites we visited, but were especially taken aback by the beauty and peacefulness of Jerusalem. The city is clearly the jewel of Israel.”

- Suzy and Brian Macdougald

WHAT'S HAPPENING



HOW TO PURIM AT TEMPLE BETH-EL

Temple Beth-El family and friends of all ages got their hands dirty and enjoyed learning to make Hamantaschen during the Temple's Purim Holiday "How To" series.



IN THE TASA CLASSROOM

TASA 5th grade students began to explore properties of water by testing and observing various frozen, liquid and boiling solutions.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS WITH JCC CHILDREN



Children from the JCC's Block and Dreeben School for Young Children plant a tree for Tu B'Shevat with help from parent and Forester, Mark Kroeze.



Teachers from the Barshop JCC Block and Dreeben School for Young Children dressed as Vashti, a beauty contestant, Mordechai, Queen Esther, King Ahasuerus, and Haman to act out the story during the annual Purim Megillah reading.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING



HEINTZ PRESCHOOL CELEBRATES RODEO DAY

Heintz Preschool of Congregation Agudas Achim celebrated its annual Yad B'Yad Intergenerational Rodeo Day during the San Antonio Rodeo. The day included pony rides, meeting a real cowboy, breakfast tacos, and other fun rodeo related activities.



GOURMET GIVING CLUB WELCOMES JEWISH GIRLS

The Gourmet Giving Club was created by the Chabad Center for Jewish girls ages 10-12 to experience a wholesome and healthy dose of Jewish fun. It's both meaningful and full of laughter while participants cook, work on Chessed projects and discuss all things Jewish. For more information please call Shayna Block at the Chabad Center at (210) 764-0300.

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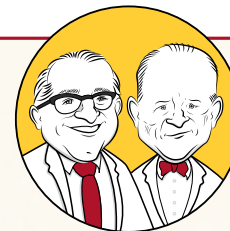


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WHAT'S HAPPENING



PURIM IN THE PALACE

A fire juggler performs at Purim in the Palace, a Persian-themed Purim celebration at the Chabad Center for Jewish Life & Learning.



AGUDAS ACHIM SISTERHOOD TEA HONORS TWO

The 98th Annual Agudas Achim Sisterhood Tea honored (l to r) Marsha Greenberg and Joyce Leighton for their good works and devotion to Sisterhood programs and charities.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

PUTTIN' ON THE RITZ WITH THE AGUDAS ACHIM PURIM BALL

The Annual Agudas Achim Purim Ball featured a 1920's themed evening. The event featuring entertainment by a Dixie band and swing dancers, was hosted by event chairs Lisa Abramson, Morgan Lichtmacher and Michelle Vizurraga.



Nowadays, it's a shortage of blood that's really a plague.



Nothing is more important than saving a life, so it's essential that Israel have an ample supply of blood for all its people. That's where Magen David Adom comes in — collecting, testing, and distributing Israel's blood supply for civilians and the Israel Defense Forces. And to protect Israel's blood supply in the future, we're building a new blood center for Israel, one that will be reinforced against rocket or other terrorist attacks. You can support MDA's lifesaving blood services. **Make a gift today. Pesach kasher v'sameach.**

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FROM THE COVER

LOAN

continued from page 1

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reduced monthly repayment rates.

Hebrew Free Loan Association of San Antonio is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, offering financial assistance to Jewish residents of San Antonio and surrounding areas through interest-free loans. For more information on this special loan program, additional borrowing opportunities or the agency, visit HFLA-SA.org, or call at (210) 736-4352.

Focus on B’nai B’rith

The Alamo City Lodge #211 of B’nai B’rith will not meet in April. The organization’s next activity will be May 21.

Founded in 1843, B’nai B’rith is rooted in these major pillars:

• **Human Rights and Public Policy:** B’nai B’rith monitors and combats anti-Semitism and other human rights abuses around the world.

• **Supporting and Defending Israel:** B’nai B’rith is a staunch supporter and defender of Israel at the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, in world

capitals and in a variety of international organizations. Our World Center in Jerusalem is our connection to a wide range of Israeli governmental, academic and cultural institutions. The World Center promotes strong Israel-Diaspora relations.

• **Senior Advocacy and Housing:** B’nai B’rith is the largest Jewish sponsor of federally subsidized housing for the elderly in the United States with 42 buildings in 26 communities. Working in partnership with the Department of Housing

and Urban Development, B’nai B’rith makes rental apartments available for senior citizens with limited incomes.

• **Helping Communities:** B’nai B’rith has raised funds to help the victims of disasters around the world since 1865. The organization’s commitment is to help communities lasts long after the first-responders have done their vital work. Additionally, B’nai B’rith volunteers are active in their local communities with a wide variety of local projects.

New course Survival of a Nation marks 50 years since Six Day War

One fateful week in June 1967 redrew the map of the Middle East. Fifty years later, Israel continues to face numerous existential threats.

Drawing on ideas of great Jewish writers and thinkers from throughout the ages, *Survival of a Nation*—a comprehensive six-session course produced by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) to mark the war’s fiftieth anniversary—presents the Six Day War as you’ve never experienced it before.

The Chabad Center for Jewish Life & Learning will offer *Survival of a Nation* at two different times: six Tuesday afternoons with Rabbi Chaim Block beginning

May 9, 12 noon. - 1:15 p.m. at the Law Office of Jackson Walker at Weston Centre, 112 E. Pecan Suite #2400, and six Wednesday evenings with Rabbi Levi Teldon beginning May 10, 7:30 p.m.- 9 p.m. at the Chabad Center, 14535 Blanco Rd.

Survival of a Nation addresses the social, political, and religious issues with which modern Israel grapples, providing a platform to discuss a variety of viewpoints and debate the challenges that Israel contends with today.

To register today for a thought-provoking experience, call (210) 764-0300 or visit www.ChabadSA.com/JLI.

JEWISH WAR VETERANS CORNER

The next meeting of the San Antonio Jewish War Veterans Post 753 (JWV) is scheduled for Sunday, April 23 at 9 a.m. at the Jewish Campus.

Upcoming volunteer activities include:

- Serving supper at Ft. Sam Wounded Warrior Center on May 4 from 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
- Placing American flags on graves of Jewish Veterans buried at Jewish cemeteries in the San Antonio area, Memorial Day – May 29.

Remembering deceased Jewish military veterans

Remembering deceased Jewish Military Veterans. Jewish War Veterans of America Post 753 asks you to remember these Jewish military veterans whose yahrzeit (anniversary of the individual’s death) occurs in the month of APRIL and who are buried in a local cemetery. (If you know of a name that is missing please contact Herschel at 468-5598.)

Altman, Richard	Friedlander, Darven	Kraft, Al	Pilloff, Lawrence
Bailey, Billy	Friedlander, Dorothy	Lang, Jack	Pyles, Thomas SR
Beanstock, Sam	Garrett, Ernest SR>	Lawson, Charles	Reich, Mendel
Bennett, Victor	Glickman, Ralph	Levine, Saul	Rimmel, Louis
Berkie, Louis	Goldberg, Issac	Lifshen, Sheldon	Rosenfield, Robert
Berler, Alvin	Goldberg, Mack	Logan, Marcia	Rosenthal, Moss
Bitterbaum, Bertrand	Goldberg, Sydney	Love, Alan	Schwartz, Charles
Brenner, Alan	Gutierrez, Al	Lynton, Paul	Seelig, Billy
Brivic, Alfred	Hoot, Morton	Malina, Abraham	Silverman, Harold
Cohen, Leonard	Isgur, Irving	Maltzberger, Robert	Spiro, Herbert
Cohn, Wilton	Joyce, Felice	Maltzman, Leo	Sterling, Jules
Dictor, Bernice	Kamrass, Samuel	Maze, Albert	Tarver, Sylvia
Edelman, Robert	Kanter, Melvyn	Miserocchi, Louis	Weiner, Joseph
Feigenbaum, Simon	Kaurman, Jack	Mittler, Earl	Weiss, Henry
Feinstein, Morris	Kelman, Dave	Mongite, Howard	Wolfe, Alexander
Feldman, Herbert	Kislin, Benjamin	Naranjo, Humberto	Wyant, Michael
Finkel, Phillip	Kline, Sidney	Nossob, Morris	Zausmer, Bert
Forman, Samuel	Koplin, Marvin	Passur, Sam	

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Rodfei's Camp SEED

Registration is now open for Camp SEED 2017 at Rodfei Sholom. Swimming every day and weekly trips are all part of camp. But, most of all, organizers say, SEED counselors help create an amazing Jewish spirit and environment.

"The secret to our camp's amazing *ruach* and to the kids wanting to come back year after year is the SEED counselors. They are warm

and kind and fun. They build relationships with the campers.

"They can't wait to see the campers every day and the campers can't wait to see them," says Rabbi Avraham Scheinberg.

Camp will be held June 26 through August 11. Scholarships are available. Contact Rodfei at rodfeisa@gmail.com or (210) 493-3557 for more details.



TASA visits rodeo

Torah Academy Kindergarten through second grade students recently enjoyed a visit to San Antonio's Stock Show and Rodeo.

Teachers say the students had a fabulous time watching Buttercup, the dairy cow, get milked. Students learned about dairy cows and how milk gets from the farm to the refrigerator. They also learned about the nutritional value of dairy products and how many servings to have each day.

The rodeo was a great way for the students to see science in action, and many of the things that were seen at the rodeo were later discussed and learned about in a classroom setting at school.

April open houses at Heintz Preschool

Heintz Preschool of Congregation Agudas Achim will host an Open House from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. on Friday, April 7 and Friday, April 21 to showcase the school with an eye toward the 2017-2018 school year.

The staff will share details about the school's Spanish and Hebrew Immersion program as well as its academic curriculum. Heintz Preschool is open with its core hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in addition to its full day extended hours of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Enrollment is also now open for Heintz Preschool's Summer Literacy Camp. Weekly themes will center around beloved children's books. The children will enjoy water activities, bouncy houses, and a petting zoo. Each week will feature stimulating activities, lessons and play.



For more information, contact Preschool Director Taryn Bretado at (210) 479-0429 or t.bretado@agudas-achim.org.



TASA faculty attends Social Thinking workshop

TASA teachers explore Social Thinking

TASA teachers recently participated in a professional development training program on Social Thinking® presented by Renee Attaway. Understanding the theory behind social thinking allows teachers to help students work through social and academic challenges they may otherwise struggle with.

Rabbi Nimchinsky, TASA's Head of School, commented that "this was one of the most valuable and well presented workshops I have ever attended. There wasn't a teacher in the room who did not walk away with (several new) practical tools for their teaching toolbox."

Judaics Director Rabbi Marrus noted: "It was

remarkable to learn that what we frequently see as teachers can be very different than from what the child is perceiving or experiencing."

This program was organized and underwritten by the Kboudi family. To learn more about Social Thinking, visit www.SocialThinking.com.



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PASSOVER

Passover at Agudas Achim

Congregation Agudas Achim will host an interactive Community Second Night Seder led by Rabbi Jeffrey Abraham and Hazzan Jeremy Lipton. The evening will include a traditional meal, songs, Haggadah readings and spiritual insight. Reservations are required by Monday, April 3. Cost is \$25 per adult, \$10 for youth, 6-11 years old; children under 5 are free. Mail your check to: Congregation Agudas Achim, 16550 Huebner Road 78248 or call (210) 479-0307 to pay by phone and to RSVP to all other events.

Leading up to Passover, Agudas Achim will host a few

other events including:

- A special pre-Passover storytime led by Rabbi Abraham at Barnes and Noble La Cantera on Tuesday, April 4 at 4:30 p.m., followed by a no host dinner at Grimaldi's Brick Oven Pizzeria.

- A free Pre-Passover Pizza Party on Sunday, April 9 at 5 p.m. at the Synagogue. Those attending will have the opportunity to bring their *chametz* to burn. There will be fun for the family with a bounce house and a San Antonio Fire Department (SAFD) truck to explore. Future firefighters are invited to come try out the water hose with the SAFD.

Chabad to offer community Seders in Hebrew and English

The Chabad Center for Jewish Life & Learning will be hosting two concurrent Passover Seders, for the English and Hebrew language communities. Relive the Exodus, discover the eternal message of the Haggadah, and enjoy a Seder complete with handmade Shmurah Matzah, Israeli wines, and a dinner spiced with singing and explanations of the unique traditional customs of this special night.

The Seders will take place on Monday, April 10 at the Chabad Center, 14535

Blanco Rd. Services begin at 8 p.m. followed by the Seders at 8:30 p.m. Couvert: \$45 adult, \$25 child (no one will be turned away due to lack of funds).

In addition, handmade Shmurah Matzah will be available for purchase from the Chabad Center:

One pound Matzah - only \$20;
3 Matzah pkg. for Seder - only \$10.

To reserve your seats and/or order Matzah please call Chabad at (210) 764-0300 or visit www.ChabadSA.com/seders.

Celebrate Passover with the JCC

Every year, the JCC hosts Passover events that invite the Jewish community to celebrate together: the annual First Night Community Seder, and the Kosher for Passover Dinner.

The First Night Seder is Monday, April 10 at 6 p.m., and is open to the entire Jewish community. Great for both individuals and large groups, the event includes a participatory Seder, song singing, festive meal, and

a search for the afikomen. Tickets are \$20 for adults ages twelve and up, \$12 for youth ages six to eleven, and children under five are free. A vegetarian entrée is available upon advanced request.

Then, Thursday, April 13 at 6 p.m., the JCC hosts the Kosher for Passover Dinner, a yearly tradition that invites the community to take a break from Passover cooking to enjoy an informal and

delicious dinner at the JCC. The menu includes salad, roasted chicken, vegetable medley, Passover noodle kugel, matzo, and Passover sponge cake with strawberry topping. Tickets are \$15 for adults age 12 and up, \$9 for youth ages 6 to 11, and children under 5 are free.

Tickets for both events can be purchased online at www.jccsanantonio.org/seasons or by calling Maya Siler at (210) 302-6867.

Temple Beth-El community Passover Seder

Temple Beth-El will host a community Passover Seder on Tuesday, April 11 at 6 p.m. led by Rabbi Mara Nathan, Rabbi Marina Yergin, and Cantor Julie Berlin. The catered interactive Seder will engage people of all

ages and the entire community is welcome to participate. Advance registration is required. Visit the Temple's website at www.beth-elsa.org for details and registration information, or call (210) 733-9135.



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PASSOVER

Free online Passover Guide

As a service to the Jewish community, Young Israel of Houston has published a yearly Passover guide for more than 20 years that includes extensive details on how to get your home ready for Passover. It is published under the auspices of Rabbi Yehoshua Wender of Young Israel of Houston, and is a collaborative work by Rabbi Yehoshua Wender and Rivkey Nimchinsky.

The Pesach Planner includes detailed instructions that start from the how to's of making one's home Kosher for Passover, to *Halachot* (laws) pertaining to Passover. There is an extensive product guide that is researched and updated yearly. This list includes items that can and cannot be used



with or without Passover supervision.

The guide available free online. While the "times" for candle lighting are for the Central Time Zone, the rest of the guide is universal.

This year's edition of the *Pesach Planner* will be available no later than March 24 at www.PesachPlanner.org. An *Updates* page will also be continuously updated throughout the holiday in the event of any updated or new information.

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How the Jewish People build, create, and advance the world

This month, Rabbi Hanoch Teller, eminent author and Jerusalem storyteller, will speak to students at the University of Texas - San Antonio (UTSA), and share his stories about principles guiding the Jewish People across the world.

The event will be held on April 20 from 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. in the Ash Room at the UTSA 1604 Campus, 2.01.40, University Center (older building) One UTSA Circle. The community is welcome to attend.

Teller is internationally-acclaimed as one of the most original and inspiring motivational speakers of our time. His storytelling presentation will be followed by a dialogue about *Building, Creating, and Advancing the World*.

The event is sponsored by UTSA student groups and Christians United for Israel (CUFI). For further information contact Professor Rosalind Horowitz, (210) 458-2672.

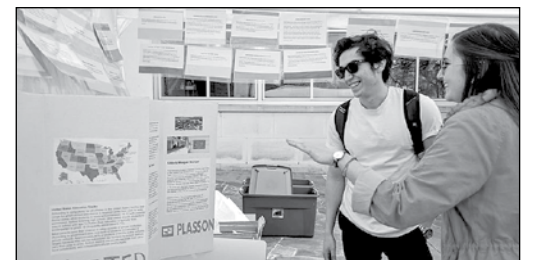


NCSY Spring Regional Shabbaton

Over 20 High schoolers from San Antonio headed to Dallas for the NCSY Spring Regional Shabbaton March 3 - 5, to be inspired and grow in their Judaism, with over 180 teens from Houston, Dallas, and Denver.

Hillel San Antonio

Hillel San Antonio recently held the first ever Israel Block Party on the UTSA campus. The purpose of the event was to educate the student body about Diversity in Israel, Israeli Education and Innovation, Israeli Pop Culture, Inclusion in the Israel Defense Forces, and Democracy and Shared Values.



STERN

continued from page 1

from 2015 to 2017.

CCAR is composed of more than 2,000 rabbis

affiliated with America's largest Jewish denomination.

Stern is the first third-generation president of the organization. His father,

Rabbi Jack Stern, served from 1985 to 1987, and his grandfather, Rabbi Jacob Philip Ruden, held the position from 1957 to 1959.



Tikkun Olam Day

During Rodfei's Tikkun Olam day, February 26, NCSY teens worked to beautify the city by painting over graffiti.

Social action with Temple Beth-El

At the end of February, six Temple Beth-El Post-Confirmation students, Joel Swedlove, the Director of Youth Programs and Informal Education, and Rabbi Marina Yergin traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism's (RAC's) L'Taken Social Justice Seminar. This four-day program engaged U.S. high school students in prayer, education, and action focusing on Jewish values and social justice. Most of the weekend focused on education as students learned about the connection between



the U.S. and the Reform Jewish community. The weekend also offered programming focused on challenging topics and culminated in lobbying Texas senators and representatives to discuss issues that the students felt were important to them; climate change, separation of church and state, reproductive rights, and U.S. aid to Israel. Temple Beth-El will offer this trip for post-confirmation students so that they continue developing their Jewish voice in American society.

Texas Hillel names new Executive Director

Maiya Chard-Yaron has been named Executive Director of Texas Hillel. Chard-Yaron currently serves as Assistant Director of University of Maryland Hillel, where she leads one of the largest Hillel program staff teams in the country on a campus serving 5,800 Jewish undergraduate students. She formerly served as Program Director of Hillel at Davis and Sacramento, where she managed program



strategy and student engagement. Maiya replaces Rabbi Daniel Septimus, who left in 2016 to become CEO of Shalom Austin. She will begin her tenure in Austin on June 12, 2017.

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ARTS & CULTURE

Music and Poetry Concert

Soprano Flicka Rahn and pianist Dr. Ruth Friedberg will perform a concert of Music and Poetry on Tuesday, April 11 from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. at The Ecumenical Center, 8310 Ewing Halsell Drive.

Rahn has a Master's degree in Guidance and Counseling and has been teaching and facilitating workshops in music and healing for over 25 years. Friedberg holds an Master's degree in musicology and has performed in concerts of chamber music and the vocal literature in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Asia, and was, for a period of ten years, keyboard artist with the San Antonio Symphony. She is co-author of *American Art Song and American Poetry*.

The concert is free and open to the public. Reservations are requested. For more information call (210) 616-0885.

Agudas Achim Sisterhood Book Review with Hazzan Lipton

Congregation Agudas Achim Sisterhood presents Hazzan Jeremy Lipton as their featured book reviewer on May 9 at 10 a.m.

Hazzan Lipton will review *Stolen Words: The Nazi Plunder of Stolen Books* by Rabbi Mark Glickman. The book traces the change from destroying Jewish books to hoarding and hiding them, the role of U. S. military forces and specially established institutions in the rescue of Jewish books as part of rebuilding Jewish community life after WWII.

This event is free and open to the public, light refreshments will be served.

Beldon Library News

- The next session of *Coffee, Books & More* will take place on Tuesday, May 9 at 10 a.m. Contact Beldon librarian Lynn Waghalter at waghalterl@jfsatx.org for the title of the book being discussed.

- Beldon Library's Summer Reading Program for Kids, K – 5 will begin on Wednesday, June 14th. Flyers and sign-up information will be available next month. This is an eight week program in which children will check-out and read 2 books per week from the Beldon Library. Children who wish to participate will need a Beldon Library card. At the end of the program, a certificate and a prize will be awarded to those who have read a minimum of 16 books.

- A Used Book Sale will take place in the Beldon Library on Sunday, August 13th and Monday, August 14th. Donations of gently used books for children and adults are now being accepted. No prayer books will be accepted. Old prayer books should have a proper burial at a Jewish cemetery. Please consult your synagogue on how to dispose of old prayer books.

- The Mitzvah Project that the Beldon Library has with the Vilna/Vilnius Jewish Public Library in Lithuania is ongoing. They are in the process of building up their children's section. Donations of new or gently used children's books with Jewish content are being accepted. Contact Lynn Waghalter for more information on this humanitarian project.



REBIRTH AFTER THE HOLOCAUST:

The Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons Camp, 1945-1950

The exhibit will run from March 1st - June 23rd.

For more information about exhibit related programs and events at UIW and The Holocaust Memorial Museum of San Antonio, visit www.hmmsa.org



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At Issue: This Is Not a *Christian Nation*

Israel has been quietly providing medical treatment to victims of the Syrian civil war regardless of religion. The world expects similar impartiality by the United States, whose Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and prohibits any religious test for holding public office. However, President Donald J. Trump's original executive order banning travel to this country from seven Muslim-majority nations gave preferential treatment to Christian over Muslim refugees.

The move was roundly condemned by clergy and lay leaders across the spectrum of American Christianity, particularly those involved in relief efforts. "We believe in assisting all, regardless of their religious beliefs," declared Bishop Joe S. Vásquez, chair of the committee on migration of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. A letter sent to the White House from the Accord Network, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, Korean Churches for Community Development, National Association of Evangelicals, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, Wesleyan Church, World Relief, and World Vision proclaims that: "The Bible teaches us that each person – including each refugee, regardless of their country of origin, religious background, or any other

qualifier – is made in the image of God, with inherent dignity and potential."

Despite ugly episodes in which non-Christians and even Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Mormons have been persecuted, the United States was founded as a rejection of theocracy. The word "God" – much less "Jesus Christ" – appears nowhere in the U.S. Constitution. George Washington's famous 1790 Letter to the Hebrew Congregation at Newport assures American Jews that in the United States, where "All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship," the government "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." In 1797, President John Adams concluded a conflict with Muslim Ottomans by signing the Treaty of Tripoli. It states explicitly that: "The Government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion; as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquillity, of Mussulmen."

So, amid growing, violent xenophobia, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism, it is especially sobering to find revival of the spurious notion that the United States is a Christian nation. Though 70.6 percent of Americans claim to be Christians of one sort or another, that does not make the United States "a Christian



Perspective:

STEVEN G. KELLMAN

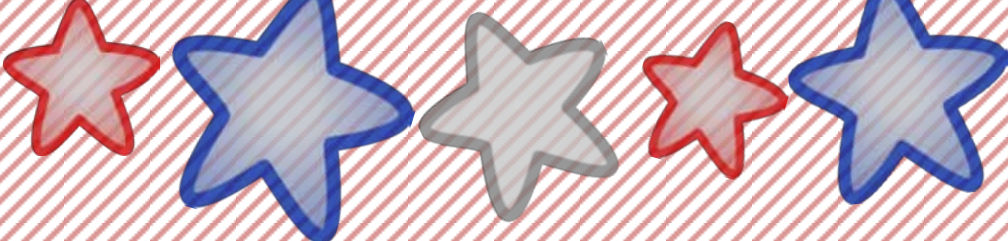
nation," any more than the fact that a majority of Americans owns a pet means that it is somehow un-American not to own a pet. According to a new survey by the Pew Research Center, 32 percent of Americans say that it is necessary to be Christian to

be "a true American." And 32 percent of Americans claim that it is necessary to be born in the United States to be a true American. By contrast, in Sweden, where 73 percent of the population is Protestant, only 7 percent of respondents felt that one needs to be Christian to be a real Swede.

It is easy to note just a few of the many contributions that Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and other non-Christians have

made throughout American history. It is easy to note just a few of the many contributions that immigrants have made throughout American history. It is not easy to cure the epidemic of bigotry that periodically afflicts a nation created to be an oasis of tolerance and religious liberty.

Steven G. Kellman is a professor of comparative literature at UTSA.



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BAT MITZVAH

EMILY NICOLE ZALTSMAN will be called to Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on April 22 at Congregation Agudas Achim. She is the daughter of Tamir and Karin Zaltsman and sister of Sarah. She is the granddaughter of Arthur and Lois Solomon of San Antonio and David (of blessed memory) and Brurya Zaltsman of Rishon Lezion, Israel.



Emily is an A honor roll student at Rawlinson Middle School and plays on the Volleyball, Basketball, and Track teams. She is also a part of the Chamber Orchestra at Rawlinson. Outside of school, Emily is a year round club swimmer for the San Antonio WAVE. Her favorite stroke is butterfly.

In her free time, Emily loves to read, play outside with her dad and sister and watch TV shows with her mom. She also loves being able to travel to Israel to see her Israeli family.

For her Mitzvah project, Emily chose to raise money for FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education) in honor of the 15 million Americans with food allergies including herself. Money raised will help in food allergy education programs, advocacy, and world-class research.

Agudas Achim recognized for outreach to interfaith families

Congregation Agudas Achim was one of 20 synagogues selected for a prestigious award from the National Center to Encourage Judaism (NCEJ) for having a welcoming website to increase awareness of the synagogue's welcoming nature toward interfaith families within the San Antonio community.

"We pride ourselves for being open and welcoming to everyone, including interfaith families looking for a spiritual home," said Rabbi Jeffrey Abraham, Senior Rabbi at

Agudas Achim. "In today's world depending on the statistics one believes, 50-70% of Jews are part of an interfaith marriage. This award is a small step in our continuing process to ensure that our members and future members feel welcome in our synagogue regardless of background or where they might be coming from."

As part of the award, Agudas received a stipend to help the synagogue continue its outreach toward interfaith families.

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