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A Tribute to Heroes

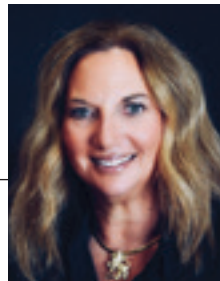
Help honor WWII veterans through sponsorship, remembrance and community support. Page 15

For the most current news and articles on the war in Israel, please visit our website at JewishFederationLCC.org.

Supporting Israel, supporting community

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

■ Debbie Sanford



Over the past several months, emotions surrounding Israel have been intense and deeply personal. The ongoing war, the conflict with Iran and the challenges facing Israelis every day have generated a wide range of feelings and opinions throughout our Jewish community.

As a Federation, we have always understood that thoughtful people can view complex situations differently. There is room within our community for differing perspectives, concerns, hopes and even disagreements. What unites us is far greater than what may divide us.

The Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties has intentionally focused on people rather than politics. Our mission is not to determine foreign policy or political outcomes. Our responsibility is to care for Jewish lives, strengthen Jewish community and support those in need — both here at home and in Israel.

Today, Israelis are facing extraordinary challenges. Families continue to cope with trauma, displacement, economic hardship and uncertainty. Through our partners on the ground, Federation support helps provide social services, mental health resources, assistance to vulnerable populations, support for seniors, children and families, and emergency relief when it is needed most.

Here in Southwest Florida, that same commitment guides our work every day. Through Jewish Family Services, our Food Pantry, emergency assistance programs, youth engagement initiatives, senior programming, security efforts and community-building activities, we strive to strengthen Jewish life and care for those who need us most.

We recognize that some members of our community have chosen to express their support for Israel in different ways, directing their charitable giving to specific organizations or causes that align with their personal priorities. We respect those decisions and appreciate every act of generosity undertaken on behalf of the Jewish people.

At the same time, we hope our community will continue to recognize the unique role the Federation plays as it remains one of the few organizations positioned to address both local needs and the broad social welfare needs of the Israeli people. Our strength has always been our ability to care for the whole community, respond when crises arise and ensure that no one is left behind.

In moments of uncertainty, our shared values matter more than ever: compassion, responsibility, community and caring for one another.

Regardless of where we may stand on specific political issues, we remain one people, connected by history, heritage and a commitment to one another's well-being. That commitment remains at the heart of everything we do. 🇮🇱



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of Lee & Charlotte Counties

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L'CHAYIM invites correspondence on subjects of interest to Jewish people. Partisan political opinions will not be published, but opinions on subjects affecting the Jewish community are welcome. All inquiries regarding copy for **L'CHAYIM** should be directed to the editor. All news material must be very clearly printed or typed (not in all-capital letters) and double-spaced. Electronic submissions encouraged. The editor reserves the right to edit for space and content.

Photographs should be clear, black-and-white or color prints. If you wish a photograph returned, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope of appropriate size.

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**SEPTEMBER ISSUE
 EDITORIAL
 DEADLINE:
 Wednesday, August 5**



OUR MISSION

To strengthen and enrich the Jewish Community by providing and supporting philanthropic, educational and social service programs locally, in Israel and throughout the world.

OUR VISION

A Jewish Community that is based on Jewish values such as Tzedakah (benevolence), Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) and K'lal Yisrael (taking responsibility for one another).

A season of generosity, growing need and community impact

By Monica Wildonger, JFS Case Manager & Food Pantry Coordinator

This summer at the JFS Food Pantry was a powerful reminder of what happens when a community comes together with compassion and purpose. June and July brought more families through our doors than ever before! Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of our donors, we were able to meet that need with dignity, warmth and real nourishment.



Monica Wildonger

Extended hours make a real difference

Word is spreading that the pantry is open Thursdays from noon to 6 p.m., and this change has been life changing for many working families. People who once had to choose between keeping their job and feeding their family no longer face that impossible decision. Your support makes these extended hours possible.

Joy and relief for families

One of the most meaningful parts of our summer is our Kids' Bags program. Once again, we distributed more than 150 bags filled with snacks chosen just for children.

These bags are more than food. They are small moments of joy — treats kids can call their own, especially during a season when school meals aren't available and budgets are stretched thin. Parents often tell us how much these bags mean, and every smile from a child reminds us why this program matters so deeply.

More nutritious choices

This was our first full summer with our new freezer, and it transformed what we could offer. Because of this upgrade and the continued support of the Harry Chapin Food Bank, families were able to take home items such as frozen chicken, ground chicken, ground beef, turkey, as well as cheese, milk and eggs from our new refrigerator.

These foods help families prepare real meals, not just get by. They bring comfort, stability and dignity to households facing difficult choices.

A significant increase in need

This summer, we saw a noticeable rise in the number of clients seeking help. Many were new to us — working individuals and families who are doing everything right yet still struggling to afford groceries.

Rising costs continue to push more people into food insecurity, and the pantry has become a lifeline for many who never expected to need one.

Every person who walks through our doors carries a story. Because of you — our donors and volunteers — we are able to meet them with compassion, respect and hope.



Jewish Singles 55+ Group

We are excited to share that JFS will launch a new Jewish singles group for adults 55 and over. Our first gathering is Sunday, Aug. 23, around noon. We will meet at the Starbucks located at Winkler and College.

This group is meant to bring people together — those looking for friendship,

connection and community. Whether you're new to the area or simply hoping to meet others in a warm, welcoming environment, we hope you'll join us for this first meet up.

Thank you

Everything we accomplished this summer — every Kids' Bag, every gallon of milk, every family served — was made possible because of you. Your generosity keeps our shelves stocked. Your time keeps our doors open. Your compassion keeps our community strong. We are deeply grateful for your continued support and partnership.

Together, we are not just feeding families — we are offering hope, dignity and a reminder that no one in our community is alone. 🌍

THIS MONTH'S ADVERTISERS

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Lunch Bunch at Temple Judea

By Elizabeth Elba, Life Enrichment Coordinator

On June 30, approximately 40 of us gathered at Temple Judea for another enjoyable Lunch Bunch.

The afternoon began on a lovely note as Rabbi Arias welcomed guests with inspiring words and beautiful songs, creating a warm and uplifting atmosphere. Before long, lunch arrived and everyone was treated to fresh, hot pizza catered by McGregor Pizza, along with crisp salads, fresh fruit platters, cookies and brownies. The food was a hit, and there were plenty of leftovers for guests to take home and enjoy later.



Elizabeth Elba

Following lunch, we had the opportunity to learn from two special FBI agents who delivered an engaging presentation on elder fraud. The discussion highlighted common scams targeting older adults, warning signs to watch for and practical steps people can take to protect themselves and their loved ones.

The presentation was both eye-opening and informative, leaving many guests with valuable knowledge they can share with family and friends.

Additional information about elder fraud prevention and reporting suspicious activity can also be found at ic3.gov/.



Events like these are only possible because of the many volunteers who generously give their time and energy. We are grateful to everyone who stepped up that afternoon to help make the gathering such a success.

Up next

The next Lunch Bunch is Sept. 29, noon, at Temple Beth El where we will welcome a group of Israeli teens for a special community conversation.

To learn more about upcoming events or to register, please visit the Federation's calendar online. 



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Honors & Memorials



With a tribute gift you can mark a milestone, celebrate a special occasion, extend your sympathy or send wishes for a speedy recovery. It is a meaningful way to acknowledge friends or family and strengthen our Jewish community by contributing to the Annual Campaign.

A personalized tribute card will be sent to the honoree or bereaved on your behalf, reflecting a personal message if you wish.

In Memory of Barbara Simon

Deepest condolences to Brian & Mindi Simon on the passing of Brian's mother.
Our thoughts are with you. We love you.
Sheila & Jerry Laboda

In Honor of Gail Margolis

Congratulations on your grandchildren's graduations (Ryan & Stella)!
Judi & Jeff Bayer

In Honor of Leah Gersh

Happy 100th birthday from your children, grandchildren, and great-granddaughter!
Maury Kohn

In Honor of Doreen Kostel

For her contributions to the Jewish community and to the Federation.
Harriet & Bruce Lipschutz

In Memory of Steve Goodman

Sheila Patinkin
Mary Ann & Matt Konopka

In Memory of Jessica Rosenstrauch

Marilyn Warren

jewishfederationlcc.org/tribute-memorials

HOW

THE JEWISH FEDERATION SERVES

Local Jewish Education and Culture

- Community-wide Jewish Education and Cultural Programs for all ages.
- L'CHAYIM published monthly to keep the Jewish community informed about local, national and international Jewish issues.
- CRC-Community Relations Council to address issues of anti-Semitism and Interfaith Relations.
- Israel Advocacy and Initiatives to strengthen local Jewish community ties with Israel. Holocaust education for middle and high school students in the community and a college campus Jewish life experience committee.
- Volunteer opportunities for all ages.

Overseas

- Funding to the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) for full-spectrum social services to Israel and Jewish communities in 60+ countries around the world.
- Partnership 2Gether relationship with the Hadera-Eiron Region in Israel.

Jewish Community Foundation

- An endowment that ensures future social and educational programming and support for our community.
- Needs-based college scholarships and study scholarships in Israel.
- Jewish camp scholarships.



Jewish Federation
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

Jewish Family
Services

Local Seniors Services

- Lunch Bunch, a monthly gathering with a free lunch for older adults to meet and schmooze.
- Holiday baskets and teen visits to seniors and senior facilities for Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah and Passover.
- Holocaust survivor outreach.

Local Social Services

- Non-sectarian, individual & family outreach, information & referral services.
- South Fort Myers United Way House.

Local Emergency Services

- Food Pantry and gift cards.
- Emergency financial assistance grants to families and individuals in crisis.
- Local disaster outreach and assistance.

Education, Arts & Culture Programs

Israeli Folk Dancing
Jewish Social Club
Mah Jongg
Holiday Senior Visits
PJ Library
Federation Hits the Road-Day Trips

Holocaust Remembrance
Jewish Film Festival
Community Breakfast
Major Gifts-Pacesetters
Jewish Heritage Day

Lion of Judah
Women's Day
TRIBE
Annual Meeting
Men's Division
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A summer full of fun and connection

By Brittany Salem, Youth and Family Engagement Coordinator

Summer is off to an exciting start for our Youth & Family Engagement programs! We were thrilled to kick off the season with an action-packed PJ Library event at Ultimate Ninja's Academy, where families came



Brittany Salem

together for an afternoon filled with movement, laughter and community. Children had a blast conquering obstacle courses, building confidence and making new friends while parents connected with one another. It was the perfect way to launch a summer of meaningful Jewish family experiences.

We also celebrated another exciting milestone with our first-ever PJ Library Story Time at the library! Families arrived in their pajamas for a cozy evening featuring beloved PJ Library Jewish storybooks, hands-on arts and crafts, delicious snacks and plenty of smiles. It was wonderful to see children engaging with Jewish stories in a fun, welcoming environment while creating special memories with their families.

As Youth & Family Engagement continues to grow, we are excited to offer programs that bring families together,

strengthen Jewish connections and create lasting friendships throughout our community. We look forward to many more opportunities this summer and beyond and can't wait to see both familiar and new faces at our upcoming events.

Rosh Hashanah at the farm with PJ Library

Celebrate the upcoming Jewish New Year with us at Southern Fresh Farms (8500 Penzance Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33912). This family-friendly Rosh Hashanah celebration is Aug. 9 at 9:45 a.m.

Enjoy meeting farm animals, participating in apple and honey activities, arts and crafts. There will be delicious food and plenty of festive fun for all ages. Everyone is welcome to attend!



The event cost is \$10 per family. Register at jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar.

We hope you'll join us as we continue building meaningful connections, celebrating Jewish traditions and creating joyful experiences for families throughout our community.

If you have questions,

please contact me at brittanysalem@jfedlcc.org. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events! 🌟



ROSH HASHANAH

AT THE FARM

Celebrate Rosh Hashanah with **PJ Library**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH

9:45 – 11:45 AM

SOUTHERN FRESH FARMS
8500 Penzance Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33912

Join us for a fun-filled Rosh Hashanah celebration featuring:

- FARM ANIMALS
- APPLES & HONEY ACTIVITIES
- CRAFTS & FAMILY FUN
- SNACKS & DRINKS

\$10 PER FAMILY

RSVP: www.jewishfederationlcc.org/calendar

Contact Brittany for more information:
brittanysalem@jfedlcc.org

Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties

PJ Library



A season of connection and community

Plus experiences to look forward to!

By Amy Hallock, Community Events Manager

As summer begins to wind down, there is so much to look forward to at the Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. The upcoming season is filled with opportunities to learn, connect, laugh, shop, explore and simply enjoy being together. Whether you are joining us virtually, trying your luck at bingo, hitting the road for an afternoon at the theater or celebrating with the community, we hope you will find something that feels just right for you.



Amy Hallock

food and live theater. It's an easy way to spend the day connecting with both old and new friends.

Shuk to the Core

Shopping takes center stage on Nov. 22 at Temple Judea when we host Shuk to the Core. A traveling shuk from Israel will transform the day into a unique shopping experience filled with beautiful finds and the energy of an Israeli marketplace. Come browse, shop and enjoy a day designed to bring a little taste of Israel to Southwest Florida.

"The Power of Hello"

We kick things off Sept. 1, 10 a.m., with "The Power of Hello," a virtual training led by Regional Security Advisor John Murtagh. This important and engaging program reminds us that something as simple as saying "hello" can play a meaningful role in creating welcoming, connected and safer communities. Tune in and join the conversation!

Designer Bag Bingo

Then, get ready for an afternoon of fun, fashion and fabulous prizes at Designer Bag Bingo, which will take place at The Oasis on Oct. 25 at 1 p.m. We are thrilled to welcome Gulf Coast News NBC anchor Peter Busch as our guest bingo caller! Grab your friends, sign up to play or become a sponsor. Join us for what promises to be a lively afternoon filled with plenty of laughs and a little friendly competition.

JFed Hits the Road

On Nov. 4, JFed Hits the Road! Meet us in Downtown Fort Myers for lunch before we head to the Florida Repertory Theatre for a performance of "The Star-Spangled Girl." It is the perfect combination of great conversation, good

Community Breakfast

Be sure to save the date for our Community Breakfast on Dec. 6 at the DoubleTree. More details are coming soon, but you will definitely want this one on your calendar!

Community Menorah Lighting

And finally, we will light up the community on Dec. 10 with our Community Menorah Lighting at Bell Tower. Join us for an evening of light, celebration and togetherness. Interested in being a vendor? Contact me at events@jfedlcc.org to learn more about participating.

Looking ahead

There is something special about looking ahead to a new season. Each event is different, but the heart behind them is the same: creating meaningful opportunities for our community to come together.

Mark your calendars, invite a friend and join us. We cannot wait to say hello and welcome you this season! For more information and to see everything happening this season, visit jewishfederationlcc.org and click on the Federation calendar. 🌟



Jewish Federation
of Lee & Charlotte Counties

THE POWER OF HELLO



Creating a Safer, More Welcoming Community





A simple greeting can make a powerful difference. Join us for an engaging virtual training that teaches how awareness, communication, and respectful engagement can help strengthen safety while preserving the warm, welcoming spirit of our community.

YOU'LL LEARN HOW TO:

 Recognize suspicious behavior

 Respond appropriately to potential threats

 Apply the "Power of Hello" approach

 Understand basic de-escalation techniques

 Use effective communication strategies



VIRTUAL TRAINING
SEPTEMBER 1, 2026
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SPEAKER:
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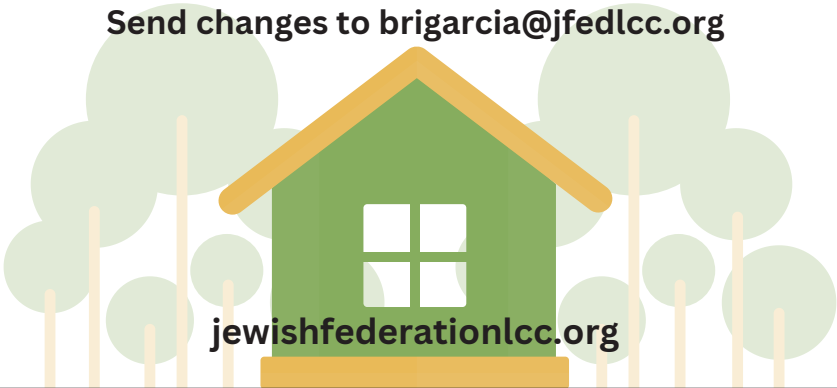


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GenShoah SWFL: 2026-27 programs

Outline part 1 (October 2026–January 2027)*

By Ida Margolis and Shelley Lieb

We are excited to share an outline of GenShoah SWFL's 2026-27 programs.

*To view the full program listing and/or if you're interested in becoming a member of GenShoah, send an email to genshoahswfl@hmcec.org. GenShoah members will see the full program listing in the monthly newsletter.

"Movies that Matter" film series and expert panel discussions

Located at Holocaust Museum

- Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.: Film TBA
- Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2 p.m.: Film TBA

Send your RSVP soon to hmcec.org

Annual Kristallnacht Commemoration

Located at St. William Church Naples

- Sunday, Nov. 8, 2:30 p.m.



Sponsored by Catholic Jewish Dialogue of Collier County; Jewish Community Relations Council; Jewish Federation of Greater Naples; Diocese of Venice in Florida; GenShoah SWFL; and Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center.

Send your RSVP to jewishnaples.org.

Veterans' Day program: "The Ritchie Boys by Jeff Kraus (2G)"

Located at Holocaust Museum

- Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2 p.m.

Send your RSVP to hmcec.org soon.

GenShoah Readers & Learners author presentation

Located at Holocaust Museum

- Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2 p.m.

Ruth Wade will present on "The Ones Who Remember: Second Generation Voices of the Holocaust." Send your RSVP to hmcec.org soon.

GenShoah Member Brunch Potluck Gathering

Location provided upon receipt of RSVP

sent to liebro@gmail.com

- Sunday, Dec. 20, 11 a.m.

"The Real Story of the Comedian Harmonists" by speaker Jeff Margolis

Located at Holocaust Museum

- Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2027, 2 p.m.

Send your RSVP to hmcec.org soon.

Open House/ New Member Reception

Located at Holocaust Museum

- Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2027, 10 a.m.

This event is open to all GenShoah members and/or survivors! Send your RSVP to hmcec.org soon. 🌍

DESIGNER Bag Bingo!

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Community Events Manager

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Celebrating 25 years of impact

By Erin Blankenship, Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center President & CEO

The 2026-27 school year is now upon us, and we look forward to welcoming back student field trips and seasonal residents! During the last school year, we impacted a record 93,000 students with the lessons of the Holocaust. In addition to our field trip program, we have several new initiatives planned to reach even more middle and high school students.

PopUp exhibit

One of those initiatives is a brand-new, traveling exhibit specifically created for our school partners. Our PopUp exhibit, which is currently available, offers schools that are not able to visit



Erin Blankenship

created, day-long workshop, aimed at giving students the tools to speak out against antisemitism and other forms of hatred. This new program, “Student Upstanders Against Hate,” will include time to learn about the history and culture of the Jewish people. Students of all backgrounds will meet and interact with Holocaust survivors, their descendants and other individuals from the Jewish community. They will also learn about how to decipher and respond to anti-semitic media.

“Movies that Matter”

Our staff is also focused on creating new experiences and opportunities for adult learners. Our upcoming season of public programs kicks off strong with “Movies that Matter,” a film series sponsored by GenShoah SWFL. This annual series presents films that highlight human rights issues paired with thoughtful talkbacks featuring community experts.

Additional events

In addition to the community-wide Kristallnacht Commemoration on Nov. 8, we are hosting a “welcome back” open house-style event and reception to showcase new exhibit offerings. We can’t wait to share more details later this fall! Plus, if you missed last month’s successful Family Day, you’ll get an additional opportunity to bring your children to the Museum for a free day of storytelling and interactive learning this winter.

One of the best things about the Museum’s public programs is that most are presented free of charge! All are welcome to attend. Make sure you keep an eye on our events calendar on our website (HMCEC.org) as more information becomes available.

Visit the Museum

If you haven’t visited the Museum in a while, now is a great time to check us out. While an admission ticket is already a great price, we want a visit to the Museum to

be accessible to all. That’s why we are proud to take part in great programs like “Museums for All” that offers reduced rates for EBT card holders, “Blue Star Museums” — offering free admission to active-duty military personnel and their families through Labor Day — and a partnership with Lee County Libraries where card holders can “borrow” up to four tickets!

Make plans to visit and see our latest updates to our permanent exhibition. We can’t wait to see you! 

“Student Upstanders Against Hate”

Later this fall, we will welcome high school juniors to the Museum for a newly



the Museum access to our permanent exhibition about the history of the Holocaust. The mobile exhibit features stories of Southwest Florida survivors, made accessible through QR codes along with material from our permanent collection, like historical photographs.

Our new offering will help area teachers meet Sunshine State standards and required education on media literacy, drawing on how propaganda has been used over time to sway the masses and



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 Sponsorships must be confirmed by Friday, October 3, 2026.
Questions? Amy Hallock, Community Events Manager • events@fedlcc.org • 239-481-4449 ext. 2

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SUNDAY OCTOBER 25TH 

LUNCH Bunch



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

at TEMPLE BETH EL

16225 Winkler Road
Fort Myers, FL 33908

AT 12 PM

**WE WILL BE VISITED BY
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LUNCH IS FREE

SEPTEMBER 2026

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		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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Jewish Federation
OF LEE & CHARLOTTE COUNTIES

Questions? contact Elizabeth at
elizabeth@jfedlcc.org or 239.481.4449 ext. 4

Nar-Anon support meetings

By Joann Goldman

Nar-Anon Family Groups is a 12-Step fellowship that offers a recovery program for those affected by someone's addiction. The group will meet in the Community Room at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties.

Addiction is a family disease; it affects the relationships of those close to the addict — parents, spouses, siblings, children, longtime friends and employers. In the group meetings, these family members and friends share their experiences, strengths and hopes to help each other and themselves.

If someone's addiction is affecting you, first you must help yourself. Come to a meeting and hear from others

who are going through similar problems and talk about how they cope and find recovery.

Nar-Anon is based on a set of spiritual principles and has no affiliation with any particular religion. There are no dues or fees. The only requirement for membership is a problem of addiction in a relative or friend.

This group has been a part of the Lee County community for more than 18 years. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. every Thursday at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties (9701 Commerce Center Court, Fort Myers).

For more information, please contact me at jogo118@gmail.com or 239-470-4827. ☎

A Jewish 12-Step recovery group

Every Saturday at 11 a.m. via Zoom

Courtesy of Temple Beth El

If you are Jewish in search of recovery support, a standard AA class may not suffice when the higher power references are not Jewish.

Folks are invited to experience the 12-Steps from a Jewish perspective on Saturdays at 11 a.m. via Zoom. This group includes those recovering from alcohol, drugs, and other addictions such

as food, gambling, sex, shopping, etc.

The guidebook is "Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery" by Rabbi Kerry Olitzky and Stuart Copans, M.D., second edition.

All who might benefit from this group are welcome. Zoom details are available by calling the Temple Beth El office at 239-433-0018. ☎

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Ahavah

Temple Beth El's new LGBTQ+ group

By Dawn Wineinger, Co-Chair of Ahavah at Temple Beth El

I am proud to announce the newly formed group, Ahavah. Ahavah, the Hebrew word for love, is meant to provide a safe, joyous and fully affirming home for LGBTQ+ Jews, their families and allies.

Our goal is to promote a vibrant, inclusive environment through social gatherings, educational programs, advocacy and support. Ahavah is committed to bringing more joy, color and diversity to the Jewish community. Whether you

identify as LGBTQ+, are questioning, or are a proud ally, we welcome you to join us!

We have one more event comping up this summer. On Saturday, Aug. 8, Ahavah will have a Havdalah Ceremony at Fort Myers Beach from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

For more information or to join our mailing list, please contact me at dawntw10@gmail.com. Let us work together to make our community a space of true belonging. 🌈

Donations for Community Cooperative

By Dawn Wineinger, Temple Beth El member

Temple Beth El Sisterhood is holding a cereal donation drive for Community Cooperative, whose mission is to eliminate hunger and homelessness in Lee County. Temple Beth El's goal is to collect 250 cereal boxes to celebrate our country's 250th year of independence.

The Temple is located at 16225 Winkler Rd, Fort Myers, FL 33908. Please call to confirm your delivery date and time. You may also bring your donation to the Temple prior to Friday night services, which usually begin at 7:30 p.m. 🌈



Jews by Choice

By Dawn Wineinger, Temple Beth El member

Jews By Choice meets in a relaxed and comfortable format (online via Zoom) from 8 to 9 p.m. on the last Thursday of each month. Come discuss the delights and challenges of converting and reconnecting.

Recent converts, those exploring conversion and Jews seeking to reconnect with their roots are encouraged to attend.

If you are considering the process of converting to Judaism, if you are in the conversion process, if you are rediscovering Judaism, if you've have questions and/or a need to talk with like-minded individuals in a friendly, non-judgmental atmosphere, Jews by Choice is for you.

For more information contact me at d.wineinger@yahoo.com. 🌈



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Friday, September 11

7:30pm Evening Service

Saturday, September 12

10:00am Morning Service

Junior Congregation

Tot Rosh Hashanah

12:30pm Tashlich at Temple Beth El

Be our guest for Rosh Hashanah lunch following Tashlich.

Sunday, September 13

10:00am 2nd Day Morning Service

YOM KIPPUR

Sunday, September 20

7:30pm Kol Nidre

Monday, September 21

10:00am Morning Service

Junior Congregation

3:00pm Exploring the Book of Jonah
(Zoom only)

5:00pm Yizkor

6:00pm N'ilah & Break the Fast
Reception

Be our guest for Break the Fast following N'ilah Service

SELICHOT

Saturday, September 5

8:00pm Havdalah/Dessert Reception

9:00pm Selichot Services

SUKKOT

Thursday, October 1

12:00pm Sukkot Social

Mediterranean lunch and
make your own Lulav & Etrog kit.

SIMCHAT TORAH

Friday, October 2

5:30pm Simchat Torah Dinner

6:30pm Simchat Torah Service

Saturday, October 3

10:00am Yizkor Service (Zoom only)

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Summertime with Women's Simcha Circle

By Toby Buerger and Ashley Kogan-Weed, Co-Chairs of Women's Simcha Circle at TBE

Ah, summertime — a season of no school, summer camps, family vacations, and a chance to slow down and recharge. Even so, there's always time to come together as a community!

In June, the Women's Simcha Circle joined members of our Temple Beth El congregation for a meaningful day trip to the Florida Holocaust Museum. It was a powerful and moving experience that inspired reflection and conversation. After our visit, we enjoyed lunch together at Jo-el's and spent some time browsing the market.

Giving back to our community remains at the heart of what we do. Recently, Women's Simcha Circle, together with members of our congregation, participated in a cereal drive benefiting Community Cooperative. Thanks to everyone's generosity, we donated an incredible 142 pounds of cereal to help local families in need!

Upcoming events

While the pace of summer may slow down, our planning certainly hasn't!

We invite all the ladies to join us for our Back-to-School End-of-Summer Beach Bash on **Sunday, Aug. 9, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** We'll meet at Temple Beth El and carpool to 'Tween Waters Island Resort & Spa on Captiva for a fun-filled day of friendship, relaxation and sunshine. Registration is available on the Temple Beth El website.



■ Toby Buerger



■ Ashley Kogan-Weed

Additionally, be sure to save the date for Ladies' Night in the Sukkah on **Tuesday, Sept. 29, 6:30 p.m.**, at Temple Beth El.

To stay up to date on all of our upcoming events, please follow our Facebook page, Women's Simcha Circle. We look forward to seeing you soon! 





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WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

Lions of Judah play a vital role in creating social justice, aiding the vulnerable, preserving human dignity and building Jewish identity. We are the most dynamic philanthropic Jewish women in the world. We are a part of an international sisterhood of thousands of global activists who care deeply about the Jewish future. The Lions of Judah set an exemplary standard of leadership and giving.

Our impact can be seen through contribution of our time and resources. Each woman makes an annual donation to their Federation that reflects her capacity to give. In our community, the threshold annual commitment is \$5,000. Some Lions also choose to endow their gift to benefit future generations.

THE PIN

Each woman who wears her Lion of Judah pin is uniquely connected to all other Lions, all of whom embody the true meaning of tzedakah. These women are empowered to take the dream of Tikkum Olam and turn it into a reality.



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Lee County Spirit of '45

WWII veterans event needs your help

By Eryka Aptaker

This year marks the 81st anniversary of the end of WWII and the 17th year that the nationwide Spirit of '45 initiative has been in effect. While the number of WWII veterans is dwindling, it is imperative that we are proactive in keeping this generation's legacy alive. This year's event is an elegant sit-down dinner followed by a well-rounded veterans ceremony held at Kelly Greens Golf & Country Club in Fort Myers on Aug. 9, with dinner starting at 4:15 p.m. The ceremony includes honor guard, singing of the national anthem, guest speakers, a pipes and drums band, and taps at the end. This is just a small summary of all that will go on that day. Additionally, I am asking that anyone who knows a WWII veteran, who

is willing and able to attend, to please send them my way. I want to see as many WWII veterans in attendance as possible. There are still too many out there who haven't heard of this initiative, and I implore you to help raise awareness before it's too late. Please help honor these wonderful members of our greatest generation. I think people do not realize how much hard work and effort goes into this event, as well as the need for financial support. There are many additional underlying costs to hold this event. The event cannot continue without financial backing, as it runs solely on sponsorship. Therefore, I am asking all of you to please consider sponsoring, either as a corporate sponsor or via sponsor-a-vet, which is \$45 to pay for each WWII



Eryka Aptaker and WWII veteran Gene Majewski at last year's Lee County Spirit of '45



Eryka Aptaker and WWII veteran Bob Hilliard and wife JoAnn celebrating Bob's 100th birthday, 2025



Eryka Aptaker and WWII veteran (deceased) Hy Tuchman at last year's Lee County Spirit of '45

veteran's meal. Your name or the name of a WWII veteran will be listed in the program. Business sponsorships range from \$50 to \$1,500+ depending on the level you choose. This will also give you advertising in the program and free tickets to the dinner/ceremony. Please note that **reservations are required**. The last day for reservations is Aug. 02. Payment must be received by Aug. 08. WWII veterans and members of the WWII generation are welcome at no charge. For all others, cost is \$45 per person. For more information and to RSVP, please call me at 917-607-4385 or email me at ejaNYG@comcast.net.

Candle lighting times:

- August 7: 7:51 p.m.
- August 14: 7:46 p.m.
- August 21: 7:39 p.m.
- August 28: 7:33 p.m.



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The spiritual bucket list

Aging Jewishly — What our traditions teach us about growing old.

By Rabbi Barbara Aiello

"Well it's almost Sum Sum Summertime!" Saul said. "Time to make some plans. Things we have on our vacation to-do list."

Saul and Ellie may not have said it in so many words, but they are talking about a concept called "the bucket list," first popularized by screenwriter Justin Zackham in the 2007 movie of the same name. In the film, Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman portray characters, each dealing with a terminal cancer diagnosis, who decide to put their wish list into action by seeing and doing all the things they've only talked about but never got around to accomplishing.

History of the "bucket list"

Although the bucket list idea now has its own website (Bucketlist.org) with more than 400,000 participants and 4 million items on its to-do list, some historians believe that the term itself has to do with an ancient religious practice where a bucket of holy water was placed at the foot of the bed where a deceased family member was laid out. When mourners came to visit the body, they would dip their hand into the bucket and sprinkle the departed with holy water.

Others believe that the term, "bucket list," originated in the Middle Ages and derives from a grisly practice of placing a bucket under the feet of a condemned criminal who was about to be hanged — an act accomplished when the executioner "kicked the bucket." Later the idiom was used generally as a slang term for death as in Joe "kicked the bucket."

Establishing a spiritual bucket list

Regardless of its historical context, blogger K. Dean, among others, notes that "many people believe that creating a bucket list channels your energies into accomplishing goals rather than wasting the time we have on earth on things that don't matter."

If that's true, now might be the perfect time to consider a spiritual bucket list. Dr. Erica Brown thinks so.

In 2016, Dr. Brown shared her ideas regarding a spiritual bucket list in a provocative article that appeared in the *Jewish World Review*. In her piece, Dr. Brown refers to the Book of Psalms (90:12) where we read, "So teach us to number our days that we may get a



■ Rabbi Barbara Aiello

heart of wisdom." Dr. Brown goes on to explain that our *Tanak* (Hebrew Bible) is filled with stories of death bed scenes and although our biblical heroes didn't know the phrase "bucket list," Dr. Brown explains that "they had a very deep understanding that the last words, blessings and demands one makes are listened to with a different kind of attention."

So, to all of our Sauls and our Ellies who wonder if they will see another Yontiff, Dr. Brown encourages you to consider creating and then accomplishing your own spiritual bucket list.

Some ideas include:

- Make that donation that you've been meaning to do. Write the check and put it in the mail.
- Volunteer in a school, daycare center, senior center or synagogue.
- Read the weekly parsha and talk to a friend about it.
- Clear up a misunderstanding.
- Reconnect with a childhood friend.
- Compliment someone on a job well done.
- Open the jewelry box and select pieces to give to your grandchildren. Write a short note about the history of each piece.
- Shred useless documents and recycle the scraps, knowing that when you pass on you've made the sorting process easier for your children.

Even if it's just for five minutes, get outside and enjoy a meditative moment surrounded by nature.

When you become annoyed or angry, apologize right away.

In the film, Morgan Freeman muses that "Forty-five years go by pretty fast." Jack Nicholson agrees when he says that "the years pass like smoke

through a keyhole." They're gone in before we even notice.

Creating and dedicating oneself to a personal spiritual bucket list offers us, in our later years, the tranquility of focusing on what is important and the comfort that comes with making things right.

Rabbi Barbara Aiello served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life in Sarasota, Florida as resident rabbi for 10 years. Currently, she serves as Italy's first woman rabbi. As Aviva's Rabbi Emerita, she shares her experiences on Aging Jewishly. Contact her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com

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What's the big idea?

By Brian Simon

There was a time in this country when men thought of stuff and built it. They didn't rely on "computers" or "code." There was nothing artificial about their intelligence.

One such time was in the 1930s, during The Great Depression — a time so miserable they named a psychological disease after it. But even in the darkness, there was a man with a light bulb above his head. That man was Joseph B. Friedman, and that light bulb was the flexible straw.

A little history

Born in Cleveland in 1900, Friedman fancied himself an inventor, because that was a thing you could aspire to be. His first idea was a lighted pencil he called "pencilite." As they say, better to light a pencil than to curse the darkness. Friedman was only a year past his bar mitzvah when he thought of it. He had other ideas like an improved ice cream scoop, a portable movie screen, a safety razor handle and a safety device for a gas range, but he couldn't sell those.

He actually did sell an improvement on fountain pens to the Sheaffer Pen Company in 1934, but his most successful invention was inspired in a soda shop in 1936.



■ Brian Simon

An idea is born

The story goes that Friedman was with his daughter Judith at his brother's soda shop in San Francisco. Sitting at the counter, the two-year-old wasn't tall enough to reach the top of the straw. She bent the straw toward her mouth, but that only pinched the paper and restricted the flow. This gave Friedman his big idea.

He went home and inserted a screw into a paper straw, then he wrapped dental floss around the outside of the straw. When he removed the screw and the floss, the straw was left with an accordion-like shape that allowed it to bend. He filed a patent for his "drinking tube" later that year.

Turns out the idea was the easy part; the hard part was selling it. One company saw the promise but believed it would be impossible to build the machinery to make it at scale. They offered Friedman 2% royalties, provided he could provide the machines to produce it. "So let me get this straight," I imagine him saying. "You want me to build the machines to make the product that I invented, but you want to own it?"

Instead, Friedman borrowed money from his brothers-in-law and founded the Flexible Straw Corporation. He burned through the initial investment and had to return to selling insurance and real estate

to make ends meet, while still moonlighting with the straw idea. World War II further delayed his ability to develop his invention.

He eventually made the machinery and, with help from his older sister Betty back in Cleveland, they made their first sale to a hospital in 1947. Production and sales exploded from there. Friedman's invention is still widely used in hospitals, and his papers were donated to the Smithsonian Institution.

Remarkable findings

There are a few things about the story that I find remarkable from a modern perspective.

First, Friedman had no formal training in engineering or business. His education was in real estate and optometry. Today, he would be encouraged to spend several years getting academic degrees and internships before he could start to develop his idea.

Secondly, I wish Friedman had invented the straw in the 1980s, so he could have promoted it by schlocky TV commercials.

First scene, shot in black and white. A woman haplessly tries to drink a milk shake through a straw. Her cheeks are comically sucked in as she shakes her head. Then she tries tilting the glass forward until the beverage ends up in her lap. Voiceover announcer: "Has **this** ever happened to **you**?"

Next scene, in full color. A family sits around a table smiling and enjoying drinks with their flexible straws. Announcer: "Now, there's **Bendy-Straw**! "Working with a patented technology, Bendy-Straw makes it easy to drink from a straw at **any angle**!"

In the video, a small child drinks from a bendy straw. Then, a man lying in bed reaches for the glass of water next to him and takes a sip.

Announcer: "This technology used to cost hundreds of dollars (video shows a hand pulling \$100 bills out of a wallet, while another hand motions for more money). "But with this exclusive TV offer, you can own a set of your own Bendy-Straws for just \$9.99!"

"But wait, there's more! Act now, and you can get this lighted pencil absolutely **free**!"

The third thing that strikes me about Friedman's story is that his daughter was trying to drink a milkshake through a straw that fateful day. Straws don't work for milkshakes! Not for good, thick milkshakes, anyway. His idea was built on a false premise!

Something else that stands out: it took Friedman more than 10 years to bring his product to market, but when he started, he shared the idea with at least five companies that already made straws.

All those companies knew this technology was coming, and none of them came up with their own version of it.

Today, Amazon would be marketing their own bendy straw five minutes after Friedman's

company made their first sale. In fact, a quick check on Amazon proves my point. "Amazon Basics Disposable Striped Plastic Flex Straws, BPA Free." \$2.29 for a box of 100.

So, the point is, if a young person today has an idea for a new invention, it will never, ever, work because he or she will spend nine years getting advanced degrees while Amazon steals their idea.

On the other hand, if a young person, or a 75-year-old friend of mine named Larry, has an idea for this column, I'll gladly let them submit and write it as an "internship," and I'll take all the credit.

Deal? 🤝

Turns out the idea was the easy part; the hard part was selling it.

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Expecting new beginnings

By Marina Berkovich, JHSSWF President

Theodor Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland Aug. 29-31, 1897, launching the modern organized movement to re-establish a Jewish state. He advocated for Zionism, because he believed that a sovereign Jewish state will be the only solution to rampant European antisemitism and the only way to ensure the safety and survival of the Jewish people.

All Jews are Zionists, even those who hate Israel; even those who live in it and still continue to hate it. We are Zionists because, by definition, it is our home. Antisemites exploit Zionism to serve their hatred of Jews in all times.

August Jewish Highlights

The month of August in Jewish history is marred by many atrocities against our people.

On Aug. 2, 1492, Jews were expelled from Spain and had to endure the tortures of the Inquisition, public humiliation and forcible conversion. Recent genetic studies show that roughly 20% to 25% of the Spanish population has



Marina Berkovich

Sephardic Jewish ancestry due to forced conversions in the 15th century.

In Germany, following the era of enlightenment, many Jews converted out of Judaism by choice to ease the life's journey for themselves and their children. Their belief in acceptance should have vanished

during the German Depression but it did not.

On Aug. 1, 1936, Adolf Hitler opened the Summer Games of the XI Olympiad at the newly constructed Reichssportsfeld (Berlin Olympic Stadium) with a brief speech proclaiming Germany "peaceful." What actually followed was years of unforgivable suffering of the Jewish people, including famous events such as the arrest of Anne Frank and her family after hiding from the Nazis in the secret annex in Amsterdam for 761 days.

The Jewish population of Europe had been disarmed first, making it easier to corral the people onto the deportation routes. There were very few acts of mass resistance, such as the Aug. 2, 1943,

prisoner uprising at the Treblinka Nazi extermination camp. Of the 840 prisoners who revolted, 300 escaped, and only 79 survived World War II.

Stalin and his henchmen were actively persecuting the Jews in the USSR shortly after the Holocaust. On Aug. 12, 1952, during the "Night of the Murdered Poets," 13 prominent Soviet Jewish intellectuals were executed in Moscow. Most of them were members of the Jewish anti-fascist committee.

The *Times of Israel* article marked the 75th anniversary of this murder by denoting "the official charges leveled against them included 'bourgeois nationalism,' 'treason,' 'espionage,' and 'planning to establish a Zionist homeland in Crimea,' yet their true offense lay not in conspiracy but in prominence; they were Jews in a state where Jewish identity, once briefly encouraged during the war, had by the early 1950s become a mark of suspicion and disloyalty."

In my once-Soviet heart, there are many contemporary echoes of those trying times my Jewish family was afraid to even whisper about. On the eve of the month that brings us Rosh Hashanah and its promise of renewal, let us hope that

the world will somehow rid itself from the ancient sickness of antisemitism.

Local Jewish History

JHSSWF is advancing full speed toward the new season of Local Jewish History and what better way to review it than during our annual Local Jewish History Film Festival. It will take place in October, November and December, spotlighting our local Jewish heroes and heroines.

Please also reserve two dates for the Annual Celebration of Florida Jewish History Month: Jan. 4, 2027, and Jan. 29, 2027. More details coming soon.

We appreciate your continuing support of our mission throughout the year. Sign up for our mailing list at jhsswf.org.

Our telephone number is 833-347-7935 (833-JHS-SWFL). Kindly direct all correspondence, including contributions and renewals to: The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida, P.O. Box #10075, Naples, Florida 34101.

The Jewish Historical Society of Southwest Florida is a section 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Contributions are deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. 



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MONALLO BAND	FRIDAY, OCT 2
JIM ASBELL & THE TROPIHOLICS	SATURDAY, OCT 3
22N	FRIDAY, NOV 13
DEREK JONES	SATURDAY, NOV 21
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GENERATIONS OF THE SHOAH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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A gift and a responsibility

By Ida Margolis and Shelley Lieb

GenShoah was formed as an affiliate of the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center to offer a way for the children of survivors to meet, learn and preserve the memory of the Holocaust. Today, it is more than just the second generation (2Gs) who have joined in support of the mission.

Survivors and their children fleeing the Holocaust are among the millions of immigrants who made America their new home. Survivors' children, born here or before their parents' immigration journey, are grateful to America for many reasons. When asked, these were some of their responses.

"This country enabled us to realize our dreams. Thanks, America."
~ Shirley Besikof



Ida Margolis and Shelley Leib

"It is not a guarantee, but it is an opportunity for anyone to achieve whatever they want to achieve. I am very thankful and have tremendous gratitude to this country for allowing someone like me to have achieved higher education and the lifestyle and affordability that I probably would never be able to achieve anywhere else." ~ Jack Abel



Harriet Berneman



Shirley Besikof



Ariel view of Ellis Island



Flo and Larry Giltman

"I am grateful to America for offering hope for the future, no matter what the obstacles." ~ Shelley Lieb

"We are deeply grateful for Ellis Island and how it permitted our parents and grandparents to enter this country and live a life of unimaginable freedom and prosperity by raising our families, we didn't just survive, but we also thrived. We hope that the values that this country was built on will continue for many generations."
~ Flo and Larry Giltman

"Life wasn't easy, but in America, they [my parents] felt safe and had choices. Choices in food, friends, occupation and religion." ~ Harriet Berneman

"I look back on the changes in women's rights. So many positive advances in education, societal norms, sports, entertainment, occupational routes and politics. Women have choices I know would be limited or nonexistent in other countries. Our laws and

expectations are not perfect or fair yet, but we'll get there." ~ Harriet Berneman

"We reaped the harvest of never ending goodness. We learned the language, learned a craft, worked hard and partook of the grandest bounty every imagined. We followed the laws, paid taxes and grew up voting for those who we wanted to lead us. And it was a fulfilling relationship for both of us: family and country."
~ Sol Awend

"Every year that passes, I feel more deeply how precious that gift of a new beginning truly was." ~ Rene Geist, snowbird from Canada

2Gs describe their gratitude to America as realizing dreams, offering hope, freedom, opportunity, prosperity, rights for women, setting up a process for immigrant entry, the gift of a new beginning.

Holocaust survivors and their children are only one piece of the relationship between America and its immigrants. It has been many generations since the first immigrants landed at Jamestown in 1607 and declared their independence in 1776. Millions more immigrants have continued to come of their own volition or by force. Nonetheless, it has been immigrants who have been transforming this land since the original, indigenous population existed.

Coming to America and starting a new life is not easy for anyone. The

stories of what that experience was like for some GenShoah members (including survivors) is available on the Holocaust Museum & Cohen Education Center website: hmcec.org/resources/. These stories describe the hardships endured and the successes realized as America provided a new home that would reward hard work and dedication to its values.

No doubt that the Holocaust immigrants will continue to teach future generations of the gifts and responsibilities that they were given when they became citizens of the United States of America.

About GenShoah SWFL

GenShoah SWFL is a group for Holocaust survivors and their descendants and anyone interested in the mission of GenShoah of SWFL, which is the promotion of Holocaust education and human rights, the preservation of history and memories of the Holocaust, connecting descendants of Holocaust survivors with one another, and support of the Holocaust Museum & Janet G. and Harvey D. Cohen Education Center.

Our group is always open to interested people. There aren't any dues or forms to fill out. If you would like to receive our newsletter and program announcements, send us an email: genshoahswfl@hmcec.org.

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CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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A season of reflection and renewal

Elul preparation and celebrating lifelong community contributions

By Cheryl Fulmer, Ellen Feingold and Marcia Rudin

The month of August — the Hebrew month of Elul — has special meaning for the Jewish people, because upon its heel comes September, with the Days of Awe, the High Holidays, asking us to measure how well we have behaved towards others. During the month of August, we realize that soon we will have to answer to ourselves and to God whether we have made some effort to make this world a better place. August is the preparatory month, giving us some time to make things right.

During the month of Elul, which begins Aug. 14 (Rosh Chodesh Elul), in order to help us to prepare to take stock of our lives, we blow the shofar at each Friday service until Rosh Hashanah. Please join us at Chavurat Shalom’s Shabbat services Aug. 14 through Sept. 2 to hear our member Dr. David Berger blow the shofar.

There are so many accomplished members of our Chavurah, we continue to profile them. This month we focus on Drs. Mark and Margie Peppercorn.

Married for 60 years, they have two sons and three grandchildren. They

joined Chavurat Shalom at its inception six years ago. They enjoy singing at our Chavurah’s Shabbat services, and we treasure their singing, among other wonderful intellectual contributions to our Shabbat service and other programs. They currently live in Sudbury, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island; their vacation on Sanibel Island.

About Margie

Margie was originally from New York. In addition to raising two sons, after graduating from Harvard Medical School, she became a pediatrician. Her other love has always been animals, and while raising her family and busy career she gradually expanded their household to include — at its height — two horses, two ponies, two geese, two dogs, two gerbils, a rabbit, tropical fish, and a cat. In 2022, she published a humorous book titled “Mrs. M.D.” about the craziness of her life combining the roles of parent, pediatrician and “zookeeper.”

In retirement, she remains active as a volunteer at food pantries in both Sudbury and Sanibel and at a therapeutic horseback riding facility for people with

disabilities. She also works with several animal protection groups. According to Margie, “Our household is now reduced to just me and Mark and one small rabbit who sits next to us during the Chavurat Shalom Shabbat services and twice a year travels with us to and from Sanibel.”

About Mark

Mark grew up in Skokie, Illinois. He attended Harvard College and Harvard Medical School. He was on the staff at the Beth Israel hospital in Boston for 45 years doing patient care, clinical research and teaching, all while coaching their sons’ athletic activities. He specialized in ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease. He retired seven years ago as Professor of Medicine Emeritus at Harvard Medical School.

In his retirement he enjoys their animals, the family’s wonderful vacations, volunteering, book clubs, golf, gardening, and taking long walks with Margie, whether at their home in Sanibel, Sudbury, or Newport.

Recurring programs

Our chavurah holds Friday night Shabbat

services every week throughout the year at 7:30 p.m. Services are led by members, with English readings, original readings and poetry, Hebrew and English singing, and Torah reading with commentary by a thoughtful member. If you wish to sing, chant or read with us, please reach out and we will include you in our service.

On the first Tuesday of the month, we enjoy our informal “schmooze” session at 7:30 p.m. “Torah Talk,” where we study the Parsha of the week together, is the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Jewish Current Events is the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The fourth Tuesday is set aside for the lecture and discussion which takes place at 7:30 p.m.

All Chavurat Shalom programs are held via Zoom. Everyone is welcome to join us. We plan in-person gatherings in the Sanibel and Fort Myers area for the holidays. For further information, email chavuratshalom@gmail.com or check out our website: chavuratshalomofswflorida.org.

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How is Hadassah life-changing?

By Shelley Einhorn, President Collier/Lee Chapter of Hadassah

When we say Hadassah is life-changing, it's not a slogan. It's a collection of very real moments: a premature baby who survives, a teenager who finds direction, a family that gets more time together. Each one small on its own — together, something quite profound.

At its heart is medicine. Through the Hadassah Medical Organization, patients from every background — Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Israeli, Palestinian and beyond — receive advanced treatment that can mean the difference between blindness and sight, disability and recovery, illness and health. From cutting-edge cancer therapies to breakthroughs in eye care and rehabilitation, people are not just treated — they are given back the possibility of a fuller life.

But Hadassah's reach extends beyond hospital walls. Through Youth Aliyah programs, vulnerable children, many arriving with trauma, are given education, structure and a sense of belonging. For them, life-changing can mean the first time they feel safe or the moment they begin to imagine a future.



Shelley Einhorn

Then there is the human dimension for those involved as supporters or members. Many find that engaging with Hadassah reshapes their own sense of purpose — connecting them to service, community and a tradition of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world in practical ways.

Looking ahead

Be sure to mark your calendar for these upcoming programs and events.

Sept. 29 – Zoom presentation with League of Women Voters of Lee County to discuss midterm election information.

Sept. 30 – Zoom presentation with League of Women Voters of Collier County to discuss midterm election information.

Nov. 16 – Legacy and Laughter – Planned giving and estates speaker, luncheon and delightful magician's show.

Dec. 13 – Chapter Recognition of 2026 Donors – The entire chapter is invited to a luncheon at a Naples country club.

Jan. 13, 2027 – Installation of Board members.

Hope to see you soon! *Am Yisrael Chai!* 🕊



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Rosh Hashanah Morning:

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Yom Kippur Evening/Kol Nidre:

Sunday, Sept 20 7:30pm

Yom Kippur Morning Service:

Monday, Sept. 21, 10:00am

Mincha Service: 3:30pm

Yizkor Service: 4:30pm

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Break-the-Fast: 6:30pm

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JEWISH WAR VETERANS — Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400 (239) 246-3151

Jewish War Veterans

Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400

By Eryka Aptaker

There's much to share about the last few months in the world of the Jewish War Veterans, Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400. We start with sad news of the passing of our last living WWII veteran, Hy Tuchman. Hy was just shy of 101 years old when he passed away April 11. He will be greatly missed.

The month of May kept the group busy engaging in Memorial Day services. Temple Beth Shalom invited us for a nice lunch after a Memorial Day veterans service. Our honor guard was busy visiting the cemeteries throughout the weekend, where ceremonial 21-gun salutes were performed and taps was played. What a wonderful way to honor and remember our deceased veterans.



On July 4, the long-awaited dedication to the All Veterans Memorial in Downtown Fort Myers finally took place. Our member Isaac Osin worked long and hard as a lead committee member on this project.

He was very passionate about this project and, sadly, Isaac passed away before he could see the fruits of his labor. His wife, Susan Osin, was present for the dedication and was honored in Isaac's memory. We miss Isaac greatly and are glad he was not forgotten in his efforts.

Funds for IDF soldiers

I want to revisit our more recent project. For those who are consistent readers of L'Chayim, I had mentioned that JWV Post 400 is raising funds for the soldiers currently fighting in the IDF.

As previously mentioned, our commanders son, Motti, is currently serving. They are in great need of helmets. Each one costs \$500 and, thus far, we have raised enough to support some of the soldiers but, sadly, still not enough to reach as many as we would like. Every penny raised in the IDF Helmet fund goes into the purchase of more helmets. They are also in great need of ceramic vests which need



Memorial Day ceremony at Temple Beth Shalom



WWII veteran Hy Tuchman on his 100th birthday celebration at our Post meeting, 2025

funding as well. To date we have raised money to purchase over 100 helmets. We just purchased two more which were immediately sent to the troops in Lebanon. Unfortunately, there is still a great need.

We want to thank our recent sponsors for their generosity. For those who have not sponsored, please consider helping these brave men and women.

To contribute, please make your check payable to "Jewish War Veterans Post 400." On the memo line, please write "IDF Helmet Fund," and mail your envelope to: Harvey Charter, 11024 Lakeland Circle, Fort Myers, FL 33913



Commander Harvey Charter with Sue Osin at the All Veterans Memorial dedication

Special invitation for IDF veterans

The Jewish War Veterans, Victor Paul Tuchman Post 400 wants to honor and recognize the Israeli members of our community who have served in the IDF, by offering complimentary memberships to our JWV Chapter. There's no cost to join, as an anonymous donor has stepped forward to make this happen. We welcome all men and women IDF reservists or retired, to join this group. For more information or to join, please contact Commander Harvey Charter at 239-246-3151 or hbcharter@aol.com.

Keeping the legacy alive

As always in these articles, we ask that you consider joining this amazing and dedicated group. Come join us as we engage in breakfast and great conversation. Jewish War Veterans, founded in 1896, is the oldest continuing veterans organization in

America. We are challenged in the pursuit of new members to keep our organization alive. With the loss of many of our WWII veterans and older members, we are striving to have members of our younger generation(s) join and show support to the JWV.

We have a Patron membership for non-veterans. If your family members were veterans, think about honoring them by joining the JWV Post 400.

I joined in honoring the memory of my father, a Korean War veteran. It was the best decision I have ever made. This group has been a blessing in my life and some of the members have become like family to me. You would be a part of a very dedicated, committed and welcoming group of individuals. We hope to see you at our future meetings!

For questions regarding joining our group, please contact Harvey Charter at 239-246-3151 or hbcharter@aol.com. 📞

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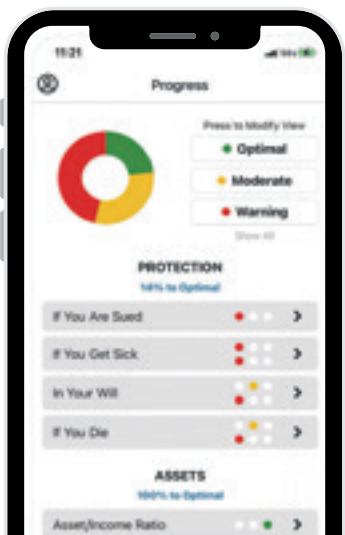
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TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Fort Myers

Allison Fego, Religious School Coordinator

This year's Temple Beth El Summer Camp was a resounding success as we celebrated our Summer of *Koach* (Strength)! Throughout the week, our campers explored the many different ways we can be strong — not just physically, but mentally, spiritually, emotionally and within our community. Each day focused on a different kind of strength, including Strength of Mind, Strength of Body, Strength of Spirit, Strength of Friendship, and Strength of Community. Our activities were thoughtfully planned to bring each theme to

and the memories they were creating. One of the most rewarding parts of the week was watching friendships blossom across all age groups. Campers from Pre-K through 5th grade encouraged one another, laughed together and formed connections that grew stronger with each passing day. It was a beautiful reminder that some of life's greatest strengths come from kindness, teamwork and community. We were also incredibly fortunate to have three of our upcoming B'nai Mitzvah students serve as our



Swampee, the Florida Everblades mascot, and our campers



Iris Luna-Bord, Abby Fego, Adi Gomel and Hadar Gomel making friendship bracelets

life in engaging and meaningful ways. Campers enjoyed yoga, jiu-jitsu, obstacle courses, friendship bracelet making, affirmation rocks, creating partner pizzas, mixing refreshing mocktails, and ending each day by reflecting in their journals about their favorite moments

Counselors-in-Training (CITs), assisting Morah Stacy and Morah Lindsay throughout the week. Their enthusiasm, leadership and willingness to jump in wherever needed were invaluable. They served as wonderful role models for our younger campers while gaining meaningful leadership experience of their own. As wonderful as our summer was, we are even more excited about the upcoming Religious School year! We have an incredible calendar of events planned, including our popular Religious School Shabbat dinners, meaningful community service projects, Parent's Night Out dinners, holiday celebrations, and so much more.

A new class for B'nai Mitzvah students

This year is especially exciting as we begin with an extraordinary group of



Morah Allison, Morah Lindsay, Morah Stacy and campers

seven B'nai Mitzvah students. These students will be participating in a brand-new class designed to complement their B'nai Mitzvah journey. In addition to their regular class time, they will have the opportunity to hear from a variety of guest speakers representing different professions. These speakers will share their personal experiences, discuss their career paths and offer valuable insight into life beyond school, helping our students begin thinking about their own futures while reinforcing the Jewish values that guide us in every stage of life. We are thrilled that this new class will be led by Ariel Baldinger, a Temple Beth El Religious School graduate and B'nai Mitzvah alumna who now teaches at Cypress Lake Middle School. It is especially meaningful to welcome Ariel back to our Religious School, where she can inspire the next generation of students through her own journey and experiences. If you have a student, friend or family member who is looking to become part of a vibrant, welcoming and growing Religious School community, we'd love to meet them! Please have them reach out to our Religious School Coordinator Allison Fego at religiousschool@templebethel.com. We look forward to another wonderful year of learning, friendship and Jewish growth together! 🕊



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TEMPLE JUDEA PRESCHOOL

Fort Myers

Suki Kelly, Preschool Director

Temple Judea Preschool's summer camp was filled with laughter, creativity, friendship and unforgettable memories. Throughout the summer, our campers enjoyed a variety of engaging activities designed to keep them learning, creating and having fun.

One of the highlights of the summer was a special visit from the Lee County Library. As part of the library's Summer Reading Program, librarians read stories to the children and generously gifted each camper a free book to encourage a lifelong love of reading.

Our themed weeks kept campers busy and excited each day. During Sweet Treats Week, children decorated their own cupcakes, using their creativity to design colorful and delicious masterpieces. To celebrate the Fourth of July, campers created festive red, white and blue tie-dye shirts, giving everyone a fun keepsake to remember the summer.

We wrapped up camp with a special Bring Your Parents to Camp Day, where families joined in the fun and celebrated another successful summer together. From arts and crafts to games, outdoor adventures and hands-on activities, campers made wonderful memories while strengthening friendships along the way.

Welcome back

As we prepare to welcome families back

in August, Temple Judea Preschool is excited to begin a brand-new school year with several exciting improvements. Families will be greeted by a renewed and revitalized front entrance, and our outdoor classroom continues to grow with the addition of a new raised garden bed that will soon be filled with colorful flowers and fresh vegetables for children to nurture and explore.

Our teachers are eagerly looking forward to welcoming returning students and getting to know many new faces. The school year will begin with engaging themes such as All About Me, My Family and Pets, giving children opportunities to celebrate what makes each of them unique while discovering the many things they have in common with their classmates. These activities help build a strong sense of community and provide the perfect icebreaker as children form new friendships and begin the year with confidence.

Temple Judea Preschool currently has limited openings available in our 18-month-old, Three-Year-Old, and Pre-K programs. Families interested in learning more or scheduling a tour are encouraged to contact Preschool Director Suki Kelly by email at templejudea.preschool@gmail.com or by phone at 239-482-1121.

We look forward to another year of learning, growing and creating lasting memories together! 🌟

TEMPLE JUDEA RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Fort Myers

Tehila Cherubino, Director of Education

The Jewish Impressionist painter Camille Pissarro was known for creating beautiful landscapes using tiny dots of color. As he painted, each brushstroke seemed insignificant on its own. Standing inches from the canvas, he could see only that one small section. There was no way to know whether the painting as a whole was coming together. So, from time to time, Pissarro would put down his brush and step back. Only by stepping back and viewing the entire canvas could he see how each individual dot contributed to a beautiful work of art.

Our lives often feel the same way. We become so focused on the details of each day — the appointments, responsibilities, work, school and endless to-do lists — that we lose sight of the bigger picture.

Through the gift of Shabbat, God teaches us that creation requires moments of perspective as well as moments of work. After creating the world in six days, God rested on the seventh, giving us a model to follow. Shabbat invites us to pause, reflect, reconnect with God and those we love, appreciate our blessings and remember what truly matters. Only when we step back can we fully appreciate the beauty of the lives we are creating.

Summer offers us that same gift on a larger scale. The slower pace of the season gives us time to step back from our daily routines, appreciate God's

creation, enjoy quality time with family and friends, and return with renewed energy and perspective.

While many of us have been enjoying this time of renewal, exciting things have been happening at our school. Our classrooms have been refreshed with new flooring and fresh paint. We are also delighted to welcome new students and teachers to our school family. Soon, those classrooms will once again be filled with learning, laughter, curiosity and friendship.

The first Shabbat B'Kef of the school year is **Friday, Aug. 21**, and the first day of Religious School classes is **Sunday, Aug. 23**. Be sure to visit our website (tjswfl.org) for information about our High Holiday services and children's programs. Also, registration for the 2026–27 school year remains open for students in Pre-K (age 4) through 7th grade. For more information, email tehila@tjswfl.org.

As we prepare to begin another school year, I hope these final weeks of summer provide opportunities to pause, reflect and appreciate the many blessings in your life. Soon it will be time to pick up our brushes once again and continue creating something beautiful together. We can't wait to welcome everyone back. Until then, enjoy these final weeks of summer! 🌟



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Yom Kippur is coming earlier

By Rabbi David Arias

Don't panic! But believe me, Yom Kippur is just around the corner. It's next week, or maybe tomorrow ... or is it today, and we didn't notice? And no, I don't mean you should start fasting right now, but we certainly shouldn't wait for one day a year to ask for forgiveness from those we have hurt.

Every year, Yom Kippur should come earlier, or at least we should feel it coming earlier. There are many reasons for that. First, the month of Elul is about to begin, and with it the Selihot period, during which we recite the traditional prayers for forgiveness, the same ones we will recite on Yom Kippur. Second, it is customary to



Rabbi David Arias

do a *Heshbon Nefesh*, a spiritual reflection on this past year and our deeds. However, we should feel Yom Kippur is coming earlier because anytime is a good time to say, "I am sorry."

Jewish law does not require using the Yom Kippur rituals and prayers to ask others to forgive us for what we did to them. In fact, Yom Kippur has nothing to do with it. As the Mishnah explains:

Transgressions between a person and God, Yom Kippur atones; however, for transgressions between a person and another, Yom Kippur does not atone until he appeases the other person" (Yomah 8:9).

It is fascinating and almost self-contradictory that the Day of Atonement doesn't atone for transgressions between one person and another, but only for transgressions between human beings and Hashem. And even if we have transgressed against God, there is no reason to wait until Yom Kippur to recognize our mistakes. Every day has the potential to become a holy and sacred day, as Yom Kippur is.

You can mark and celebrate 10 Yemei Kippur in a row, and fast for a month, and you'll still owe an apology to those you hurt and a commitment to repair the damage.

So why do we focus so much on this particular day or season of repentance? Well, because if we forgot to do it earlier in the year, we have at least one day a year to remind us to do it. Part of the beauty of Yom Kippur is doing it together, as a community, as a family, and therefore, it is much easier to call out our mistakes and transgressions. However, if we have the chance to do it right now, we shouldn't wait until Yom Kippur to do it.

The month of *Teshuva* (repentance) begins now. Yom Kippur is coming earlier this year, as it does every year.

Rabbi David Arias serves at Temple Judea in Fort Myers. 

Every day has the potential to become a holy and sacred day, as Yom Kippur is.



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 Monday, September 21
9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

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Reclaiming the power of the tongue

By Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

The Book of Proverbs teaches, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Proverbs 18:21).

One of the casualties of the internet age has been civility. People no longer merely make a statement and the listener responds with words of support or refutation. If you share your thoughts about an issue on any form of social media, be prepared to be attacked. The insults hurled towards the writer can quickly go from benign to out and out libel. Online threats of physical harm or even death are almost commonplace.

A culture of aggression in civil discourse has taken root in American society. This culture of aggressive speech is not confined to the street but expresses itself at the highest levels of government, in business and in sport. Defining the borders of free speech is one of our most difficult challenges. While free speech is a hard-won constitutional



■ Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

right, unfiltered by boundaries of decency, speech can be a source of harm both emotionally and physically.

When the free exchange of ideas is throttled by bullying in the media, only the loudest and angriest voices are heard.

Jewish tradition cherishes free speech. The medieval rabbi, Moses ibn Ezra, taught that "when a person refrains from speech, the ideas die, the soul stops and the senses deteriorate." Jewish texts of the rabbinic era preserve the arguments of both the majority and the minority, affording respect to both.

Yet, while Jewish law and tradition encourages robust debate, it strictly prohibits malicious speech such as gossip, public shaming and slander. The prohibition against gossip is contained in "The Holiness Code" in Leviticus chapter 19. The Talmud teaches that evil speech (in Hebrew, *LaShon HaRa*, the evil tongue) has consequences to more than just the

object of gossip. "Evil speech kills three: the one who says it, the one who listens and the subject of the gossip" (BT Arachin 15b).

This same tractate of the Talmud also highlights the severity of the sin of *LaShon HaRa*. The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught, "Anyone who speaks malicious speech increases his sins to the degree that they correspond to the three cardinal transgressions: Idol worship, and forbidden sexual relations, and bloodshed."

How do we strike a balance between free speech and hateful speech?

First, focus on issues, not individuals. Criticism of policy and actions of governments and organizations, even if we don't agree with the criticism, is legitimate.

Second, avoid generalizations about groups of people rather than individual behaviors. And, of course, always speak

truth. If you are re-blogging or quoting something you have read online, take the time to be certain that these words are more than simply opinions or outright fabrications.

It is time for all of us to reject speech that injures rather than enlightens. It is a first step to restoring civil society and a national ethos for America. Failure to do so will lead to disaster.

After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of The Second Temple, the Talmud, when attempting to explain how the Romans could have destroyed God's house, teaches "the Temple

was destroyed because of needless hatred between countrymen."

Let us abandon bullying and angry discourse. Let us have the courage to call out others when we hear falsehood or bigotry. Let us be the change we wish to see in the world.

Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer serves Bat Yam Temple of the Islands. ☪

Defining the borders of free speech is one of our most difficult challenges.

The month of Elul

Introspection: A good and sweet year

By Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

We all like to do things, to make decisions, to see the results and to progress further. If we are successful, we'll also look back and glow in the halo of achievement for a while, but honestly, we prefer doing much more than reviewing what we have done.

Certainly, there is virtue in continued positive activity, but if we never give our efforts adequate evaluation and assessment, it is possible we will have fired all our cannons while aiming at the wrong target. Moreover, behavior tends to be self-reinforcing. So quite often, we may continue following the same pattern, relearning our mistakes and ingraining them deeper into our personalities.



■ Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz

One of the signs of maturity is for us to contemplate our actions and examine them, considering whether we acted correctly or not. The recognition of the necessity to do this is one of the first signs of growing up spiritually.

Jewish thought puts an emphasis on such careful review. Every day, at the end of the day, we recite the *Shema* before retiring. That recitation is more than a ritual. Before that recitation, we conscientiously evaluate our conduct throughout the previous day, seeing where we have been successful and where we have failed, where our energies were employed advantageously and where they could have been used more profitably.

This process is carried out with greater intensity every Thursday night, as we assess not only our conduct on that particular day, but throughout the entire week. On the last day of every month, we should think over the entire month and make such an accounting.

All these times, however, are dwarfed by the process of self-analysis that should characterize the month of Elul. Elul is an entire month devoted to examination

of our conduct in the previous year and preparation for change and progress in the year to come. Like a storekeeper who closes his operations from time-to-time to take inventory, this is a month dedicated to taking stock of our conduct and seeing how it can be improved.

Introspection, however, does not always lead to positive results. On the contrary, sometimes it just makes us heavy, without propelling us forward. Introspection is valuable when we have a purpose. Then our thoughts are directed to defining our goals and purposes more

clearly and seeing whether or not our deeds are aligned with these purposes.

For when a person feels purpose and direction, he is charged with energy and feels the need to accomplish and achieve. He wants to see the goals in which he believes and identifies to be manifested in actual life, therefore, he is both active and reflective. He desires to do but wants his actions to be constructive and fruitful.

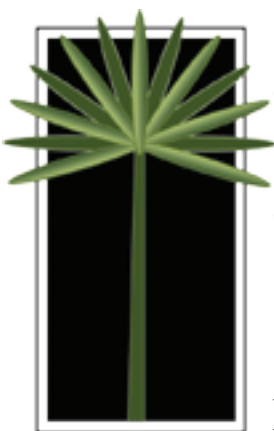
So from time to time, he appraises his activities and sees whether they are aligned with his ultimate objective or whether it is necessary to redirect his focus.

When we set aside time to review our conduct with this focus during the month of Elul, we will ensure ourselves a *kesivah vachasimah tova*, a good and sweet year in all matters, including the matter of ultimate importance, the coming of *Mashiach*.

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz serves at Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida. ☪

One of the signs of maturity is for us to contemplate our actions and examine them ...

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Context is everything

By Rabbi Bruce Diamond

Over the summer we have been enjoying weekly Sabbath eve dinners and *qabbalat shabbat* at my home in The Forest. The setting is very peaceful and like a park, with a scenic view of a lake teeming with wildlife, especially a spectacular array of birds and waterfowl. Tucked away in the most remote part of The Forest adjacent to the Estero Bay Preserve, there is very little vehicle traffic and lots of walkers and bicyclers.

As is the custom, I open a door to welcome the Sabbath, envisioned as bride, as we conclude singing 16th century qabbalist Sholomo Alqabets' hymn *lkha dodi* ("come, my beloved"). In this case, it is a large sliding glass door facing a very serene lake and people enjoying their early evening strolls.

Every now and then there are passersby as I stand in the open door dressed in Sabbath whites calling out and singing in an ancient language and then bowing to an imaginary woman. All they can see is me, not the worshippers behind me in the great room.

As you might imagine, sometimes they stop and stare. I don't really need to wonder what they must be thinking; some poor old guy is having "an episode."

A person standing on a street singing in a strange language to an imaginary being the singer believes is constantly watching with the power of life and death over him might be picked up by the cops and "Baker Acted" for at least an involuntary three-day confinement and evaluation in a psychiatric facility.

However, if a bunch of people are doing exactly the same thing together in the same room it's generally just fine and even a good thing since it is considered a religious gathering — in our case, we Jews praying in our synagogue.

There you have it. Context is everything — either you're a "nut case" or a devoted pious soul, depending on where and with whom you are.

From a certain perspective, organized religion enables and even encourages large numbers of individuals to act insanely at the same time and place. You might want to think of it as group therapy, but that's okay by me. Insane is the "default setting" for most every



■ Rabbi Bruce Diamond

human being and here's why: from bacteria and amoeba on down, everything that lives has a self-preservation reflex. Of course, we humans do as well, but we also know — for a fact — sooner or later that reflex won't prevent us from dying. So, we are all pressed between these two main "tectonic plates:" self-preservation and awareness of our own endings.

That's what we got by eating from the Tree of Knowledge, an awareness of our own mortality, which induces all kinds of aberrations and probably spawned all these religions trying to "beat the Reaper." I am convinced that our fear of death is the source of our imagined need for religion.

Our species-wide insanity comes from the inevitable friction with these two plates rubbing and sometimes grinding against each other. As a rule, organized religion is the lubricant we use to keep this friction bearable and go on with our lives, maybe even finding dollops of joy along the way.

Religion at its best keeps every

person from being torn apart inside by these two incompatible forces and, even worse, trying to relieve "waiting for the other shoe to drop" tension by rushing out to drop it ourselves on ourselves and on others too!

I regard my rabbi work as trying to keep our collective insanity under control, not exacerbating it, possibly even using it as the wind our in our sails moving us forward. It's based on understanding that we humans by nature are not "100% right in the head," so we all need to tread lightly, carefully and humbly. Religion at its best teaches that, but when the real "whack jobs" get control, it gets a lot more dangerous and crazier for everyone.

It helps believing that if we're going to have a religion, the Jewish way is a pretty safe bet. When done right, it is mostly harmless, enjoys a good time, and promotes thinking and learning.

Make peace inside; be happier.

Rabbi Bruce Diamond serves at Community Free Synagogue in Fort Myers. 🌍

I am convinced that our fear of death is the source of our imagined need for religion.

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What does B'tzelem Elohim really mean?

By Rabbi Nicole Luna

This summer, up to the High Holy Days, I'm sharing a summer sermon series on "Judaism's Ten Top Ideas." One idea we are exploring is the concept of *B'tzelem Elohim*, being made in the image of God. The idea comes from a verse in Genesis about the creation of humankind: "And God created humankind in the divine image, creating it in the image of God — creating them male and female" (Genesis 1:27).

In general, this principle teaches that because all humanity is created in the image of God, human life is holy and each person is equally valued. Each person has a spark of divinity in them and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. But we're still left with the question, what does it really mean to be made in the image of God?

In modern times, scholars connect our intellect, conscience and moral freedom



■ Rabbi Nicole Luna

with the spark of God. But in ancient times, rabbis were not afraid to connect God's image with our physical bodies. Hillel, from the first century B.C.E., said that bathing was a mitzvah, that it was similar to a loyal subject washing the statue of a king. Our body resembles and contains God's image, and we need to maintain it with honor. Bathing, taking care of our body, is respecting not only God's creation, but God's image.

It's not an easy understanding for modern Jews, but it's actually connected to and helps us make sense of another commandment, the commandment against graven images. Exodus 20:4-5 reads, "You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth."

Normally, we understand this to mean that God has no image, and any depiction of God is a distortion, but Rabbi Art

Green recounts a teaching in which Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel interpreted the commandment differently. He said, "it is precisely **because** God **has** an image that idols are forbidden. **You** are the image of God. Every human being is God's image. But the only way to shape that image is by using the medium of your entire life."

You can't **make** God's image, you can only be God's image. What an incredible responsibility!

Imagine walking around your neighborhood, Publix, or the doctor's office knowing, I am reflecting the Divine Presence right now! So, how can we best be God's image in the world? The idea of

B'tzelem Elohim is not only about our physical selves but about our actions, about what we **do** with our bodies. We're supposed to do what God does.

We learn about God's actions in the Gevurot prayer: *somech noflim, v'rofei cholim, u'matir asurim* — God supports the fallen, heals the sick, frees those who are bound up.

When we recite this prayer we're praising God's power to do these things, and we're reminding ourselves of how to be God's image in the world. We praise God by acting like God. So just as God is merciful and compassionate, so too should

we be full of mercy and compassion. We are God's image in this world. When we take care of ourselves and when we act in God's ways toward others, we live out the Jewish principle of *B'tzelem Elohim*.

Rabbi Nicole Luna serves at Temple Beth El in Fort Myers. 🌐

Each person has a spark of divinity in them and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

Rosh Hashanah

A timeless call for renewal in a fractured world

By Cantor Barry Butensky

In the Hebrew calendar, the first of Tishrei marks Rosh Hashanah, literally the "Head of the Year." Far more than a New Year's celebration, it marks the anniversary of humanity's creation and the proclamation of G-d's sovereignty over the world.

At its core, Rosh Hashanah is a day of judgment and coronation. Tradition teaches that on this day, the books of life, death and those in between are opened before the Divine King. Our deeds from the past year are weighed, not as a final verdict, but as a call to change course. This is why the 10 days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are known as the Days of Awe — time set aside for *teshuvah*, often translated as repentance but more accurately as "return" or turning back to our better selves.

Teshuvah follows a clear path: stop the harmful behavior, feel genuine regret, apologize to those we've wronged — including ourselves and G-d — and commit to doing better next time. This four-step process is practical wisdom for living with integrity.

These ancient practices speak with startling relevance as we live in an age of deep polarization, endless conflict



■ Cantor Barry Butensky

and environmental strain. Rosh Hashanah's emphasis on personal accountability offers a counter-narrative to the blame-shifting so common in public discourse. It asks each of us: Where have I contributed to the brokenness around me?

The shofar, that raw ram's horn, carries layered symbolism perfect for our moment. Its piercing sound awakens the soul from spiritual slumber. Blowing it also recalls the coronation of a king, reminding us that true power ultimately rests beyond human leaders and their failures. In a time when trust in institutions is low, the shofar calls us to align ourselves with higher values: justice, compassion and stewardship of creation.

Rosh Hashanah's food symbols reinforce this message of hope. Dipping apples in honey expresses our prayer for a sweet year ahead, even when the previous one has been bitter. Pomegranates, with their many seeds, remind us of the countless opportunities for good deeds. These simple acts at the table become profound declarations of faith that sweetness and abundance can still emerge.

For the Jewish people specifically, Rosh Hashanah arrives against the

backdrop of ongoing challenges in Israel and the diaspora. The themes of remembrance and renewal feel especially poignant when memory of loss is still fresh. Yet the holiday insists that even after profound rupture, return and rebuilding remain possible.

Beyond the Jewish community, these High Holiday themes offer wisdom for everyone navigating modernity's pressures. In a culture that prizes constant productivity and self-promotion, Rosh Hashanah demands we pause for honest self-examination. In an age of outrage and quick condemnation, it models a path of regret followed by concrete commitment to change.

The environmental dimension feels particularly urgent. Just as G-d surveyed creation and called it good, we are asked to examine our role as stewards of that same world. Climate justice, sustainable living, protecting the vulnerable from environmental harm — these become modern expressions of *teshuvah*, turning from destructive patterns toward healing ones.

Rosh Hashanah ultimately carries a message of radical possibility. Despite

our mistakes, despite the year's hardships, we can begin again. The books may be open, but they are not yet sealed. As one teaching puts it, it is not our task to finish the work, but neither are we free to desist from it.

As the shofar sounds once more this year, may its call pierce through the noise of our distracted lives. May it awaken in us the courage to stop what harms, the humility to regret sincerely, the strength to make amends and the resolve to commit to a better path — for ourselves, our communities and our shared world.

In a time that often feels hopeless,

Rosh Hashanah offers not naive optimism but grounded hope: the promise that return is always possible, that renewal can emerge from reflection and that even small acts of

turning can ripple outward in ways we cannot fully predict.

Shanah Tovah — may we all be inscribed for a year of growth, healing and sweetness.

Cantor Barry Butensky serves at Temple Beth Shalom in Cape Coral. 🌐

Despite our mistakes, despite the year's hardships, we can begin again.

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Fort Myers

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A new chapter for Temple Judea:
It is a privilege and an honor to begin serving as Executive Director of Temple Judea. I am grateful for the confidence our leadership has placed in me and look forward to working closely with our clergy, Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and congregation as we build on the strong foundation that has made Temple Judea such a special community.

I assume this role at a time when Jewish communities around the world face significant challenges. We continue to see rising antisemitism, the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation, and the growing influence of social media narratives that too often replace facts with distortion. These developments remind us of the importance of staying grounded in our Jewish values, traditions and moral principles while continuing to promote understanding, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence with all communities. They also remind us that the strength of every synagogue depends not only

on its leadership but also on the active involvement of its members. Together, we share responsibility for creating a welcoming, vibrant, secure and caring environment for everyone who walks through our doors.

Looking ahead, one of my priorities is to address the needs of our growing community.

Southwest Florida is experiencing remarkable growth, particularly in Fort Myers, Cape Coral and North Fort Myers. We are also seeing more young Jewish and Israeli families choosing to make this region their home. This presents an important opportunity for Temple Judea to expand its reach, welcome new members, strengthen Jewish life and develop programs that meet the evolving needs of individuals and families at every stage of life.

Growth, however, is not measured solely by numbers. It is reflected in the quality of the experiences we provide, the warmth with which we welcome newcomers, the educational opportunities we

offer to children and adults, the support we extend to those in need, and the sense of belonging every member feels as part of our synagogue family.

As we prepare for the High Holidays, our clergy, staff and many dedicated volunteers are already working to create meaningful and inspiring services for our congregation. We look forward to welcoming longtime members, new families, seasonal residents and guests as we gather together during this sacred season. We hope this year's High Holidays will bring our community together in large numbers as we reflect, reconnect and begin the New Year with renewed purpose and hope.

As I begin planning for the years ahead, I would very much like to hear from you. Every reader brings valuable perspectives and experiences that help shape Temple Judea's future. Whether you have ideas for new programs, suggestions to improve existing services, opportunities to deepen intercommunity engagement, educational initiatives or simply thoughts on how we can better serve our congregation, I encourage you to reach out.

Our tradition teaches us the importance of *Tikkun Olam*, our shared responsibility to repair and improve the world around us. Every act of

kindness, every volunteer, every new member welcomed, every child educated and every hand extended in support of another contributes to that mission. Together, through our synagogue and collective efforts, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others and in the community we proudly serve.

I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming weeks and months and to working together as we write the next chapter in Temple Judea's history.

ברב־עם ברב־עם סדרת־מלך
(משלי י"ד, כ"ח)

"In the multitude of the people is the glory of the sovereign."

Beruchim Tihyu!
Jackie Eldan 

About Jackie Eldan
Jackie is a former diplomat for the State of Israel, entrepreneur and business executive with extensive experience in community leadership, economic development, international relations and public-private partnerships.

TEMPLE JUDEA - 5787/2026

BS'D



HIGH HOLIDAYS

Start the Year with Purpose

ROSH HASHANA EVE
Friday, September 11
6:30 pm - Evening Service

ROSH HASHANA DAY 1
Saturday, September 12
9:30 am: Shaḥarit Service
9:30 am - 1:30 pm: Babysitting and children's programming

ROSH HASHANA 2ND EVE
Saturday, September 12
6:30 pm - Evening Service

ROSH HASHANA DAY 2
Sunday, September 18
9:30 am: Shaḥarit Service
9:30 am: Babysitting and children's programming
11:30: Shofar Service
1:00 pm: Tashlich

YOM KIPPUR EVE
Sunday, September 20
6:30 pm: Kol Nidrei
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm: Babysitting

YOM KIPPUR DAY
Monday, September 21
9:30 am: Shaḥarit Service
9:30 am - 2:00 pm: Babysitting and children's programming
11:30 am: Yizkor

YOM KIPPUR MINḤA
Monday, September 21
4:00 pm: Special Program
5:00 pm: Minḥa Service
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm: Babysitting and children's programming
6:30 pm: Neilah
8:00 pm: Havdalah



TEMPLE JUDEA

Services led by Rabbi David Arias and Leo Dworsky.
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Temple Judea is busy in August. Please join us!

Important dates

The first day of Preschool is Tuesday, Aug. 11.

Musical Shabbat with Rabbi David Arias is Friday, Aug. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

Shabbat B'Kef is Aug. 21, and Shabbat for young families kids, our Sukkot event, is Sept. 27.

Religious school resumes Aug. 23. For information and to register, contact

the office at 239-433-0201 or email teh-ila@tjswfl.org.

Nashim Circle's events are a beautiful way to come together. The next event is challah baking on Friday, Aug. 28 at 10 a.m. Registration and additional information is online at tjswfl.org. You can also call our office at 239-433-0201 for more information.

Preparing for the High Holidays, the Havdalah and Selichot Musical service with Rabbi David Arias is Saturday, Sept. 5 at 8 p.m.

Regularly scheduled events and programs

Temple Judea continues to accept food donations for the Cadkin Foundation Food Pantry at Jewish Federation of Lee & Charlotte Counties. There are collection envelopes near the front door for contactless monetary or gift card contributions. Contributions may be mailed. Please call the office to ensure your contribution has been received.

Temple Judea is conducting in person services with an online Zoom option. Synagogue members can use the Zoom ID and password as published in our weekly megillah. Non-local residents may contact the synagogue for information.

Friday evening Shabbat services at 6:30 p.m. Saturday morning Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. Kiddush luncheons are served every Shabbat. If you are interested in sponsoring a Kiddush, please contact JoAnn Lewin at jalewin2@aol.com. We would love to see you in person or via Zoom.

On break

The following events and programs are currently on break and will resume in the fall.

- Rabbi Arias' adult education classes
- Morning Minyan Monday, 9 a.m.
- Co-President Jan Klein's Monday morning availability at Temple Judea, 11 a.m.–3 p.m. 🌐

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Weekly Sabbath Eve dinners at the synagogue resume Friday, Sept. 4, 6 p.m. Bring a non-dairy dish, side, salad, dessert or wine. *Qabbalat Shabat* begins at 7 p.m. and will be available via Zoom. For easy access to the CFS Zoom room, visit the website at fortmyerssynagogue.com.

Torah Study with the rabbi continues each Sabbath morning, 9:30-11 a.m., only via Zoom. Now in its 30th year, this is Southwest Florida's longest continuing weekly Adult Jewish Education program.

Rosh Hashanah worship begins at 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 11 and continues

the following morning, starting at 10 a.m. *Tashlikh* and shofar sounding and the annual rabbi's open house begins on the second day of the holiday at 2 p.m. at the rabbi's home in The Forest (7210 Falcon Crest).

Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur Eve worship begins at 7 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 20. The following morning worship starts at 10 a.m. *Minhah* including *yizkor* continues at 5 p.m.. A light dairy and fish break-the-fast is served after *ne'ilah*.

Days of Awe worship is in our main sanctuary and will be available via Zoom. Everything is always free and

all are welcome. Appropriate attire is requested.

Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D. has led the congregation since its founding 22 years ago. Read about CFS in Kerry M. Olitzsky's "New Membership & Financial Alternatives for the American Synagogue: From Traditional Dues to Fair Share to Gifts from the Heart."

All events are on the Unity Campus (1112 Ranchette Road). To learn more about CFS, visit the website (fortmyerssynagogue.com) or email synfree@comcast.net. 🌐

TEMPLE BETH EL Fort Myers

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Florida's heat will not slow us down at Temple Beth El.

Upcoming programs and events

Rabbi Luna continues her class, "Exploring the Prayerbook," live and at the Temple on Aug. 5, 12, 19 and 26.

Rabbi Luna's Summer Sermon Series, "Judaism's Top 10 Ideas," continues as we honor those with birthdays and anniversaries during services on Aug. 7.

Our Ahavah group will hold a Havdalah Ceremony on Saturday, Aug. 8 at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome.

All are invited to light Shabbat candles for services on Friday, Aug. 14 at 7:30 p.m. The following morning, we will celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of Zara Luna-Bord as she is called to the Torah. Congratulations to Joe Bord and Rabbi Luna on their daughter's big day! Mazel tov to Zara!

Don't forget to order "Honey from the Heart" and send sweet New Year greetings while supporting TBE. Go to orthoney.com and mark Temple Beth El

of Fort Myers as your organization. The deadline for free shipping is Aug. 16.

Our Sisterhood's most fun and delicious monthly event is Thursday, Aug. 20 at 12:30 p.m. An email will be sent for you to register. Sisterhood or Temple membership is not a requirement, but please register so we have a good count. On Friday, Aug. 21, join us for a delicious Community Shabbat Dinner at 5:30 p.m. preceding our Nachas and Good News Shabbat at 7:30 p.m.

It's back to school on Sunday, Aug. 16 with Religious School's first day. Welcome back!

It's not too early to start thinking about and planning for the High Holidays. We will have a wonderful S'lichot experience on Sept. 5 at 8 p.m. This will include a Havdalah service with dessert reception — as we have each year — and Erev Rosh Hashanah is Sept. 11. Watch for our annual magazine in your mailbox!

Our next Mitzvah Mission To Cuba is Dec. 16-20. To learn more, click on Dec. 16 on the TBE calendar, available at templebethel.com/calendar.

A community invitation

TBE is launching a Holocaust preservation project to ensure that memories carried within our community are not lost to time. For additional information, please email info@templebethel.com. Stories will be collected privately, thoughtfully written and shared back with each participant for approval before being preserved in our Temple library.

Recurring Temple Beth El programs

- Non-perishable food items and all your plastic bags can be dropped off in the temple lobby shopping cart and the plastic bag containers whenever the building is open.

- All are welcome Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. for Torah study via Zoom.

- Tot Shabbat will resume Sept. 25 at 6 p.m.

- Hispanophone is the fourth Wednesday of every month at noon via Zoom.

- History & Heritage of Our People is Aug. 18, 7 p.m., via Zoom.

- Shabbat services are open to all: Fridays at 7:30pm, live in the sanctuary, on Zoom, and streaming on Facebook. When a Shabbat dinner is scheduled, services will start one hour earlier at 6:30 p.m.

Jews by Choice

This group meets online on the last

Thursday each month from 8 to 9 p.m. Discuss the delights and challenges of converting and reconnecting. Recent converts, those exploring conversion, and Jews seeking to reconnect with their roots are encouraged to attend. Contact Dawn Wineinger at dawntw10@gmail.com.

12-Step Recovery Group

This group meets every Saturday at 11 a.m. via Zoom. Experience the 12-Steps from a Jewish perspective, seeking a path to recovery through Judaic spiritual principles. We are a fellowship of people who are recovering from alcohol, drugs and other addictions such as food, gambling, sex, shopping, etc. The book we use is "Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery" by Rabbi Olitzky and Stuart Copans, M.D., second edition.

There's always something happening here, and our members make it happen. To learn more about Temple Beth El and our special events, Shabbat services and recurring programs, visit our website: templebethel.com. Follow us on Facebook @TempleBethElFortMyers and on Instagram @templebethelfortmyers. You can always contact the office at 239-433-0018.

Many folks will be traveling during these summer months, and we wish everyone safe travels. Temple Beth El ... where everyone matters. 🌐



CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA Fort Myers

(239) 433-7708 • www.Chabadswf.org

Members of the Southwest Florida Jewish community recently traveled with Rabbi Yitzchok and Shani Minkowicz of Chabad Lubavitch of Southwest Florida on a meaningful one-day Gimmel Tammuz Soul Journey to New York.

The day was filled with inspiration, prayer and Jewish unity as participants visited the Ohel, the resting place of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory. There, they offered personal prayers and prayed for the well-being of their

families, friends, the State of Israel, and the entire Jewish people.

The group also visited the Rebbe's historic synagogue and world headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, where they experienced the vibrant atmosphere that continues to inspire Jewish life around the world. The day concluded with a wonderful meal together at a kosher restaurant, giving participants an opportunity to reflect on the powerful experiences they had shared.

Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz remarked, "Gimmel Tammuz reminds us that true



leadership and inspiration continue to live on through acts of goodness, kindness, Torah and mitzvot. It was deeply moving to see our community come together for a day of heartfelt prayer, connection and renewed commitment to making our world a brighter place."

The journey left participants uplifted and inspired, returning home with a renewed sense of purpose, faith and connection to their Jewish heritage.

Join us

Please join us for prayers, Torah Study, ladies events and classes with Shani, men's events and family events.

Daily prayers and Kaddish

- Sunday, 8 a.m.
- Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.
- Saturday, 10 a.m.
- Evenings, 7 p.m.

Torah Study

- Kabbalah Class: Saturday, 9 a.m.

Ladies Torah Study with Shani

- Torah & Tea: Monday, 7 p.m.

For more updates, please visit Chabadswf.org.

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TEMPLE SHALOM Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands

(941) 625-2116 • www.templeshalomfl.com

Temple Shalom, the center of Jewish life in Charlotte County, believes in having fun in the summer.

Members gathered for lunch entertainment provided by Tom Chute, a noted New England broadcaster, actor and entertainer. Tom now performs

on Saturdays at Remy's Restaurant in Lakewood Ranch. We were lucky to be able to schedule him at Temple Shalom.

On July 5, dozens of congregation members gathered for an Independence Day party.

A (kosher, of course) hot dog barbecue is planned for Aug. 15 at noon. Please join us and let us know you are coming by calling 516-635-9871.

The community is invited to join Rabbi Aaron Sataloff and the Temple Shalom congregation for High Holy Day services. Details can be found on the Federation calendar. Here are the key events:

- Sept. 11: Erev Rosh Hashanah, 7:30 p.m.
- Sept. 12: Rosh Hashanah, 10 a.m.
- Sept. 20: Kol Nidre, 7:30 p.m.

- Sept. 21: Yom Kippur, 10 a.m.

Rosh Hashanah luncheon and Yom Kippur break-the-fast reservation information will follow in next month's edition of *L'Chayim*.

Social, educational and worship events at Temple Shalom in Port Charlotte, including Shabbat services held every Friday at 7:30 p.m., are open to all.

Temple Shalom is located at 23190 Utica Avenue in Port Charlotte. Visit our website for more information: templeshalomfl.com. ☎

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM Cape Coral

(239) 772-4555 • www.templebethshalomcc.org

Summertime brings back fond memories of lazy sunny days, beaches, camp fires, picnics and travel. My parents were teachers and had the whole summer off, so they bought a 16-foot travel trailer, and we wandered across the country visiting national parks, rural towns and big cities. We had



Cantor in white

no deadlines, few cares, little money and lots of fun. It never dawned on me how special that time was. At the end of August, we would return home, go back to school and start getting ready for the holidays.

Getting ready for the holidays meant shopping for a new outfit, starting Sunday school and looking forward to seeing people we hadn't seen all year. While I am sure that the High Holy Days were important religiously for our parents, for us kids, it meant hanging out on the synagogue steps with all of our Jewish friends. Even better, the car dealerships were a block away and the new models had just come out. We had to go check them out!

In the years since, I have come to appreciate the beauty of the holidays and the religious significance, but what I now realize is that in those carefree days as a child outside the temple I was learning the joy of being part of the Jewish community. The joy of being with people who share my values and my heritage.

At Temple Beth Shalom, we see each other all of the time so we look forward to greeting new visitors. We come to services regularly, we share dinners and brunches, watch movies, read and discuss books, have



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meaningful conversations about life, morals, ethics and, of course, family. We share the comfort of being with people who care about us and understand us.

I was well into adulthood before I realized the holidays don't just happen by themselves. There is a lot of work that goes into getting everything ready. We need to clean the Torah covers, change everything on the bima from blue to white, and polish the silver. We need to rehearse the music, give out honors, write speeches, publish greetings, and do so much more. Much of that work is a team effort and there is joy in that too. The satisfaction that we all feel when the services flow and we can pray and renew our commitment to Judaism makes everything worthwhile.

Reflecting on the summer

I don't mean to give the impression that all we do all summer is work. We also put on a dinner theater with a play written by one of our members, and her daughter held a Fourth of July barbecue. We had a musical tribute to the nation's 250th

birthday, a naming ceremony for members who had never gotten a Hebrew name, danced to accordion music at our one shabbats, among so much more.

An open invitation

At Temple Beth Shalom we like to say that we are the home of joyous Judaism. We invite you to visit us and experience yourself the wonderful community we have here. Our Friday night shabbat services and Saturday morning services and discussions are traditional but never dull. Our spiritual leader, Cantor Barry Butensky makes them meaningful and fun at the same time.

We invite you to join us Sunday, Aug. 2 from 3 to 5 p.m. for an open house. Meet our Cantor and our members. If you have children, make sure you meet our fabulous religious school teachers, check out the classroom and participate in some arts and crafts. There will be wine and cheese for the adults and ice cream and cookies for everyone.

We can't wait to meet you! ☎

**BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS
REFORM**

Friday evening services at 7pm at the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ,
2050 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel
Spiritual Leader and Cantor:
Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer
President: Janice Block Chaddock
Vice Presidents:
Sandra Teger, Annette Pacyga
Email: batyamsanibel@gmail.com
Website: batyam.org
Services: October through April
For more information on our service times and programs, please write to batyamsanibel@gmail.com or PO Box 84, Sanibel, FL 33957

**CHABAD
OF BONITA SPRINGS/ESTERO
ORTHODOX**

24611 S. Tamiami Trail
Bonita Springs, FL 34135-7024
Rabbi Mendy Greenberg
Phone: 239-949-6900
Web site: JewishBonita.com
Services: Saturday at 10:00 a.m. followed by a Kiddush

**CHABAD JEWISH CENTER
OF CAPE CORAL
ORTHODOX**

1716 Cape Coral Pkwy. W.
Cape Coral, FL 33914
Rabbi Yossi Labkowski
Phone: 239-963-4770
E-mail: info@chabadcape.com
Web site: chabadcape.com
Sunday - Friday 8:00 A.M Shacharit
Friday Evening 5:30 P.M.
Saturday Kabbalah Class 9:00 A.M.
Shabbat Services 9:30 A.M.
Kiddush Luncheon 12:00 P.M.
Hebrew School of the Arts Sunday 10:00 A.M - 12:30 P.M.
JLI Classes Monday 7:00 P.M.
Torah Study Tuesday 7:30 P.M.
Women's Weekly Class Wednesday 11:30 A.M.

**CHABAD OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY
ORTHODOX**

424 W Henry St
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
Rabbi Simon Jacobson
Phone: 941-833-3381
E-mail: chabadpg@yahoo.com
Web site: chabadofcharlottecounty.com
Services: Saturday at 10:00 a.m. followed by a kiddush
Torah study: Wednesday at 8:00 p.m.

**CHABAD LUBAVITCH
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
ORTHODOX**

5620 Winkler Road
Fort Myers, FL 33919
Rabbi Yitzchok Minkowicz
Phone: 239-433-7708 • Fax: 481-9109
E-mail: rabbi@chabadswf.org
Web site: chabadswf.org
Services: Friday 5:15 p.m.;
Saturday Kabbalah
class 9:00 a.m.; Shacharit 10:00 a.m.;
Kiddush at noon
Minyan: Monday & Thursday 7:00 a.m.

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The Unity Campus 11120 Ranchette Road
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E-mail: synfree@comcast.net
Web site: fortmyerssynagogue.com
Sabbath Eve Dinner every Friday at 6:00 PM followed by worship at 7:00 PM
Torah Study on Zoom every Sabbath morning from 9:30-11:00 AM
Meeting Room ID: 527 117 7864
Passcode: 435419
Rabbi Bruce Diamond, D.D.
Cantoral soloist Traci Pavel

CHAVURAT SHALOM OF SWFL

CHAVURA
PO Box 722
Sanibel, FL 33957
Chavuratshalom@gmail.com
Web site: chavuratshalomofsouthwestflorida.org
Cheryl Fulmer, President
Shabbat services - 7:30 p.m. every Friday
Schmooze - 7:30 p.m. 1st Tuesday
Torah Talk - 7:30 p.m. 2nd Tuesday
Current events - 7:30 p.m. 3rd Tuesday
Speakers - 7:30 p.m. 4th Tuesday

**TEMPLE BETH EL
REFORM**

16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi Nicole Luna
E-mail: rabbiluna@templebethel.com
Learning Tree Preschool Director: Ronni Vega
Ronnilearningtree@gmail.com
President: Michael Altman
Email: President@templebethel.com
Phone: 239-433-0018
Office Manager: Karen Kagan
Email: manager@templebethel.com
Web site: templebethel.com
Shabbat services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Torah study 9:00 a.m. Saturday
Religious School: 9:30 a.m.- Noon Sunday
Mazel Tots (0-5 yrs. old). Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Religious school coordinator: Allison Fego
Religiousschool@templebethel.com
Judaica Gift Gallery
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**TEMPLE BETH SHALOM
REFORM**

702 S.E. 24th Ave., Cape Coral, FL 33990
President: Helene Glocer
Phone: 239-772-4555
Spiritual leader: Cantor Barry Butensky
Email: templebethshalomcommunications@gmail.com
Web site: templebethshalomcc.org
Services: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Saturday morning Torah Service/Torah study twice monthly at 10:00 am
Enrichment night every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.
Shabbat 10:30 a.m.

**TEMPLE JUDEA
CONSERVATIVE**

14486 A&W Bulb Road
Fort Myers, FL 33908
Rabbi David Arias
E-mail: rabbi@tjswfl.org
Co-Presidents: Jan Klein & James Mann
E-mail: giaof3@gmail.com
Religious School Coordinator:
Tehila Cherubino
E-mail: tehila@tjswfl.org
Preschool Director: Suki Kelly
templejudeapreschool@gmail.com
Phone: 239-433-0201 • Fax: 239-433-3371
E-mail: tjswfl@gmail.com
Web site: tjswfl.org
Services: 6:15 p.m. Friday and 9:30 a.m. Saturday Minyan: 9:00 a.m. Monday Religious School: Sun. 9:30 a.m. - noon; Wed. 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Early childhood education: Preschool, M-F, ages 18 months-5 years;
"Mommy & Me," 12 months-2 years
Affiliated: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

**TEMPLE SHALOM CHARLOTTE
HARBOR AND THE GULF ISLANDS
REFORM**

23190 Utica Ave., P.O. Box 494675
Port Charlotte, FL 33949-4675
President: Judith Migdol
Phone: 941-625-2116
E-mail: Shalompc06@gmail.com
Web site: templeshalomfl
Organizations: Sisterhood; Brotherhood
Affiliated: Union for Reform Judaism

**SHALOM LIFE CENTER
TRANS DENOMINATIONAL**

Rabbi Lawrence Dermer
Phone: 239-218-3433
Email: info@shalomlifecenter.org
Web site: shalomlifecenter.org

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- AIPAC
(American Israel Public Affairs Committee):
Lynda Adler & Ian Noy - 617-676-7567
- AJC (American Jewish Committee):
Brian Lipton - 941-365-4955
- Anti-Defamation League: 561-988-2900
- B'Nai B'rith International: 941-302-4500
- Chabad Jewish Student Life at FGCU
Rabbi Mendel Gordon - 347-452-0489
mendelgordon@gmail.com
- Chevra Kadisha: Taryn Sasser
- Generations of the Shoah SWFL: 263-9200
- Hadassah - Collier/Lee Chapter:
Joyce Toub - 518-330-1559
- Hazak 55+ Chapter:
Joyce Rosinger - 239-437-1566
- Israel Bonds: Regional Headquarters:
800-622-8017
- Jewish Community Services:
239-481-4449
- Jewish National Fund:
Joshua Mellits, Director, Western Florida
941-462-1330 ext. 865
Memorial Tree Planting in Israel
1-800-542-8733
- Jewish War Veterans:
Post 400: Commander
Harvey Charter - 239-246-3151
- Mikvah Bashka of Southwest Florida:
Nechamie Minkowicz - 239-822-2784

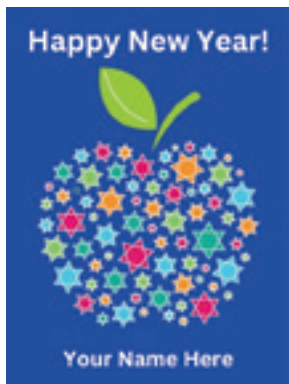
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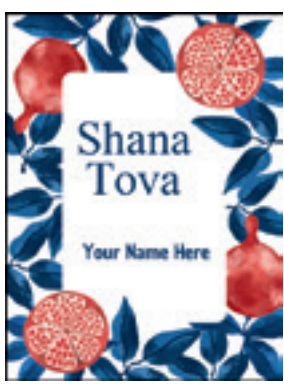
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