

Savannah JEWISH LIFE



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Savannah Jewish Life

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Shalom Savannah

Adam Solender

As you opened up this edition of Savannah Jewish Life, at this very moment, as you read this, the Savannah Jewish Federation is supporting, sustaining, and protecting Jewish life here in Savannah – as we've done for nearly eighty years in times of crisis and calm.

Because of compassionate donors, we're here for all of life's most important moments. We're here the moment when they receive a Jewish themed book from our PJ Library program and they enter Preschool. We're here, on a college campus, when a young woman uses her voice to advocate against spreading antisemitism.

We're here when a senior receives a warm smile and a hot kosher meal. And we are also here providing the vital training and security measures that save lives the moment an active shooter threatens a synagogue or any other Jewish communal institution.

The Savannah Jewish Federation is here day in and day out, at every moment, working to support and protect Jewish life, and we couldn't do it without your help.

Thanks to your past kindness and generosity, we are uniquely qualified to confront the challenges we face today. Here in Savannah, in Israel, and worldwide, you help us provide food, shelter, and medical care to those who otherwise would go without.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Jewish Federations, in collaboration with our partner organizations, have been in Ukraine and at its borders, helping the millions who were forced to flee their homes, communities, and country.

Savannah
JEWISH LIFE

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The objectives of the Savannah Jewish Life Magazine 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.

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Please send all Savannah Jewish Life materials to: savannahjewishlife@savj.org
Please send eNews newsletter submissions to: adam@savj.org

And as the war rages on, we continue to be there, for Jews and non-Jews alike, both on the ground and working from afar, to provide the vital aid needed to recover, resettle, and rebuild broken lives.



We work to protect our Jewish communities from violent antisemitism, securing our synagogues, the JEA, our community center, day school, and other Jewish institutions. We combat all forms of antisemitic and anti-Israel activity wherever they appear. And we raise our voices and advocate on Capitol Hill for critical legislation and funding to protect ourselves and every group targeted by hate.

We work to engage younger generations in Jewish life through Young Jewish Savannah and YESOD Leadership training. Through listening, exploring, innovating, and the support of our donors we're creating lasting moments of next-gen connection to Jewish community, learning, and Israel.

As we prepare for the High Holiday season we reflect that "It's Moments Like This" that make all the difference. Together, we're building and supporting a safe, equitable, inclusive and healthy Savannah Jewish community.

Chag Samech
Shanah Tovah U'metuka

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Letters to the Editor

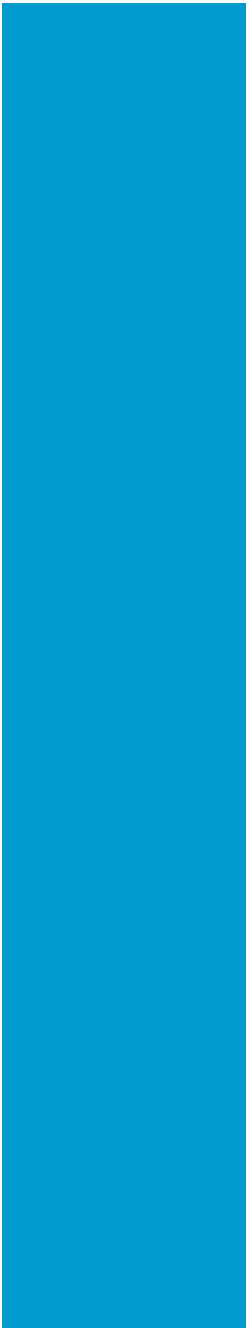
Savannah Jewish Life is a community publication. Letters should be civil and considerate in tone and not contain personal attacks, random attacks on businesses, or defamation. All statements of facts must and may be edited for length, clarity, or factual content. The opinions expressed are always the writer's. All letters must include the author's full name, address, and phone number (only your name, and if appropriate, job title and organization or business name, will be published). No more than two letters from the same author will be published within 12 consecutive months. Submit letters to savannahjewishlife@savj.org. Savannah Jewish Life retains full and sole discretion about which letters to publish.

Savannah Jewish Federation Mission Statement

Charged with raising, collecting and distributing funds, the Savannah Jewish Federation seeks to advance the welfare of the total Jewish community. The Federation strongly supports Israel and world Jewry. Additionally, the organization strives to preserve the civil, political, economic and religious rights of all Jews to develop an articulate, intelligent, and constructive Jewish community and to promote mutual understanding with the community at large.



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To the Editor

Dear Savannah Jewish Federation,

As you know, the trial for the 2018 Pittsburgh massacre is now underway. Recognizing the gravity of this moment for the Jewish community across the country and both the security and psychological implications of a trial such as this, the Secure Community Network (SCN) has established a Command Post in coordination with the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh (JFGP) to support both the local Pittsburgh Jewish community as well as our National Jewish community.

I am grateful to you and your Federation for your support of this effort in permitting Brett Butler to travel to Pittsburgh and contribute to this important effort.

The Command Post is offering direct support of the JFGP's security team. Those staffing the Command Post will monitor information and potential incidents aimed at disrupting the trial or posing direct threats to our community. To ensure the effectiveness of this operation, Intelligence Analysts from Jewish Security Operations Command Center (JSOCC) and security directors from across the country are traveling to Pittsburgh on a rotating basis to contribute their expertise.

These professionals will work alongside JFGP's security team, helping to bolster security in the community for those most impacted by the shooting, including witnesses and victims' family members. as well as working to ensure appropriate security measures are in place at various locations.

We are deeply appreciative for your partnership in permitting your security director to support this important and historic event in our community. We believe the experience will be directly beneficial to your community: beyond gaining a deeper understanding of this horrific event and its long-term impact, we see this as an opportunity for security directors to bring the knowledge and experience gained back to their communities to strengthen their local security efforts.

SCN is proud to partner with Pittsburgh the Savannah Jewish Federation to demonstrate not just the resilience of the Jewish community in the face of adversity, but our collective power to support and lift each other up during trying times. Thank you for your continued partnership and support in this critical endeavor.

Very Respectfully,

Michael G. Master
SCN National Director &CEO



Dear JEA Preschool Students,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$450 to Senior Citizens Inc's Meals on Wheels program.

Your donation to help feed seniors in our community is an inspiring deed that will provide tasty,nutritious meals and so much more.

...Because of you, they will see a friendly face when we deliver their meals, and

...Because of you, they will know that they are remembered.

I am touched beyond words with your kindness.

With gratitude,

Patricia Lyons

President

Senior Citizens, Inc

Your Campaign Dollars At Work

Jessica Ravitz Cherof



Director of Communications Strategy, ADL Southern Division

Editor's Note: Charged with raising, collecting and distributing funds, the Federation seeks to "advance the welfare of the total Jewish community." Each issue highlights some of the organizations that are beneficiaries of allocations from the Savannah Jewish Federation's Annual Community Campaign.

As a new girl in school, Kylie-Ann Hunsinger saw what it was like to be bullied as a seventh grader. She was fortunate that a teacher quickly stepped in to stop what was happening, but being new -- and simply being who she is -- compelled Kylie-Ann to look out for others at Lee Roy Myers Middle School in Savannah.

She connected with students who enrolled after her, showed them around and made sure they knew they belonged. She stood up for peers in need of an ally and checked in on the well-being of those around her, teachers included. "I like to help people and make them feel better about themselves," she said, offering words not heard enough from 13 year olds.

It's this sort of selfless outreach that faculty noticed, which is why Kylie-Ann was nominated and then named ADL Southeast's Middle School Changemaker on No Place for Hate Day, which was celebrated on May 11.

"To just come in and want to change the climate and culture, and to be that voice for her classmates, she was more than worthy," said Gabrielle Brundidge, the school counselor who nominated Kylie-Ann.

ADL, or the Anti-Defamation League, exists to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. One way the 110-year-old organization combats hatred and promotes appreciation of diversity is through education and initiatives like No Place for Hate. The student-led and customizable program encourages team building and activity implementation to improve school climates by making them more inclusive.

The program, currently in more than 1,800 schools across the country, engages students and staff, promotes meaningful conversations and unifies school communities to challenge bias and bullying.

The ADL Southeast regional office, which covers Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama, had 272 schools registered for No Place for Hate for the 2022-2023 school year. In Savannah, 19 schools registered for the program, including 13 high schools, two middle schools and four elementary schools.

Sharonda Murrell, Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools Associate Superintendent for Secondary Schools, is a longtime supporter of No Place For Hate. She first became familiar with the program while working in Atlanta Public Schools. There, she saw it develop leaders and foster collaboration, which is why she advocated to introduce the program in Savannah during a high school student leadership conference in February.

Murrell sees No Place for Hate as a resource and launchpad to empower students, promote social emotional learning, and prepare students for the bigger and more diverse world that awaits them. She likens the embrace of inclusivity to what it takes to pick up a second language.

"Research tells us that the earlier you start a language, the more fluent you're going to become," Murrell said. "The same holds true as it relates to No Place for Hate. The earlier we start, the more likely you'll see students amplify their voices for good."

Over the summer, Kylie-Ann's family moved to Effingham County, which means she's at a different school now. But wherever she is, new girl or not, she is bound to be a positive force.

To learn more about the No Place for Hate movement or get your school community involved, visit www.noplaceforhate.org

Straight From The Horse's Mouth

Whether you mosey or scurry over to the JEA on Sunday September 10th, you will not want to miss this year's Gala, themed **Rhinestone Cowboy**. Every year this annual fundraiser for the JEA allows community members to gather and mingle, all the while raising money for our community engagement activities that range from preschool to sports to film festivals and more.

Our community center is growing and thriving with changes like expanding the preschool, renovating the outdoor pool and updating the building to keep up with the needs of the Savannah community. While many of us believe our small contributions won't make a major impact on the changes occurring at our JEA, we know this to not be true. The ticket you purchase to the Gala, the silent auction item that you bid on, even the bottle of wine you take home from the Wall of Wines all *pony up* to making the JEA the center of our Jewish lives for generations to come.



We are excited to have Natalie Goodman and her band provide live country music this year (be sure to take advantage of the JEAs line dancing classes to prepare), delicious southern grub, ponies (yes, you read that correctly) and a watering hole with some libations to cool off from the summer heat.

This year's Gala will have over 100 items to bid on for our silent auction and we are bringing back our live auction with a real fast talker auctioneer. We are also thrilled to announce a record number of sponsors to this year's Gala proving that our community outreach is growing and impactful. So grab your Stetson, cowboy boots and be sure to add some glitz and glam. We are excited and looking forward to two-stepping with you on September 10th.

Yee-Haw!

Yael Elfassy and Rachael Currie

Your Gala Co-Cowgirl Chairs

SEPTEMBER 10TH

6:00PM

JEA GALA 2023

GRUB BY
NICK MUELLER

TUNES BY
NATALIE GOODMAN & BAND

UNBELIEVABLE
LIVE & SILENT AUCTION

RHINESTONE
COWBOY

\$136 PER TICKET
\$360 FRIENDS OF THE JEA
AVAILABLE AT THE FRONT DESK OR
SAVANNAHJEA.ORG

Linda Sacks, SJF President

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future"

John F. Kennedy



Thirty years ago, on behalf of U-J-A* we campaigned. Then it morphed into U-J-C** and is now J-F-N-A***.

Whatever its name, the money from our annual campaign supports J-D-C's# sacred mission to continue to maintain a decent standard of living, replete with dignity for elderly survivors of Nazi European atrocity. For oppressed Russians and starving Ethiopians - we had no silence.

Today, we rescue Ukrainians fleeing warfare's violence. Bounded by sworn enemies, Israel had peace with Egypt alone.

Now dine kosher in Abu Dhabi when you are away from home.

Today, Israel struggles with internal conflict regarding her highest court.

Whatever side you favor, the people of our homeland deserve our support.

Then - over half of campaign pledges through the process of allocation

went overseas to Europe and Israel, funding social services and immigration.

Today the majority of pledged money stays in the Coastal Empire,

funding programs and services to help and to inspire.

Like Purim and Chanukah community celebrations, Innovation grants and Yom HaShoah commemorations.

First called the Jewish Film festival: drama and comedy galore.

Now: a month of movies, concerts, cooking lessons, lectures and more.

Sadly, the Kibbitzers are gone, and their weekly club meetings as well,

But we offer Food for Thought: a kosher meal and thought-provoking intel.

A full and thriving preschool was but a figment of communal imagination.

Now 120 kids learn and benefit from Jewish Early Childhood Education.

Our Savannah Jewish history lay in danger of being ignored,

but thanks to Atlanta's Bremen Museum our past has been restored.

Federation funds PJ library and provides kids without cost Age-appropriate books, lest their rich Jewish heritage be lost.

And don't forget the recent concerts from Maccabeats and 613,

and Young Jewish Savannah bringing young couples and singles to the scene.

Through Jewish Family Services, Federation continues its conviction

of aiding others who are hungry, sick or in danger of eviction.

Still strongly significant, Savannah's three historic shuls are now joined by CHABAD and SCAD Hillel, Sababa!! So cool!

Yet among our Jewish institutions, there's discord with costs most severe,

more hurtful than mere sibling rivalry, what might make it disappear?

Three decades ago, five Endowments were all we had to report.

Today there are 127 funds for financial support.

Mom and Dad both gainfully employed has emerged as the norm.

So incentives for volunteerism had to be reformed.

As lay leadership ranks grew ever smaller, lest governance implode,

we set up a developmental curriculum and named it Yesod.

Years ago: police presence at shuls in Israel and Europe.

Now: it's the same here, due to rising antisemitic tropes.

Threats to Jewish security: now a partnership with S-C-N##

trains our community to be safe, teaching us how to fend with potential threats and troubling situations.

Its costs are underwritten from campaign allocations.

With time, many generous donors have passed from the scene.

Will their offspring remain here? That remains to be seen.

Will they give to the Federation which their parents so prized?

Or move on to other cities, or their charitable priorities revise?

Will they devalue Federation and redirect their sizeable donations,

and for cultural non-profits and NGO's become sustaining patrons?

Changes for better and for worse – yes, Federation's feeling the heat,

but we pledge continued efforts for a communal future that's upbeat.

We need everyone's support as we push open the door, Looking forward, never backward to 5784.

*United Jewish Appeal

**United Jewish Communities

***Jewish Federations of North America

#Joint Distribution Committee

##Security Community Network

Rabbi Zalman Refson Chabad of Savannah



We're human. We forget things because they drop off our mental radar. We can't be constantly conscious of everything and everyone passing through our lives. G-d, on the other hand, is Infinite, Omnipotent, and Omniscient. G-d certainly has no memory lapses.

Yet, on Rosh Hashanah, we'll read liturgy in which we ask G-d – a good number of times in various ways – to 'remember' us. Seriously? Do we believe in a G-d Who can forget us?

Chassidic thought points out that forgetting something implies a distance, a lack of conscious connection between the 'rememberer'; and the 'remembered'.

That distance can occur in our relationship with the Divine, but only because WE forget.

When we get wrapped up in the struggles of the moment, when we're only conscious of what's directly in front of our [mind's] eyes and screams for attention, we often forget about Higher Purpose. We can lose consciousness of the fact that we were created with an objective, and every day needs to be another stride toward achieving that objective. We can forget G-d.

And when we do, we create a distance between us and our Creator. The 'gulf of forgetfulness'. And, as in any relationship, that's a divisive chasm that needs to be bridged. The good news is that this is reasonably achievable.

When you remember something, you're not learning something new. The forgotten person/factoid is something you've been mentally carrying with you; it just dropped below your line of mental vision. It's there, waiting to be accessed. So you need to raise it back up and make it part of your life, part of your mindset. You only need to sharpen your mental vision...and remember. And once you recall your Creator, once you re-experience your relationship with the Divine, and commit yourself to maintaining clearer consciousness for the road ahead, the gap has been repaired.

Rosh Hashanah addresses our reality: G-d gave us an interactive universe. When we forget the Divine, the distance is mirrored.

The Shofar's calls jar us from our self-absorbed reverie to remember our Higher Calling. And when that happens, G-d's deep love for us bridges the gap, and we're reunited in an intimate bond with the Divine.

Be there.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Shana Tovah filled with happiness, love & light!

Allison Konter JEA President

"If you will it, it's not a dream." - Theodore Hertzl



In 2019, we envisioned our future at the JEA. We realized that our building was in great need of updates, and a comprehensive plan was developed to address those needs. We imagined our dreams. While the pandemic delayed those dreams, we officially began our capital campaign in 2021. There has been great momentum in early fundraising efforts and due to generous donations combined with grants and SCAD's philanthropy, we have finalized the initial projects. Our dreams are now our reality.

Our 21st century Outdoor Pool was finished in early June. We have only begun to see the impact that this update will have on our community. Kids and adults are finding endless enjoyment from the zero entry pool, seating is often filled, and our community "grill and chill" nights have been packed! Additionally, our preschool expansion was completed in early August; we will increase enrollment in our early learning program by thirty percent during this fiscal year. Finally, we have updated our recreation and wellness facilities with the refinishing of our outdoor courts into basketball and pickleball courts and the opening of the new functional fitness room, Studio J.

As we embark on a new year, it is important to reflect on what all of this excitement proves. The JEA is a central element in both the Savannah Jewish community as well as the greater Savannah community. While our preschool enrollment remains full, our children's programming is equally as popular. Our camp program wrapped up a very full summer, with 72 schools, public and private, represented at our program. Campers from different backgrounds celebrated Shabbat on a weekly basis, experienced all things Israeli, and were regularly exposed to Hebrew and Jewish values.

This new year will continue to be filled with energy and enthusiasm towards our programming, and the continued execution of our Capital Campaign fundraising and projects. While our Capital Campaign has been successful, it is not near completion and we need your help to reach the finish line!

Thank you for joining me in envisioning and willing our dreams as we embark on another year. The JEA is our community center, and it takes our community's hard word and energy to ensure our future success.

Happy New Year!

Rabbi Robert Haas Congregation Mickve Israel



I want to first wish everyone the very best for the upcoming holidays and for the coming year, even though many of us may find it difficult to wish everyone the best for the coming year.

We have just seen so much tragedy in recent years, that it sometimes feels strange to ever appear hopeful. We've seen a pandemic grip our planet. We've watched as divisiveness engulfs our country and our world in so many ways. We've seen a spike in violence and hate groups, and we've seen an alarming rise in anti-Semitism. In fact, the ADL reports more anti-Semitic incidents in 2023 than any other year, since the organization began tracking these numbers in 1979. Even more alarming is the fact that this record has been broken three times in the past five years. In times such as these, how can we hope for the best for the coming year?

It is not a simple answer, but even though the English poet, Alexander Pope coined the phrase, "Hope springs eternal..." in many ways, Judaism actually invented the idea of hope. So, shouldn't we continue to abide by our invention. In the Talmud, we read, "Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, said, A person who prayed and saw that he was not answered should pray again, because 'Hope in the Eternal, strengthens yourself, lets your heart take courage and hope in the Eternal.' (Psalms 27:14). One should turn to God with hope, and if necessary, turn to God again with hope." (Berachot 32b:10)

We pray again and again, even when prayers cease to seemingly be answered. Why, because of Hope. We believed in a better world during times of trials much worse than the ones we endure today because of Hope. "The whole of Judaism," wrote Sir Jonathan Sacks former Chief Rabbi of England, "is a set of laws and narratives designed to create in people, families, communities and a nation, habits that defeat despair. Judaism is the voice of hope in the conversation of mankind." According to Lord Sacks, Hope is Judaism's gift to the world, and we must remind ourselves at least once a year that hope never dies.

Every year we arrive at the High Holiday and remind ourselves that the phrase, "Hope springs eternal..." would not exist without us. Isn't the greatest Hope Story of them all, the Exodus from Egypt, the seminal story in our belief system? Isn't the national anthem of Israel, HaTikva, which means, "The Hope."

One of the oldest congregations in the western hemisphere, Congregation Mikve Israel, which means the Hope of Israel, was founded in 1651...in... Curacao, and it proved such a success that another "Hope of Israel" synagogue was founded in Savannah in 1733 and then another "Hope of Israel" synagogue was founded in Philadelphia about ten years later.

And all three of them exist today, although only the synagogue building in Curacao has a sand floor. Talk about hope.

In the Jewish world, Hope springs eternal and so we continue to hope for a better year every next year. So as the New Year approaches, Good Yontif to everyone. May we continue to hope for a better future at least once a year.

PJ Library & PJ OUR WAY.
APPLES AND HONEY:
 A ROSH HASHANAH EXPERIENCE
PJ LIBRARY SAVANNAH AND CONGREGATION MICKVE ISRAEL INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR
 - LUNCH
 - APPLESAUCE SNACK
 - HONEYCOMB ARTWORK
 - STORYTIME
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH
CONGREGATION MICKVE ISRAEL
20 E GORDON ST - SAVANNAH, GA
12-2 PM

OVER THE MOON SAVANNAH'S
STAND UP COMEDY SPECIALS
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST @ 7PM | \$25 TICKETS
 100% of ticket sales will go towards Over the Moon, the Diaper Bank of Coastal Georgia!
FEATURING COMEDIANS:
 Rabbi Robert Haas, Jon Antoine, & Stephanie Kapel
 Front Porch Impact
 210 W Victory Drive, Savannah, GA 31401

Rabbi Samuel Gelman

Congregation Agudath Achim



I'm a twice-a-year Jew." Rabbis hear this all the time, usually accompanied by a slight smile and a look of pity. It's often followed up with "I'm just not a services person." I think that people go right to that defense because they expect

me, as a rabbi, to encourage them to be more than a twice-a-year Jew, and are pre-empting the question "Why don't you come to services more often?" And while yes, I would like every Jew to be an "everyday Jew" instead of a "twice a year Jew," that doesn't mean I'm going to start preaching at twice-a-year Jews to show up to services every Shabbat (though I'd love for y'all to be there!) Rather, I think it is important that we acknowledge that being Jewish means so much more than attending services.

If we look to the Torah for the origins of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we see the following: "Hashem spoke to Moses, saying: 'Speak to the Israelites thus: In the seventh month [from Nissan, the month of Passover], on the first day of the month, you shall rest, and observe a sacred occasion with loud blasts. You shall not work at your occupations, and you shall bring an offering by fire to Hashem...the tenth day of the seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring an offering by fire to Hashem; you shall do no work on that day. (Leviticus 23:24-28) Close readers will observe that there is nothing there about sitting through long services. Even in the Talmud, the laws dealing with the order of the Rosh Hashanah service are in the context of knowing when to sound the shofar, and in Tractate Yoma (referring to Yom Kippur) prayer is only mentioned in the context of Vidui, the confession.

So then why, you might ask, do our foundational texts focus so little on prayer on the High Holidays, when now they're known for being all about prayer? I believe that our tradition values prayer as a utility, a spark, in service of something outside of itself. The Sages established prayer in remembrance of the sacrifices that we could no longer give after the destruction of the Temple. We don't pray for the sake of praying, but to change something within ourselves. To give us focus. On Rosh Hashana, prayer serves as the vehicle for the shofar's wake up call, and helps us put the past year into perspective.

On Yom Kippur, prayer gives us space to reflect and own up to what we failed to do in the last year, and to practice teshuva as a means for improving in the year to come. And on both holidays, prayer gives us a space to be at rest, and to do no work - just like the Torah states.

And that's just the High Holidays! Whenever we pray - on weekdays, on Shabbat, on holidays - that prayer is meant to spur us towards something greater: living fully Jewish lives not just in synagogue, but in our daily lives. So if you tell me you're "just a twice-a-year Jew," and I challenge you to increase the number of days when you're are Jewish, know that I'm not referring to attending synagogue. I instead hope to see you take your Judaism from the synagogue and out into the world.

Best wishes to you and yours for a shana tova u'metuka, a happy and sweet New Year.



PJ books piling up?
Donate your well-loved PJ books
and we'll lend you others at the

PJ Lending Library
(2nd floor of the JEA)



Rabbi Avigdor Slatus

Congregation B'nai Brith Jacob



The holidays are a time for prayer and introspection. We reflect upon the year that has past and we take inventory of our lives. This is the period in which we stand before our Heavenly Creator and ponder the meaning of our existence and purpose of our being. We remove ourselves from the daily routines and we count our blessings and beseech the Al-Mighty for His blessings for the coming year. He knows our every thought and records our words and deeds. We are accountable to Him and we shall affix our names to His truthful judgment. We recognize the insignificance of man and how our lives are truly in His hands.

"Who shall live and who shall die" the holy words of the U'Nesana Tokef touch the souls of even the most casual participant. "How many shall pass away and how many shall be born." Who can recite these words and not be touched! Rosh Hashana, for some, is just another holiday, an excuse for family to join together and indulge in gluttonous consumption of food. For the thinking, spiritual man, Rosh Hashana is a day of judgment, when Hashem ascends His throne of glory and presides in judgment of humanity. "Like a flock of sheep, as a shepherd seeks out his flock, making his sheep pass under his rod, so dost Thou make all the living souls pass before Thee."

Yom Kippur affords us the remarkable opportunity to delete from our record any mistakes, transgressions or acts of negligence, even after our "day in court." More than just an appeal, Yom Kippur allows us to attach

ourselves to our Creator and retroactively remove all past errors and thereby "cancel the stern decree."

On Rosh Hashana their destiny is inscribed and on Yom Kippur it is sealed." How fortunate we are to have been chosen to be judged by the King Himself, our Father, Our King, the Creator. Who dares question His will to pardon us! Who can oppose His decision to forgive us! Who can contest His judgment to bestow His blessings upon us!" Who shall be lowered and who shall be raised." It is He who desires to raise us, to welcome our prayers, our repentance and commitment to fulfill His will. "Man comes from dust and ends in dust. He is like the shadow that passes, a cloud that vanishes, a breeze that blows, a dream that flies away. But Thou are King, the everlasting G-d."

Only those whose ears have become numb, only those who do not perceive more than their physical being, see no value nor are moved by these sacred words of the U'Nesana Tokef. The powerful message is not limited to Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur but is intended to penetrate deeply within our souls and awaken us toward Hashem for the coming years of our lives. G-d attentively awaits our prayers the entire year and He patiently awaits our connecting with Him during all the days of our lives. Demonstrating that Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are not anomalies, we have opportunities throughout the year that display the sincerity of our High Holiday prayers. Shabbos is certainly the holiest day and most appropriate to reveal that the U'Nesana Tokef has genuinely found residence in our hearts.

May we join together on the Holidays and every Shabbos, experiencing the eternal spirituality which is our Torah, and may we be blessed with a year of good health, prosperity and Shalom.



Savannah Jewish Federation

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

7:00 PM

JEA

80TH ANNUAL MEETING

STATE OF THE FEDERATION

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

PRESIDENTS AWARD

RELECTION OF GOVERNORS

REMARKS FROM LINDA SACKS, PRESIDENT

YESOD COHORT 3 GRADUATION

Security and Safety During The High Holidays

Brett Butler, Security Director

As Jewish communities around the world come together to celebrate the High Holidays, there is a growing need to prioritize security and safety measures. The significance and prominence of these events, such as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, make them potential targets for security threats.

Jewish communities around the world face various increased security challenges during high holidays. The rise in global anti-Semitism, hate crimes, and terrorist activities adds to all of our concerns for the safety of the community. Synagogues, community centers, and other places of gathering become potential targets for individuals or groups seeking to instill fear and division. Additionally, the open and welcoming nature of High Holiday services makes us feel even more vulnerable to unforeseen incidents.

To safeguard those gathering at services and to maintain the sanctity of the High Holidays, all institutions must adopt proactive security measures. Collaboration with law enforcement agencies is essential to assess potential risks and develop appropriate security protocols. Implementing physical security measures such as access control, surveillance systems, and metal detectors can deter potential threats. Throughout the month, Secure Communities Network has been providing special seminars in advance of the High Holidays including classes on *"Securing the Synagogue, Firearms and the Faithful, The Role of Greeters, Ushers, and Volunteers, Functional Needs and Emergency Preparedness, Personal Safety for Lay & Professional Leadership During the High Holidays, and Committing to Action:"* all programs to prepare our synagogues for the season.

Creating a sense of vigilance and preparedness among our community members is crucial. The Savannah Jewish Federation has been providing training programs and workshops on **Situational Awareness, Countering Active Threats (CATT), and Stop the Bleed (STB)** over the past six months in each of the synagogues that empower individuals to be proactive in protecting themselves and their congregations.

We encourage you to report any unusual or suspicious activity as a vital step in maintaining overall safety. You can go to the Incident Reporting Form which can be found at Savannah Jewish Federation Security Page.



While prioritizing security, it is equally important to maintain an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere during the holidays. The goal is to strike a balance between vigilance and ensuring that the spirit of the holidays remains intact.

The High Holidays are moments of spiritual significance and unity for the Jewish community. In a world where security threats are ever-present, it is crucial to prioritize safety without compromising the essence of these cherished observances. By adopting proactive measures, fostering community engagement, and leveraging technology, we can ensure that our high holiday gatherings remain secure, peaceful, and imbued with the spirit of unity and reflection.



Savannah's Own: Leo Center

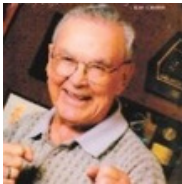
By Scott Center

Some of the very first inhabitants of Savannah were Jewish. They were on the boat of the original settlers brought on shore by General James Oglethorpe. The story has been told that the original Jewish settlers were not allowed to leave the ship harbored in what is now called the Savannah River. All other immigrants were allowed ashore. But not the Jewish settlers. Then there was an outbreak of yellow fever. Lo and behold there was only one medical doctor in the community. He happened to be Jewish and aboard that ship. Gen. Oglethorpe applied to the King's Lawyers in Charleston for permission to allow that doctor ashore. Permission was granted. But the doctor refused to disembark unless all Jewish immigrants were allowed ashore. Gen. Oglethorpe applied again the King's Lawyers in Charleston and permission was granted for all Jewish immigrants to come ashore. Thus began the Jewish community in Savannah, GA.

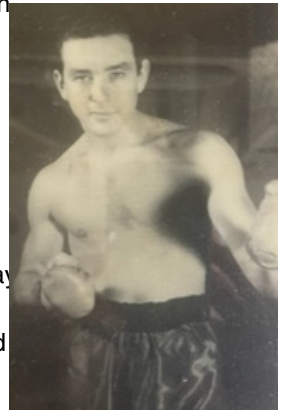
Savannah's Jewish community produced prominent business, professional, and civic leaders. As early as 1799 Levi Sheftall was elected an Alderman. Levi's descendants Mordecai and Moses Sheftall were also elected aldermen, Solomon Cohen in the 1800s, Julius Jay Shoob (1957-1966), and Benjamin Garfunkel (1966-1970).

Then came Leo Center, who was elected by the citizenry to five consecutive terms from 1970 until he resigned in 1990. During his tenure Leo served as Vice-Chair of Council and Mayor Pro Tem. Along with medical professionals (Dr. Irving Victor), legal professionals (Aaron Kravitch and Aaron Buchsbaum), and business leaders (David Rosenzweig and Julius Fine) among others, Leo Center pushed and fought for political and civil rights for all Savannahians, particularly African-Americans.

It was during Leo Center's tenure that the first African-American (Bowles Ford, 1970) and the first elected female (Dr. Harris Lentini, 1978) served as Aldermen. Leo was prominent in pushing for both those changes. In his last three terms Leo served on councils with three (eventual) mayors - John Rousakis, Floyd Adams, and Otis Johnson.



Leo was a native Savannahian born in 1918 to Henry and Hannah Center. Leo's dad Henry served as a Savannah police officer.



There is an archived story in the Savannah Morning News that Henry ran down a runaway horse carriage and saved the lady passenger. Leo attended Savannah public schools. He was an exceptional athlete.

He lettered in basketball and football at Savannah High and Miami Military Academy. As an amateur prize fighter Leo won several Golden Gloves titles, a city championship, and advanced to the National Golden Glove finals in NY where he performed so well at Madison Square Garden that he was asked to join the New York team and travel to Chicago. During this trip he became friends with the real Sugar Ray, Sugar Ray Robinson, and in later years officiated a match that Sugar Ray Robinson fought in Savannah.

As a professional, Leo was named Fighter of the Month by Ring Magazine in 1941. He was ranked in the top 10 Light Heavyweights in the world, but then the US entered WWII, so Leo enlisted in the Navy where he won a Fleet Championship. Except for those four years serving America during WWII, Leo lived his entire life in this city that he loved. He was later named to the JEA and Greater Savannah Athletic Halls of Fame.

Returning to Savannah after WWII, Leo married Miriam Kantsiper, started a business, and a family. Beginning as the Linoleum and Shade Shop (the original lettering is still on the side of the building now housing Sorry Charlie's), then changing the name to Center Brothers, Inc., Leo built a local commercial sub-contracting company into a regional force with offices in Atlanta, Jacksonville, Tampa, Miami, and Hilton Head. He was asked to serve on the National Board for Interior Contractors. During a convention held in Canada when one speaker spoke down about African American workers, Leo took the floor to provide an animated and aggressive rebuttal. Leo was active in the local Chamber and civic affairs. He also refereed local prize fights.

Leo Center, continued

In one particular fight during a match between a white and a black boxer, some drunk local, sitting high up in the back of the National Guard Armory on Eisenhower Dr. kept calling out over and over, "Kill the N... Hit the N... Destroy that N...". His voice kept floating over the hubbub of the crowd. It was obnoxious. It was frightening. Everyone cringed. Everyone froze. Nobody knew what to do. But Leo did. He stopped the fight mid-round, pointed to the rafters, and bellowed out, "That's enough!" The taunts immediately stopped. Then, to thunderous applause, the fight went on.

Bar mitzvahed and married at Congregation Bnai Brith Jacob, Leo remained true to his Jewish roots. Leo re-founded the local chapter of AIPAC and took local leaders, including Pastor Matthew Southall Brown and Congressman Lindsay Thomas to Israel. He taught boxing at the JEA. In 1984 Leo married Simone Robinson.



Leo proudly represented his beloved Savannah, as an amateur and professional prize fighter, as a businessman, and as an elected official, on local, state and national levels through League of Cities convention connections and on the board of his commercial industry. Through the League of Cities Leo became friends with San Jose Mayor Norman Mineta who later became the first Asian-American to serve in the national cabinet (as Secretary of Transportation under Pres. Bill Clinton and later George W. Bush). As an Alderman, Leo was instrumental in developing Rousakis Plaza along our riverfront, changing a broken yet historical area into one of our most recognized and visited development.

Leo was enshrined with a signed menu on the wall of Johnny Harris restaurant and almost all Savannahians have seen and commented on his photo on the wall of the Crystal Beer Parlor.

After living 94 years and 19 days in his beloved home city of Savannah, Leo died September 30, 2012.

Campaign Kicks Off With Adam Teitelbaum



Adam Teitelbaum will be the featured speaker at this year's Savannah Jewish Federation **Annual Community Campaign KickOff dinner on Thursday, October 12th at 6pm.**

Adam currently serves as the Executive Director of the Israel Action Network and the Associate Vice President for Public Affairs at The Jewish Federations of North America. In this role, he is responsible for the strategic planning and implementation of initiatives to leverage the entire Jewish Federation system to address rising antisemitism and Israel delegitimization at the local, state, and Federal levels.

Adam has been leading pro-Israel activism for more than a decade, most recently serving as AIPAC's Leadership Development Director where he oversaw all student participation in strengthening the U.S.-Israel relationship.

After college at UC San Diego, he began his professional career as the International Director of Jewish and Philanthropy Programming at AEPi Headquarters. During his tenure at AEPi, he is most proud of helping create the Hineni Jewish Identity Conference, the Civic Leadership initiative, Shabbat Across AEPi initiative, and building towards the National Philanthropy goal of \$700,000 for seven remarkable partner agencies.

Adam is also a member of the fourth cohort of the Schusterman Fellowship and currently lives in Cincinnati with his wife and son.

**Wishing all of our
family and friends a
sweet and happy
new year**

**Victor, Elise, Heather,
Jason, Reed and Palmer
Shernoff**

**HOPE THIS IS YOUR BEST
YEAR EVER**



SCOTT, TATSIANA, SOFIA AND LEO CENTER

**L' Shana Tova!
The Biners of Savannah
Stan and Peg, Walt and Melanie
Sarah, Karla, and Jonah**

**L Shana Tova To Our
Jewish Community
Harriet, Margo, Mark &
Eric Meyerhoff (Of Blessed Memory)**

**L'Shana Tova 5784
Peace to all
Adelle and Ted**

**May the year ahead be filled with
the blessings of health,
happiness, and peace.
Marcia & Sandy Berens and family**

**Dayle and Aaron Levy along with
their entire family send New Year
wishes for a world filled with good
health, happiness and peace.**

**L' Shana Tova
David & Julie Rubnitz**

**Skippy and Sandy Goodman
Marc, Karen and Parker Goodman
Jill, Ken, Ben and Carly Goldstein
wish a happy and healthy New Year to all.**

**Happy and Healthy New Year
from our family to yours.
Paul, Harriet, Brian, Jen,
Alec, Peri and Josie Kulbersh
Dana, Eric, Ross and Alyssa Bernath**

Happy Holidays

AM Goldkrand

Judith Goldkrand & Nancy Geenen

Lucy & Joy Goldkrand Cheskin

Howard Goldkrand

Beth Coleman and BZ

We Wish Our Family and Friends Peace, Health
and Happiness Always. L'Shana Tova!
Tami & Lenny Tishberg

May this New Year be filled
with Health & Happiness,
Sweet moments for you
and your family, and peace
in the world
L'Shannah Tovah

Sarah Denmark & Adam Solender

L' Shanah Tova to our beloved community!
May your year be filled with simchas
Arlene & Allan Ratner
Jami, Scott, Jennifer, Brett,
Skyler, Madelyn, and Margot

Happy New Year To All.
From Marilyn and Jim Farley

Best wishes for a peaceful, meaningful
and productive New Year to the entire
Savannah Jewish Community.

Shana Tova uMetukah
Linda and Steve Sacks

Shana Tova to all of our friends and family
at the AA, JEA, Federation, and beyond.
Adam, Lauren and Derrick Fins

Linda & Michael, Stephanie, Jonathan, Lilly,
Amelia, and Isabelle Zoller
Becca, Eric, Adeline & Zachary Zoller Stone
wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year.

Wishing our family, friends and community
a very happy, healthy, peaceful New Year!
Jean and Julian Weitz

The Adler Family wishes everyone a
Happy, Healthy New Year!
John, Sue, Ben & Gabe Adler

May peace, good health and
happiness be yours in the coming
year and always.
Toby Hollenberg, Jeff, Melissa, Jessa and Ellie Neil

Happy healthy New Year
Jane Winter

Best wishes for a Happy
and Healthy New Year
Beth and Lily Bosman

We wish all our Family and Friends A
Happy and Healthy New Year!
Sally and Steve
Greg, Susan, Eleanor & Grant
Matt, Karina, Leo & Tomas Greenberg

On The Personal Side

Mazel Tov To

Jeffrey Lasky, who was honored with the 2023 Judge Cheatham Professionalism Award by the Savannah Bar Association.

Malvina Leder, Ann Solomon & Teresa Victor for being awarded Women of Mickve Israel's 2023 Women of Valor

Denise and Steve Sultan on the birth of their grandson, David Jeremy, to parents Heather & Patrick Fitzgerald.

Carol Greenberg for being awarded the DAR Excellence in Community Service Award.

Leslie Westmoreland on the birth of her granddaughter, Nina Sadie, to parents Rachael Westmoreland and Elliot Gruber.

Erin Horesh, daughter of the late Donna Reeves and Larry Horesh, on her engagement to Liam Irwin.

Joey Heilbrun, daughter of Mikie Heilbrun, who became a bat mitzvah in Israel on July 20th.

Benjamin Jensen, son of Shellie and Ken Jensen, who will become a bar mitzvah on September 2nd.

Kenzie Langdon, daughter of Jody and Paul Langdon, who will become a bat mitzvah on September 9th

Lily Levy-Cowart, daughter of Jennifer Levy and Joseph Cowart, who will become a bat mitzvah on October 7th.

Henry Walcoff, son of Leslie and Andrew Walcoff, who will become a bar mitzvah on October 14th.



Become a BBYO Advisor

BBYO Advisors are volunteers committed to helping members and their chapter reach their full potential

bbyo.org/get-involved/become-an-advisor



TELL US YOUR good news

CELEBRATING A SIGNIFICANT EVENT, SIMCHA, BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY?

SUBMIT TO SAVANNAHJEWISHLIFE@SAVJ.ORG

Community
CALENDAR

Stay up to date on all events in the Savannah Jewish community

WWW.SAVJ.ORG

Obituaries

through 7/31/23

Michel Franklin Steinfeldt

Who died Saturday, May 6, 2023

He is survived by his brother, Sumner Steinfeldt, his children, David (Amy) Steinfeldt, Lisa (Ricky) Leff, and Danny Stein feldt; grandchildren, Ray, Rebecca, Rachel, Jacob, and Gabriel; step-children, Dr. Andrew Berens, Dr.

Lisa Scott, and Carolyn Slipakoff; step-grandchildren, Cameron, Colby, Talia, Landon, Avery, Ben, and Connor; step-sister, Dr. Elizabeth Neufeld, and several nieces and nephews.

Donations: The Michael J. Fox Foundation, PO Box 5014 Hagerstown, Maryland, 21741

Allen Michael Frank

Who died Monday, May 8, 2023

He is survived by his wife, Rochelle Frank, two sons, Brian (Lori) Frank and Michael (Samara Louton) Frank, three grandchildren, Jessica, Maya, and Elliot, a brother, Myron Frank, and a sister-in-law, Barbara Frank.

Donations: Congregation Mickve Israel or Parkinson.org.

Donna Reeves

Who died Tuesday, May 16, 2023

She is survived by her children; Michelle (Matthew) Allan, Juniper (Tristen) Russo, Aliya Rubenstein, Erin Horesh, and Jordan Horesh; her grandchildren, Lila and Raphael Allan, Vivian, Darwin and Crystal Russo, her mother, Vonnice Reeves; siblings Howard Reeves, Robyn Rhodarmer, and Alana Wolfe; many nieces and nephews; and a very special niece, Ashley Applebaum.

Donations: For Fox Sake Wildlife Rescue, forfoxsakewildlife.com or Savannah Jewish Federation for Holocaust Education

Samuel Barnard Adams

Who died Wednesday, June 7, 2023

He is survived by his wife Berta; daughter, Jamieson Adams Troise; son in law, Michael Troise; and three grandsons, Finley, Callan, and Sam. He is also survived by his sister, Mary Adams, and numerous cousins.

Donations: Hospice Savannah, Christ Church Anglican, UGA Scholarship Funds.

Gregory S. Portman

Who died Saturday, June 10, 2023

He is survived by his niece Jennifer Teyf and nephew in law, Roman Teyf, niece Kathryn Lashin and nephew in Law, Paul Lashin, Step daughter Bridgett Witt and husband Morgan and their daughters Sienna and McKenzie. In addition to numerous surviving Portman cousins, Greg amassed lifelong friends that he held near and dear to his heart.

Donations: animal rescue organization of your choice or IDF www.idf.il.

Leon Slotin

Who died Thursday, July 13, 2023.

He is survived by his wife of 75 years Nancy Levington Slotin, his daughter Jane Slotin, his granddaughter Micaela Slotin, his daughter-in-law Bonnie Juengert, and three generations of nieces, nephews, and cousins who adored him.

Donations: Savannah Jewish Federation, Congregation Bnai Brith Jacob, Alee Shriner Morris Slotin Fund, or the Morris Slotin Physical Therapy Scholarship at GSU.

Eileen Lobel

Who died Sunday, July 30, 2023.

She was predeceased by her husband, Hugh Lobel, and son David Lobel. She is survived by her daughter Meri Lobel (Walter) Campbell, two grandchildren Somer (Steve) Hackley and Chet (Caroline Larson) Campbell, and four great grandchildren, Connor Hackley, Eliza Campbell, Calvin Campbell and Miles Campbell; brother-in-law Mark Lobel and her many friends.

Donations: Stephen D. Hollenberg Patient Assistance Fund, c/o Savannah Jewish Federation, or to the Hospice of your choice.



"As my fathers planted for me,
so do I plant for my children."
- Taanit 23a

WELCOME TO THE



Ian Baez & Sarah Aliffi Baez
 Alan & Michelle Atwood
 Rick & Mary Railey Bartlett
 Magdalena Boguslawska
 Scott & Emma Bowling
 Austin Boyette
 Erika Brooks
 Rejana Brown
 Megan Burns
 Jamell & Nicole Callahan
 Ben Carson & Heather Wolfert
 Patricia Coombs
 Frank Cordero
 Brian & Elizabeth Crowley
 Dean & Elizabeth Danosh
 Vidas Dapsys
 Travis & Katie Easterlin
 Evan Ethridge & Amanda Gallina
 Jamie Gray
 Patrick & Anne-Marie Grayson

Valerie Hanks
 Holly Harrod & Ashley Perkins
 Uzziel Hernandez
 Sander & Robbie Hollander
 Isaiah Johnson & Stacie Orrico
 Tomas Jukna
 Erik & Rachel Kohlbrenner
 Victoria Kohnke
 Emily Lagergren
 James & Allison Lind
 Sandra Linn
 Charles & Dawn Marshall
 Anna McGaughey
 Josh & Emma McGill
 Edwin & Christina Molina
 Rollin Nash & Rachel Roundtree
 Osman & Gabriela Perez
 Joyce Piersanti
 Drew & Kristen Rabun
 Joyce Piersanti

Drew & Kristen Rabun
 Greg & Christine Reilly
 Patrick Ritchie & Ella Taufik
 Robert & Christine Rushing
 Samuel Sacks & Hillary Davenport
 Nicholas & Christie Savas
 Alexandra Sheeran
 Matthew & Kelsey Smith
 Paige Smith & Amanda Slaughter
 Andrew Steadman & Alexandra Paez
 Kenward Stone
 Gary Tate
 Jon & Lauren To
 Kathleen Turner
 DuSean & Mercedes Williams
 Raven Wilson
 Jenny Woodruff
 James & Elizabeth Yarnall
 Sai Zhou

TRX 101

WITH CHELSEA
 @ STUDIO J



JOIN
 THE FUN!



Tuesdays & Thursdays
 8:30-9:15 AM

NEW
 Wednesdays
 6:30-7:15 AM
 Starts August 9

Using gravity and your own body weight will allow us to maximize our new suspension training for the ultimate core and low impact total body workout. Members of all fitness levels are encouraged to join the fun.

THIS ROSH HASHANAH, HOW WILL YOU ANSWER THE SHOFAR'S CALL?

On Rosh Hashanah, the blast of the shofar calls to us – not just once, but 100 times – rousing us to a higher purpose. This year, that purpose could not be more clear. And the summons to answer that call has never been more urgent. The needs in our community are great. From communal security to our Family Services programs, Federation is here for all of us.





Thursdays at 12:30 PM Jewish Educational Alliance

Join for a delicious meal, meeting new & old friends, and an engaging speaker.



All meals are served with a salad, vegetable and dessert

09/07

HCA Healthcare
Atrial Fibrillation

09/28

Jesse Dillon
COO of the Savannah Economic
Development Authority (SEDA)

10/19

Brie Zipperer
Chatham County Public Library Systems

11/09

Joel Bitterman
Family Story- Krystallnach

09/14

Jackie Laban
Experience in Israel through the Martin Pear Fellowship

10/05

Bailey Davidson
Internationally known fine artist

10/26

Linda Sacks
Keeping It Together, Part 2

11/16

April Haas
Gardening From A Jewish Perspective

09/21

Melissa Miles
Author of special needs superhero books

10/12

HCA Healthcare
Breast Cancer

11/02

Philip Gillette
St. Joseph's Hospital, Vascular Issues

11/30

HCA Healthcare
Lung Cancer

Food For Thought will be closed for Thanksgiving on 11/23

Reservations are required by the Tuesday before by calling 912-355-8111

Kids' Night Out

Parents enjoy a night **OFF**
while your child enjoys a night **OUT!**

Aug 19

Sep 9

Sep 23

Oct 21

Nov 4

Dec 2

Jan 20

Feb 3

Mar 2

Mar 23

Apr 13

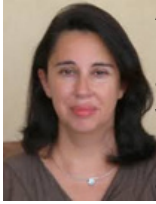
May 4



WWW.SAVANNAHJEA.ORG

No Need For A Fancy Retreat

Eva Locker, Principal



As we gear up for the upcoming High Holidays, we are in for a mix of excitement and introspection. It is that time of year when we reinvigorate ourselves for a fresh things. But Sukkot teaches us to pause, appreciate, and find joy in the present moment.

We build and dwell in sukkahs to remind ourselves that life is transient and what truly matters are the experiences and relationships we cultivate along the way.

Embrace gratitude (Akrat Hatov). In a world of abundance, it is easy to take things for granted. During Sukkot, we express gratitude for the harvest and the blessings we have in our lives. It is a great time to remember to appreciate the little things—the roof over our heads when the rain starts to pour, the food on our plates, and the love of family and friends. Gratitude opens our hearts to happiness and contentment.

Connect with nature. Amidst the concrete jungles and digital screens, Sukkot encourages us to connect with nature. It is an opportunity to spend time outdoors and marvel at the world's beauty, for meals only or, better, for all seven days and nights. Build community. Sukkot is a time of togetherness. It is about gathering with family, friends, and neighbors to celebrate and share meaningful moments—the perfect time to strengthen bonds with others and be there for one another.

Value simplicity. In a world that values material possessions, Sukkot reminds us that simplicity can be deeply fulfilling. The sukkah, with its basic structure and homemade decorations, teaches us that happiness doesn't come from material wealth but from a contented heart. A message that often gets lost in today's world.

As we celebrate Sukkot after two weeks of introspection, let's pass these teachings to our little ones. Let's remind them to embrace gratitude, find joy in simple moments, connect with nature, build strong friendships, and value what truly matters. Let's take those lessons past the holiday season and every day of your journey.

May you carry the spirit of Sukkot with you, and may it enrich your life with meaning and fulfillment.

Chag Sameach!

JEA Preschool Savannah

Heather Lieberfarb, Asst Director

With the start of the preschool school year comes the typical parent anxiety, is my child ready for the next level class? Do they know enough, are they behind their peers? How will they perform when it's time for elementary school, will they know enough, will they be competitive?

It is easy as a parent to worry about all your child needs to know; after all they are a blank slate with so much information to accumulate in a short time. All parents want their children to be successful and many times use academic criteria to measure success. This is natural, because as a society we look for those cues as an indication of intelligence, - Can he can recite the alphabet, can she count to 20? What if my child confuses a circle and a triangle, is she destined to be behind?

As it turns out the most important skills for young child to learn, are the ones that will enable them to foster a lifetime of learning-These skills are actually not the A B Cs and 1 2 3s.

Children need to learn basic social and emotional skills to enable them to thrive academically in the future. Preschool is the place and time to build the foundations to carry them through lifetime of learning.

Kindergarten teachers will tell you, for your child to be successful in school, here is what they need to know, yes even more then the AlphaBet, and to count to 100.

- Critical thinking skills, are they able to make sense of the world around them? Do they understand mommy comes back after school? Can they perform basic problem solving, and conflict resolution with peers?
- They can listen and follow two step directions? Are they able to follow simple instructions, go sit on the carpet? Time to line up.
- Do they share, can they take turns? Can they positively interact with their peers?
- Do they communicate and verbalize their needs through words? I am tired, I am hungry. I want to play with that toy.
- Can they self-regulate their emotions? Are they able to calm themselves down when upset? Do they exhibit self-control?

continued on Page 24

Interest-Free Lending Comes To Savannah

Savannah's Jewish community has a new resource to help people facing financial challenges. Jewish Interest-Free Loan Association of Georgia is pleased to offer interest-free loans, financial literacy workshops and free financial coaching to you.

Why Interest-Free Lending?

Jewish Free Loan societies (such a society is also known as a Gemach) are based on the biblical injunction found in Exodus 22:25: "If you lend money to My people, to the poor among you, do not act towards them as a creditor; exact no interest from them."

Since 2010, JIFLA has approved more than \$1.55M interest-free loans. Our interest-free loans have provided financial stability and opportunity to more than 360 of Atlanta's Jewish community members and their families, and we are thrilled to now offer these same opportunities to Savannah's Jewish community. "We selected Savannah due to its rich Jewish history and strong Jewish community and infrastructure," said Danny Frank, JIFLA's president. "We are so excited to work with the Jewish Federation of Savannah and community leaders to bring this life-changing resource to the Savannah community."

Our Mission

JIFLA's mission is to create opportunity and financial stability for Georgia Jews via interest-free loans and financial education. Typical uses for our loans include medical or dental expenses, living expenses, car purchases, professional development, and credit card debt consolidation. We make loans to help community members live their best lives, including fertility treatments, summer camp, home improvements, and Simchas.

Our Loans

JIFLA loans range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and are generally repayable over 3 years. Primary applicants must be Jewish and display a reasonable ability to repay the loan. The amount repaid is exactly equal to the amount borrowed – we do not collect interest or fees. JIFLA is managed by our Executive Director, Professional Staff, and Board of Directors, and supported by many volunteer committee members. We are a qualified 501c3 nonprofit organization and an active member of the International Association of Jewish Free Loans (IAJFL).

We would be delighted to meet with you to share more information and answer any questions.

Please visit our website www.jifla.com to learn more. We also welcome you to contact our office at office@JIFLA.org or 470-268-5665 to learn more about our loan process, financial literacy classes, and free financial counseling programs.

The Savannah Jewish Federation is excited to be partnering with the Jewish Interest-Free Loan Association to provide another wonderful asset and opportunity to and for the Savannah Jewish community.

**Jewish Interest-Free Loan
Association of Georgia**

**A BETTER WAY TO
BORROW MONEY**



-  **Medical Bills**
-  **Car Maintenance**
-  **Home Repair**
-  **Debt Consolidation**
-  **Gap Year Programs**
-  **Your unique Need**

**Providing 0% interest loans to
Jewish individuals & families in
Georgia since 2010**

CONTACT JIFLA TO LEARN MORE

office@JIFLA.org (470) 268-5665 www.JIFLA.org



Just Thinking...

Ester Rabhan, Principal



As we approach the new school year, we are excited and looking forward to embracing a new two-year-old teacher, Maia Small, and a new three-year-old teacher, Nina Cafasso. We had to end the school year saying goodbye to Morah Yedidah Schochet who has been with Rambam for 18 years. Morah Yedidah is moving to Lakewood and will be missed beyond words!

The summer always brings reflection of the school year that has just passed and thoughts and ideas for the school year to which we are preparing to enter. We had a wonderful year filled with laughter, learning and fun! There were definitely some tears shed, but what is life without a few hiccups to keep us paying attention? As I was reflecting on Rambam, an article a friend shared with me came to mind. The article was written by a non-Jewish teacher who teaches in a day school. Let me share a few of his thoughts with you.

"Jewish culture embraces discussion, argumentation and hearing various points of view. As part of the culture, students study the Talmud and they learn to read multiple interpretations and commentaries of Torah passages. These students have grown up in a world where it is normal and expected for people to have strong perspectives on important issues, but it's also expected that your point of view be supported by more than feelings - there needs to be evidence and logic to support your conclusion. Growing up in a culture that demands logical, refined thinking results in students who don't feel the need to ostracize someone who dissents from consensus. As important as academics are, the students are taught by example and through Torah lessons what it means to be a mensch."

Above is just a glimpse from a non-Jewish teacher's perspective of a day school education. Imagine a place where children can learn about their heritage, the world around them, math, science, literature, history. Imagine through learning about their heritage in various texts they also learn their own potential for being great. Great as a person and great in any field they choose to pursue. All high schools to which our students attend, share with us that our students are great critical thinkers and natural leaders.



Like with any institution, there are strengths and weaknesses. Rambam Day School is no different. We strive to listen, evaluate and grow. Just consider coming to see the school when we're in session. I think you may see what we are really all about.

JEA Preschool continued from page 18

Are they able to make connections with others? Can they make friends, can they relate to their teacher?

By school age children should have basic life skills as well.

- Can they put their things away?
- Are they able to wash their hands independently?
- Do they stand in line?
- Can they take turns?
- Are they able to open their lunch independently and self-feed?
- Do they speak in complete sentences?
- Do they find stories enjoyable?
- Do they know and recognize their name?

So next time your child comes home and tells you they played nicely with their friends, or shared at the playground, know these are the skills of a genius in the making and they are learning all they need to know to be successful.

Mah Jongg and More

Robin Rackoff



Once upon a time, I loved to read. My first love affair with a book was in the fourth grade when Mrs. Berk handed me a copy of Beverly Cleary's novel *Fifteen*, the story of a girl's first crush. I wanted to change my name to Marcy because she was the cool girl who had everything, including a handsome boyfriend.

When I was in college and worked summers in the city, getting on the subway each morning was like being in a book club because everyone would be reading the Number One bestseller of the day. The year that *Rosemary's Baby* came out resulted in a hush unprecedented on subway cars since people were too scared to talk! There were the years of epic family sagas like *Belva Plain's Evergreen*, and of course, *The Chosen* and *A Stone for Danny Fischer*. So many wonderful books.

And then there were the books I read to and with my kids. We cried through *Where the Red Fern Grows*, and vowed never again to read a book where an animal dies. And who doesn't love Judy Blume? There's even a Rest Stop named after her on the Garden State Parkway.

But as the years went by, my joy of reading was gone. I know it was because I was in too many book clubs. At one point, I was in three, and all I felt was the need for speed. I often finished a book just minutes before the group gathered to discuss it. I made the tough decision to leave two clubs behind and stick with my longtime, original gang. Our group agreed to read one book every quarter instead of monthly, which suits us fine.

I thought I was finished with Book Clubs, but never say never. Last year, I was introduced to Renee's Reading Club, an online Facebook Book Club with over 45,000 followers. Someone posts a comment about how much they loved a book, and by the time you refresh the page, one hundred other readers have chimed in about how much they loved that book.

Seeing so many raves makes it hard to wait to start my next book, but I can take my time to savor the words, if I choose to. My reading passion is back! I listen to my books which gives me two for the price of one, since

my dog loves to hear the stories as well, as his wagging tail indicates.

I've even read some Mah Jongg books this year. Fern Bernstein's memoir, *Mah Jongg Mondays*, is a beautifully written story about Mah Jongg, friendship, and love, and Karen Goosen's *Searching for Bubbe Fischer* is part memoir, part Mah Jongg lesson.

My dog has his earphones on, so it's time to walk and listen to our book. Until next time, let's MajOn!

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Our Camp Story: Best Friends

Derrick Fins and Ethan Tolman

TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOU.

Derrick: My favorite color is red. My favorite thing is sleeping and eating...and reading.

Ethan: I am 8 years old. My favorite color is orange and my favorite subject in school is math. I like Pokemon.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BOYS BEEN FRIENDS?

Ethan: We've been friends for 6 years ever since we met at the JEA.

Derrick: We've been friends since we were 2, but we have broken up and gotten back together in the same day a few times.

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF CAMP?

Derrick: I have a few, but my two favorite are going on the blob and the hurricane (that's a slide).

Ethan: The best part was the food- it was all you can eat! and if you don't like the meal at lunch, there is a salad bar and a pasta bar. At breakfast there is a cereal bar!

DID ANYTHING HAPPEN AT CAMP THAT YOU ARE REALLY PROUD OF? DID YOU OVERCOME A FEAR OR TRY SOMETHING NEW?

Ethan: I jumped from a high height to do the Blob.

Derrick: I overcame my fear of big storms because one of my counselors helped me get through a really big storm.

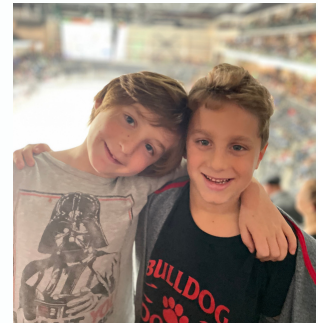
WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF GOING TO CAMP?

Derrick: I was worried that I was going to get homesick, but I didn't!

Ethan: The hardest part of going to camp was meeting new friends, which was scary and awkward.



Ethan and Derrick as toddlers



WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE ACTIVITY?

Ethan: The Creek hike. That was when we walked up the creek and explored all the wilderness in the creek like spiders and a hot tub. **A what?** A hot tub - a really warm spot in the water that was fun to relax in. It was warm because it was shallow and the sun made it warm. I liked the Jewish education involved like sebaba. Sebaba is where we go to the outdoor media area and learn about Jewish history. We learned about inventions made by Jewish people.

Derrick: The lake! And also the pool! I love water!

WHAT WAS IT LIKE GOING TO CAMP WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND?

Ethan: Going with Derrick made it less scary because I knew I wouldn't be left out.

Derrick: I felt like I was going with family.

DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK NEXT SUMMER?

Both: YES!!

Derrick: I plan to go back anytime I can!

Ethan: Hopefully for the whole month! My mom hopes there will be scholarships to help pay for that.

Tova, Ethan's Mom: *laughing and shaking her head* He's not wrong.



Derrick and Ethan with camp friends

Ethan is the son of Tova Javetz & Steve Tolman. Derrick is the son of Lauren & Adam Fins. They both attended Camp Barney Medintz with the assistance of a Jewish Youth Summer Experience grant from the Savannah Jewish Federation made possible by your generosity during the annual Community Campaign. For more information on Jewish camping, see the website of the Foundation for Jewish Camp, www.jewishcamp.org.

Montag Art Gallery: Artist Spotlight

September: Janet R. Bailey

September 1-30, Opening Reception September 7th, 6-8pm



Janet Bailey is from Kansas where she received her BFA from the University of Kansas. She has won numerous awards for her art and has even designed a book cover for a published novel. She presents layered paintings on paper and canvas, creating a series with specific themes. Concepts of spatial relationships are conceived by mixed media, with collage, paint, inks, and various textural elements. Forms and shapes that are particular to the natural Southern environment, botanical explorations, ever-changing skies, night space and introspective reflections model themes.

For this show, Janet has painted a large series of tides, landscapes, sky, star, moon, and space-related paintings for several decades; these paintings have been collected by many.

October: Bailey Davidson

October 1-31, Opening Reception October 5th, 5-7pm



Bailey Davidson is originally from Milledgeville, GA. An aspiring artist from a young age, his creativity ranges from acting and playing music to photography and painting. He holds a degree in Theatre Performance from Georgia College and studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, The Burt Reynolds Institute for Theatre Training, and the Actors Studio. In 1999, Bailey decided to formally study another passion, photography. He has participated in solo and group exhibitions both nationally and internationally.

Expanding on his 2001 thesis show, Bailey's Acres, Davidson has chosen the plastic Holga pinhole camera and its unique characteristics as the consistent theme for this body of work. The challenges created by using this camera and lens are what make successful images more rewarding.

November: Justine Ferreri

November 1-30, Opening Reception November 5th, 2-4pm



Justine Ferreri is a self-taught clay sculptress working in stoneware clay. Recently, she moved to Savannah and opened a studio in The City Market Art Center. Justine has been making a living as a clay artist for over 30 years. Her works have evolved from being very tight to a more fluid and expressive form. Says Justine, "I strive for more emotion and expression, not perfection.

I have developed a process of glazing that starts with underglazes, then I fire oxides and clay chalks with the final firing of 14 karat gold. This I call my touch of Klimt. His works have always inspired my art." Many have a story or deepen meaning. All try to give you a look into the mind and heart of the artist.

Are you an artist? Would you like to show your work in the JEA Art Gallery? Having a show at the JEA is a great way to have your work seen and to help your community. Please contact Vicky@savj.org to inquire about available months for your show!



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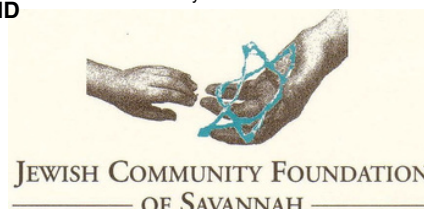
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