



## Sustaining the Jewish Community Through Challenging Times

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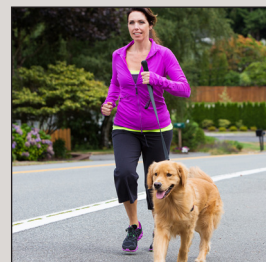
### PJ LIBRARY CONNECTS WITH PASSOVER AND SPRING

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### WORKING FROM HOME AND STAYING HEALTHY

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## Vibrant Community Comes Together

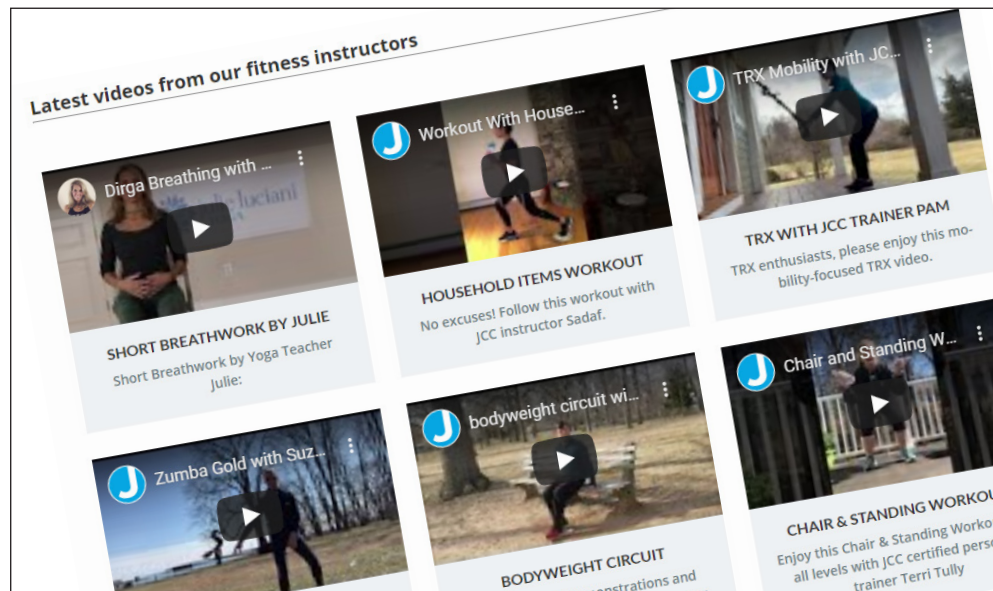
No, unfortunately we didn't wake up on April 1 to find out that this has all been some type of cruel joke. Yes, we are living in a new and hopefully temporary reality that has us feeling like we are in freefall; we are fearful for that which is most precious: our health and the health of our loved ones.

While many things are out of our control, ensuring that our Jewish community is cared for and supported is not. In fact, we began preparing long before we found ourselves asked to stay in our homes, knowing that people might become isolated due to illness or caring for a loved one with illness. This is what led us to create our outreach effort. We are proudly connecting with 10,000 households in our community, reaching out day after day, and week after week. We will continue to reach out to offer kind words of support and friendship as we match any needs to the services required. This is what it means to be a part of a caring community.

Over the past four years, I have taken strength from the incredible fortitude of the Jewish professionals and volunteers that power our community. We have overcome many challenges and found our way to create an even stronger future built on our past. And we will again.

Just as during the crisis of the fire that devastated our JCC building, our staff and incredible volunteers have stepped forward to meet the challenge of the day. This is a healthcare crisis and an economic crisis, and our community is responding. The boards of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation stepped into action to create the COVID-19 Response/Maimonides Fund to ensure that everyone who needs help for essential human needs—food, medicine, mental health, medical bills and housing relief—will be supported. Immediately, Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven and The Towers at Tower Lane each received \$27,000 as frontline providers of critical support to the vulnerable. Funds will continue to be raised and distributed as the needs persist with every dollar raised spent for those who need help.

At the same time, funds raised through



our Annual Campaign have been deployed to help with urgent needs in our sister communities of Afula/Gilboa in Israel. As part of the Southern New England Consortium, we helped to purchase essential equipment for Emek Hospital. The consortium partners are providing food to the elderly and needed sanitary equipment for the Arab villages in the Gilboa. They are also supporting the efforts of the Haifa Rape Crisis Center as some women find themselves homebound with their rapist. Our brothers and sisters throughout the globe that are encountering this horrible pandemic are also being helped by our partners The Jewish Agency for Israel, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and World ORT.

Our professionals have been asked to turn on a dime to deliver quality content across departments to all age groups virtually without prior experience. They are exceeding expectations, resulting in community connections at fitness classes, recreational events, Jewish speaker panels, book talks, game nights and so much more. The JCC has opened all of its programming to the entire community. I hope everyone takes the opportunity to enjoy the offerings and connect with others. I must admit that doing Zumba in my house where no one is seeing me wiggles is a bit freeing for me!

We will all have our moments during this crisis when long-held plans may be upended or holidays must be celebrated

in new ways. This time has tested our creativity, or may have left us feeling lonely or isolated. Our community is here for you. If you are struggling and need some help, please call our hotline at (475) 800-8010 and we will assist you.

The Greater New Haven Jewish community is vibrant, strong and incredibly creative. I am inspired on a daily basis by the many new ways our clergy have found to keep their congregations connected and by the volunteers who continue to come forward to offer to help others. I am blown away by the heroic efforts by the professionals at Jewish Family Service and The Towers. I salute the incredible educators at Ezra Academy and Southern Connecticut Hebrew Academy as well as our many religious schools and JTE. They have taken learning online in fun, innovative ways. We continue to be a beautiful mosaic of Jewish life. Together we will persevere and overcome this horrible pandemic.

I hope that your Passover is filled with joy and the comfort of ritual even if it happens in a totally different way than we could have imagined. May we experience redemption at the end of this story as we overcome the COVID-19.

Wishing you and those you care about strength, good health and a zissen Passover.

*Judy*

## SHALOM NEW HAVEN

SHALOM NEW HAVEN is published six times per year and delivered free of charge to the Greater New Haven Jewish community by the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven.

**COPY DEADLINES**  
Copy deadlines for the upcoming Shalom New Haven issues are:  
 • Apr. 24 for May online issue  
 • May 22 for June online issue  
 • May 29 for July/August issue  
 • July 31 for September/October issue  
 • Sept. 30 for November/December issue  
 • Nov. 30 for January/February 2021 issue  
 • Jan. 29 for March/April issue

**SUBMISSIONS**  
To submit an article or photo, please email [shalomnh@jewishnewhaven.org](mailto:shalomnh@jewishnewhaven.org). Please include your contact information when submitting.

Space is limited; submission does not guarantee publication. All articles are subject to approval by the editorial board.

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## A New Collaborative Effort for Those on the Front Lines



Alarmed by the rise of COVID-19 cases in Connecticut and the lack of access to personal protective equipment (PPE), the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven in collaboration with Madison residents Bob and Amy Stefanowski, have created Masks for Heroes. This special project is delivering needed protective surgical masks to hospitals, nursing homes, physicians and first responders throughout Connecticut. Masks for Heroes is a grassroots, volunteer effort that, since Monday, March 30, sourced, bought and distributed nearly 500,000 protective masks to hospital workers, police, fire, nursing homes and other caregivers in over 125 towns across the state.

The need is urgent. Masks and other PPE are running out faster than supplies can be sourced. Masks for Heroes was founded to leverage the resources of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven and the broader Connecticut philanthropic community to expand fundraising and support distribution of the masks. Each mask is sourced at \$0.75, a low price in comparison to the going rates of up to \$2. One-hundred percent of any tax-deductible gift will go to support medical staff and caregivers throughout the state.

“As citizens of the State of Connecticut, we are called upon at this moment to do all we can to help save lives by stopping the spread of COVID-19; we are proud to partner with Bob and Amy Stefanowski, who are truly inspiring community leaders,” said Judy Alperin, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven. “Amy and I are determined to do everything in our power to help these first responder heroes stay safe and healthy,” said Bob Stefanowski, co-founder of Masks for Heroes.

To learn more and make a tax-deductible gift, visit [masksforheroesct.org](http://masksforheroesct.org). Check payable to Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven can be mailed to 360 Amity Road, Woodbridge CT 06525, Attention: Masks for Heroes.

# Donate to

# The COVID-19 Response/Maimonides Fund

because Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh La'zeh  
“All Jews are responsible one for another”

The Jewish Federation and the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven have launched the COVID-19 Response/Maimonides Fund, seeding it with \$108,000 to support immediate needs of those most vulnerable. Distributions of \$27,000 each to Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven and The Towers at Tower Lane were immediately released to help with the urgent needs in our community.

Your support of this fund will enable us to make grants to our Jewish agencies and synagogues to help provide critical services related to food insecurity, unemployment, and mental health support.

We are facing unprecedented times. United as one Jewish community we will meet the rising needs in our community and overcome the great challenge before us.

[www.jewishnewhaven.org/response](http://www.jewishnewhaven.org/response)



# 8 Steps to Working from Home and Staying Healthy

by Susan Donovan  
 Director of Fitness & Wellness Services  
 JCC of Greater New Haven

With all its perks and pluses, working from home can also present some unique challenges when it comes to keeping a healthy lifestyle. Your home office can make it difficult to stay fit when temptations arise from handy access to a pantry or refrigerator, or to an almost too flexible schedule.

## HERE ARE SOME WAYS THAT CAN HELP YOU WHEN YOU ARE WORKING FROM HOME:

- 1.** Create a routine. We all thrive on routines. Try to get up and ready for your day just as if you were leaving for work. Schedule your lunch break and quitting time, allowing for short activity breaks.
- 2.** Wear casual or workout clothes and sneakers. Dressing this way can make you feel like moving more. When you're dressed for the part, you are more likely to act it out.
- 3.** Set a timer. Make it a point to stand up and walk around, or take a short stretch break once every hour. Studies have shown that sitting for long periods of time may decrease your metabolism, and can be harmful to your body especially your back and neck. Making it a priority to get up and move once per hour can also help boost emotional and mental health.
- 4.** Set boundaries. It's easy to fall into a pattern of overworking. There's no commute and no co-workers to remind you it is lunchtime; it's easy to get wrapped up at your desk without stopping until the sun goes down.
- 5.** Try not to eat at your desk! Eating mindlessly while your attention is on your work will distract you from your body's fullness signals; this, in turn, can lead to overeating. Leave your workspace to eat at your designated meal space, and enjoy your food and the break.



- 6.** Stock your kitchen well. Healthy, fresh foods that are easy to prepare for lunch and snacks will help. Limiting the supplies of empty calorie sweets and snack foods will make it easier to avoid the temptation.
- 7.** Get outside! It's good for the mind, body and soul. Studies show that being out in nature can boost health and decrease stress. Whether you take a walk on your lunch break or spend a conference call walking instead of sitting, simply stepping outside of your workspace a few times per day can reap good health benefits.
- 8.** Stay connected with others. When you're working from home, especially while maintaining social distancing, it's easy to feel isolated and alone. Reach out to others, whether it's a work buddy or a friend, to connect with through social media. Join a virtual workout or yoga class. Find that sense of camaraderie knowing that we are all in this together. With a little compassion and connection, we will all come through this stronger than ever!

For more information on joining a virtual class or an online healthy coaching session, contact [susand@jccnh.org](mailto:susand@jccnh.org).

# A Different Kind of Passover for 2020



by Dr. Jeffrey Hoos  
 Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven President

Dear friends and family,

Who would have thought that last year when I wrote my Passover message, I spoke about anxiety about the Matza Ball? That anxiety is long forgotten when compared to what we are facing now with the COVID-19 virus. Now the "enemy" is unknown and like nothing most of us have faced in our lives. And that makes us so very anxious.

It is the unknown of who will get sick and, if sick, will they live? When can we get back to work and be able to pay our bills? When will we be able to get back our "normal" lives? These difficult questions are understandable; if we

had answers, we would all feel better. I personally think about this in a different way so as to make sense of our modern day plague at Passover time.

In their Switched book, authors Chip and Dan Heath include this one-line summary: "Switch is about how you can lead and encourage changes of human behavior, both in yourself and in your organization, by focusing on the three forces that influence it: the rider, the elephant and the path." It is a story about how to change human behavior, an important question for leaders in organizations and individuals who may suffer from their bad habits. In order to address the problem, the authors looked at three driving forces behind behavior change: the rational and emotional sides, and the environment in which the change is supposed to happen. The story is told about your brain as a rational rider trying to direct an emotional, stubborn elephant. The elephant wants to go its own way because it has a deep need to eat and satisfy its craving.

The hungry elephant sees a bunch of bananas. No matter what the rider (your brain) does—including yelling, kicking and poking—the elephant wants and will get the bananas. What does this symbolize? Emotion will always win over the rational behavior. Just because we are smart and have knowledge does not mean we don't make foolish choices.

I have seen in my career people who have had heart attacks and lost voice boxes yet still smoke.

Now we are supposed to stay in our houses, practice social distancing, and wash and disinfect everything. How is it possible to do all of this and maintain our sanity?

We have to recognize that together we can do this. We have to remember that strength comes from the collective. We can "tame" our personal elephants and our rational thoughts to control our behavior by trying to maintain schedules, exercise, eat well and recognize that the feelings we have are normal.

It helps to know that our lay leaders, our Jewish professionals, are working hard to help our community. If you are having trouble, reach out to our hotline at (475) 800-8010. We have also created an emergency COVID-19 fund that needs your help to support our Jewish community and agencies in this time of need.

Yes, Passover will be different this year. We will come out of this. We will have learned some real lessons about ourselves, our community and our world. I know the journey will not be easy and harder for some than others, but we can do this.

Betsy and I wish you strength, health and a kosher Passover.

Sincerely,  
 Dr. Jeffrey Hoos

## BRING-YOUR-OWN-PLATE: Find Your Last-minute Place at a Virtual Seder



Several local congregations and online resources are e-gathering on the second night of Passover on April 9. Reach out to them to join in!

—6:30 P.M. TEMPLE EMANUEL OF GREATER NEW HAVEN'S Rabbi Michael Farbman is hosting the seder. Visit [tegnh.org/2020/02/27/2nd-night-passover-seder-5780-at-te-thursday-april-9-at-630-pm](http://tegnh.org/2020/02/27/2nd-night-passover-seder-5780-at-te-thursday-april-9-at-630-pm) for more information.

—7 P.M. CONGREGATION MISHKAN ISRAEL'S annual tradition will continue online with a seder led by Rabbi Immerman and Cantor Giglio. Visit [cmihamden.org/online-events-calendar/cmis-second-night-community-seder](http://cmihamden.org/online-events-calendar/cmis-second-night-community-seder) for details.

—7 P.M. JEWBELONG is hosting what may be thousands of people coming together online. They will all be using the same free JewBelong Haggadah (find at [flipsnack.com/jewbelong/jewbelonghaggadah/full-view.html](http://flipsnack.com/jewbelong/jewbelonghaggadah/full-view.html)). There will be celebrities and musicians leading the seder. Find out more at [jewbelong.com/holidays/passover](http://jewbelong.com/holidays/passover).

## JCC DAY CAMPS

**2020 CAMP SEASON**  
6/22 - 8/21

**CAMP YOUR WAY**

- Pick the weeks you want
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From Branford, Cheshire, Bridgeport & points in between.

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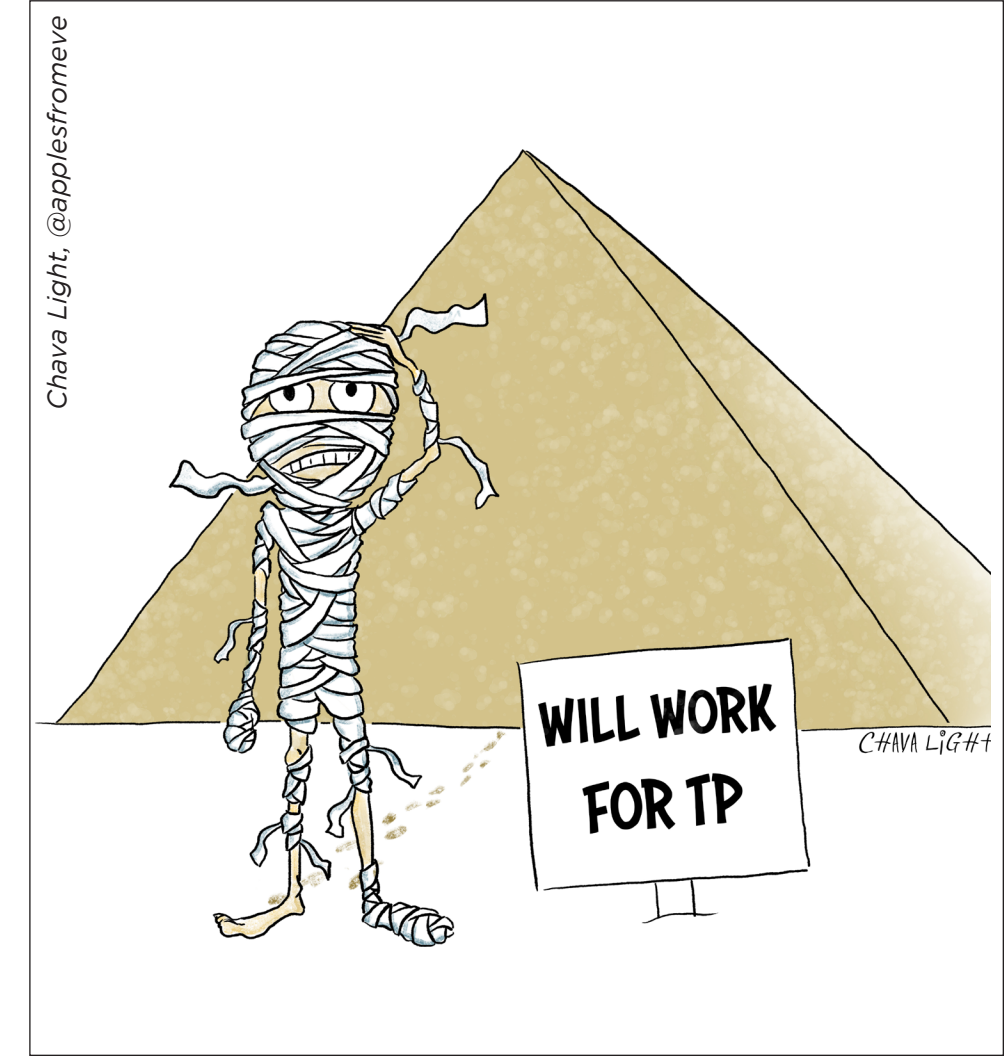
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## COVID-19 Fund, PLUS Annual Grants & Scholarships/2020

### COVID-19 FUND

#### THE JEWISH FEDERATION AND JEWISH FOUNDATION OF GREATER NEW HAVEN COVID-19 RESPONSE/MAIMONIDES FUND

Monies from this fund will be deployed in two ways:

- 1. Emergency grants to our Jewish agencies and synagogues to allow them to meet increased and immediate community needs such as food insecurity, unemployment and mental health needs.**
- 2. To provide direct assistance to individuals, families and households in need. Monies will be made available to and paid to an agency or synagogue, upon the request of the agency head or rabbi. No application or names are required. Requests will be made by a rabbi or agency head to the fund, on behalf of person in need. In the past, these monies have been distributed to assist with rent, medical bills and emergent needs related to unemployment, health and food insecurity. We expect this fund to receive many requests in the upcoming days, weeks and months; we want to be able to meet all of those requests. This fund has already made \$54,000 in emergency grants to Jewish Family Service (for food assistance and social services) and to The Towers at Tower Lane (for food assistance).**

### GRANTS

To apply for any Jewish Foundation grant, go to [jewishnewhaven.org/grants](http://jewishnewhaven.org/grants) for online applications and descriptions.

#### FOR THE JEWISH ELDERLY

There is \$130,000 available in grants for the Jewish elderly. These monies are from funds from the Jewish Home Building Fund Corp, which were recently transferred to the Jewish Foundation. This will be an annual grants initiative. This year, the awards will be made on a rolling basis. **The first applications may be submitted beginning on Monday, April 13, and we will accept applications until midnight on June 30, 2020.**

#### SECURITY GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR SYNAGOGUES, CAMPS AND DAY SCHOOL

These grants are made possible thanks to the generosity of the Arthur Eder Family Fund at the Jewish Foundation and are made in memory of Arthur and Yvette Eder. **We ask that you apply by August 3, 2020.**

#### WOMEN OF VISION SOCIETY GRANTS

The Jewish Foundation's Women of Vision Society has been helping women and girls in the Greater New Haven area and Israel for over 20 years. This endowment, created by 100 founding members in our community, has tackled issues from domestic violence and health to acculturation and spirituality. The endowment has more than doubled its membership and giving since its creation. Since its inception, Women of Vision has disbursed over \$180,000 to help seed and sustain critical programming and services for women and girls. Grant awards typically range between \$500 and \$3,000 for qualifying programs. **Due May 29.**

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS FOR JEWISH EDUCATORS

**Due September 20.**

### SCHOLARSHIPS

To apply for any Jewish Foundation scholarship, go to [jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships](http://jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships) for online applications and descriptions.

#### COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

**All applications must be completed online by May 15.** All applications are confidential. This is a competitive process and, in most years, not all applicants will receive an award.

- **Mary Taylor Friedler Memorial Scholarship Fund:** For high school seniors. This scholarship is not needs based and requires an essay concerning what peace, justice and righteousness mean to you and your Judaism. Awards range from \$500-\$2,000. Applicants must reside in Greater New Haven. Awards are based on the strength of the application.

- **Stuart J. Drell Scholarship Fund:** May be awarded for any college year. Awards are \$2,500 and applicant must reside in Connecticut. Awards are based on the strength of the application and financial need.

- **Emma Kohn Podoloff Scholarship Fund of the National Council of Jewish Women's Greater New Haven Section** For high school seniors. The average award is \$1,500. The application includes an essay and three recommendations. Awards are based on the strength of the application and financial need.

#### ISRAEL EXPERIENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Jewish Foundation Israel Experience Scholarship Program enables local Jewish students to have the opportunity to participate in an Israel experience to develop and enrich their Jewish education and reinforce their Jewish identity. The Jewish Foundation provides scholarships for both short-term (3-week program minimum) and long-term organized Israel educational programs. Greater New Haven youth ages 14-19 are eligible.

For 2020 summer trips, awards have already been made. For the 2020-2021 gap or academic year programs, applications are due by May 15, 2020. An essay and two recommendations are required. All applications are confidential and anonymously reviewed by the Israel Experience Scholarship committee. Go to [jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships](http://jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships) for more information, a list of qualifying programs and application requirements. This is a competitive process and, in most years, not all applicants will receive an award.

#### JEWISH OVERNIGHT CAMP GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

##### One Happy Camper

The Jewish Foundation offers needs-blind incentive grants for first-time campers as well as needs-based aid for first-time and returning campers.

Go to [jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships/one-happy-camper](http://jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships/one-happy-camper).

#### SYNAGOGUE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

**Due October 19, 2020**

## Lehitraot, Not Goodbye to Our Amazing Israeli Emissaries



When the Jewish Agency for Israel suddenly recalled all the young Israeli emissaries from the United States in mid-March given the COVID-19 pandemic, our community had no time to say a proper thank you and "lehitraot" to our own emissaries, Li'on and Tal.

They became a part of our extended family here in the Greater New Haven. Not being able to say goodbye to them in person was hard and sad. And they

were heartbroken having to leave so suddenly. If you would like to send them some words of love, please post them to the Jewish Federation of GNH Facebook page.

#### LI'ON AND TAL SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCES UPON RETURNING TO ISRAEL.

"The Coronavirus has affected many lives very rapidly around the world," says Tal in a letter he wrote to the Shalom New Haven editor. "After months of taking part as a young emissary in the Jewish community in New Haven, the Jewish Agency for Israel made a decision to send back all the young emissaries. Two days later, we were already on the plane on our way to Israel," he wrote.

As part of Israel's special regulations pertaining to COVID-19, anyone entering the country has to be quarantined for two weeks. Tal opted to be quarantined in a room within his parent's home while Lion chose to be quarantined in a facility operated by Jewish Agency. "They left trays of hot meals, some produce and groceries by the door. We weren't allowed to step out. The only connection to the outer world was through phone and internet," said Li'on, who shared a suite with a friend who was an emissary in Westport. When it was finally permissible to step out of quarantine, they saw an Israel they had never seen before.

"A reality where it is forbidden to go further than 100 meters (a little bit more than 328 feet) away from home, except to buy food and medicine, or for work that is considered essential and necessary," said Tal. "The only time we get to see people is when we go grocery shopping. They only allow 10 people at the store at any given time so there are long lines to get in. It's a pretty scary experience," said Li'on.

Li'on said she occupies herself with baking, yoga and exercise, sometimes with her mother. In Tal's household, they are glued to the TV screen watching the news for coronavirus updates.

Tal sees some of the new "normal's" positive aspects. "It allows us to spend more time with our family, which might have been hard for some of us before. It also encourages different perceptual changes in the spirit of the period, such as a clear emphasis on hygiene and even halachic rulings that allow Zoom software to be used during the Passover seder to keep the quarantine during the holiday."

In summary, Tal and Li'on both acknowledged, along with the difficulties and restrictions following this illness, that there are also positive effects on society—and that we should acknowledge those as well.




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**JCC'S SPORTS BANQUET**  
**Oct. 18, 2020 | 10 a.m. | \$55 per person**

Kosher Brunch will be served  
JCC of Greater New Haven  
360 Amity Road, Woodbridge

**NOTE:  
NEW  
DATE!**



**Honoring  
Allan  
Greenberg**

*"A good coach can  
change a game; a  
great coach can  
change a life."*

— John Wooden

Join us at our Sports Banquet to support our JCC and honor Allan for his 45 years of dedication to our community

**RSVP: [jccnh.org/rsvp](http://jccnh.org/rsvp)**

**Sponsorships, table captains and tribute-book ads are available.**

Contact: Lindsey Barger, (203) 387-2424 x276 by August 1, 2020 to be included.



Your first time camper may be eligible for up to \$1000 off Jewish Camp!



The Jewish Foundation's One Happy Camper program provides 1. Needs-blind incentive grants of up to \$1000 for first-time campers and 2. Needs-based aid for first time and returning campers to over 195 Jewish overnight camps.

To learn more or apply, please visit: [jewishnewhaven.org/one-happy-camper](http://jewishnewhaven.org/one-happy-camper)

# COVID-19 • GIVE • VOLUNTEER • GET HELP • FIND RESOURCES • GIVE

THE JEWISH FEDERATION'S HOTLINE 474-800-8010

THE JEWISH FEDERATION'S HOTLINE 474-800-8010

We are living in unfathomable and unprecedented times but we are here for you. At times of calm and times of crisis, the Jewish Federation, Foundation and JCC of Greater New Haven work as one to address the needs in our community. Please open up your hearts, lend a helping hand, and give generously. Remember “Kol Israel, Arevim Zeh La'Zeh,” which loosely translates to, “All Jews, all people, are responsible for one another.”

## JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER NEW HAVEN:

We have been deploying emergency grants, reaching out to thousands of community members, and providing content and programs to people of all ages. Here is just some of what we have accomplished in the last two weeks of March:

**1,672** participated in **75** Zoom classes and programs

**8,300** community members received well-check calls from our staff and volunteers

**64** have volunteered to deliver medicine and food, contacting community members by phone for well-checks and socialization, and providing tech support

**\$108,000** was seeded to establish the Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven COVID-19 Response/Maimonides Fund and, as of the beginning of April, an additional **\$91,000** has been donated to the fund by **91** individuals

**\$27,000** was granted to The Towers at Tower Lane to provide kosher food to **80** quarantined residents

**\$27,000** was granted to Jewish Family Service to provide food and shelter to **45** individual community members

**\$100,000** sent from Southern New England Consortium to strengthen Emek Hospital, Rape Crisis Center, and to support food deliveries to seniors

We look forward to continuing to provide support and interesting content to our Greater New Haven area community!

### CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Since the surge of COVID-19 cases in Connecticut and the decision to close the JCC as a preventative measure, over 8,000 check-in call were made by the Jewish Federation staff and volunteers.

*“We are a caring community and this is holy work,”* said Judy Alperin, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven.

*“We are reaching out to let people know that we are there for them. To listen to them and offer our support with anything they need—running errands, providing tech support by phone, being there for them or referring them to other resources in the community,”* said Chief Development Officer Amy Holtz, who headed up the effort. Below are just a few examples to demonstrate the impact of these calls.

*“I reached a woman who is totally alone. She is over 65, lives in New Haven and is a cardiac patient. She was very nervous about becoming ill and having to go to the hospital with no one in the world to help her. I told her that her community is here and that we are all family. She started to cry which, in turn, made me cry. I told her that I would personally be calling her and that when this all was over that we would meet so that I could give her a hug. I’m sure this will be the beginning of a long and lovely relationship.”*

~ Robyn Teplitzky

*“I just had a discussion with a woman who lost her husband and had to cancel his unveiling. On another call this morning I accidentally connected with a Jewish woman who didn’t know where to turn for resources and couldn’t believe the timing of my call. I only connected with her because I misdialled a number by one digit. People have been incredibly thankful to hear from someone offering support; it’s amazing what a simple call can do.”*

~ Kayla Bisbee

*“The woman I called said it was like an angel calling...we chatted for an hour. I told her about all kinds of things she can do online with her kids/grandkids for Passover. She wanted to*



*Kayla Bisbee, making community outreach calls from home.*

*express how much she is enjoying the online classes...She was so thankful!”*

~ Stacey Battat

*“Hello, neighbors. Elliot Markman was very persistent in trying to reach me...I live alone and wasn’t feeling well at the time and found his words to be very comforting, reassuring and so unexpected. I am not Jewish and go to the JCC very often through the Silver Sneakers program. That only makes the call all the more remarkable. Thank you all for your efforts!”*

~ Community member

*“How wonderful of you to call me today. My husband and I are doing ok but our family does not live close by. It is good to know that the Federation is checking on us. We have donated every year and knowing that you are all working so hard to take care of us and our community makes me proud to support the Federation. Please thank all of your fellow workers for what they are doing”*

~ Community member

### CONTACT US

Check out [jewishnewhaven.org](http://jewishnewhaven.org) for the most up-to-date community announcements.

Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven and The Towers at Tower Lane's work is made possible in part due to emergency grants from the Covid 19 Response/Maimonides Fund.

## JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF GREATER NEW HAVEN:

“JFS has always been the eyes and ears of our community,” says Jewish Family Service of Greater New Haven’s (JFSGNH) CEO Amy Rashba. “We’re uniquely positioned to provide a full range of critical social services. Now, at this moment of unprecedented need, our community is turning to JFS for assistance. Although our physical offices are closed, our staff is working tirelessly to make sure we are here, today, to help those who need it most.”

### RABBI HERB BROCKMAN

The obligation of feeding the hungry is woven into our Torah and Jewish tradition; it is a mitzvah and primary obligation. Our current situation intensifies our responsibilities. As a JFS board member, a rabbi and community member, I ask myself, “What happens to our more than 288 clients who depend upon our JFS food pantry? And what happens to those, who through no fault of their own, will lose their jobs as a result of the present crisis? We are facing a community tragedy.”

The answer is coming together to pool our Jewish human resources. JFS is spearheading collaborative efforts with our synagogues, Jewish Federation and interfaith community. Rabbis are reaching into their discretionary funds while congregants are fulfilling tzedakah through donations and gift cards. As far as distributing the pantry food, this has not been resolved yet. But I’m hopeful that, with Pesach on the horizon, JFS will find a way to provide, at least symbolically, kosher-for-Passover food for those who need it most. Celebrating our historic redemption can give us all hope and courage for the present.

### ELIZABETH DAVENPORT (CASE MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY SERVICES)

Our clients are dealing with a number of anxieties, including limited access to food, fear of getting sick and being worried about their loved ones. I’m taking multiple calls a day regarding case management to connect individuals to food resources and delivery. I am also continuing my mental health appointments via telehealth and running a group at

## THE TOWERS AT TOWER LANE, GREATER NEW HAVEN:

### by Gustave Keach-Longo

CEO/President, The Towers at Tower One

We have spent the last month listening to experts, connecting with national leaders and resources while launching into action to keep our residents healthy and safe. In early March, we closed our common spaces on the ground floor and our doors to non-essential visitors. We began a campaign to help feed 120 residents not currently on our meal plan, via our in-house kitchen, at greatly reduced prices regardless of their ability to pay.

Getting groceries can be difficult for our seniors on a good day, let alone a time of crisis. Our kitchen crew and executive chef stepped up operations to increase meal



production from 225 to nearly 1,000 meals daily. With the generosity of our board of directors, major donors and community members, we have been able to begin feeding every resident in our buildings three healthy meals a day, delivered to their doors. We express thanks to the Jewish Foundation and Jewish Federation for supplementing our efforts with an additional grant to help keep the most vulnerable safe.

Our convenience store began increasing its supply, taking phone orders of necessity items for delivery. Our goal is to reduce exposure, risk and stress as much as possible while keeping life as comfortable as possible for our residents. At Passover, any residents who want one will get a bag of grocery items for Passover from The Towers’ kitchen.

Programming at The Towers continues in a new form to help everyone remain connected and engaged. Residents can watch services and classes conducted by the community’s rabbis, participate in exercise, enjoy CuriosityStream and movies, and see the community via streamed Zoom opportunities. We are grateful to Rabbi Rona Shapiro and Cantor Malachi Kanfer for providing a Passover seder via a recording for our residents. Weekly streaming services continue with Ruthie Greenblatt.

The Towers via conference call. All JFS social workers are doing our best to facilitate the most needed connection for clients.

### SANDY HAGAN (FOOD PANTRY AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH DIRECTOR)

The food pantry is working with JFS social workers to access the need for non-perishable emergency food. We are coordinating with local synagogues to establish a list of volunteers who can hopefully deliver bags as the needs of our community increase in the coming weeks.

### HANNAH LEITERMAN (MENTAL HEALTH CLINICAL DIRECTOR)

As a trauma specialist, I’m aware how this traumatic period stirs up anxiety. In lieu of counseling clients in our office, we are resorting to phone and telehealth appointments. I appreciate how our community is getting the word out!

### RACHEL SCOLNIC DOBIN (SOS COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR)

SOS clients who recently obtained jobs, were in the process of doing so and were laid off, or had their hours significantly reduced are dealing with a multitude of issues connected to unemployment. We have many new emergencies for those facing 100% loss of income and don’t know where to turn. JFS provides case management, directing those individuals to web resources and community agencies. Our Holocaust survivors, who are elderly and vulnerable, are now isolated. We are regularly calling them and their family members to help set up vital social services.

### ANDREA JOSEPH (AGING ADULT SERVICES COORDINATOR)

JFS has been inundated with requests from older adults. They are lonely and scared. I’m informing them of their options for food delivery and emergency food drop offs. I would like to encourage people to make phone calls to older neighbors, family members or friends to enable them stay connected to their community, offer to pick up groceries or pharmacy items, and deliver items by their door.



## Holocaust Remembrance Day Spotlight: The Strength of Esther Geizhals

Esther Geizhals, a Holocaust survivor living in the Tristate Area, was one of the presenters scheduled to speak at the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven's Holocaust Remembrance Day event in mid-April. As with all in-person events at this time, it will become an online community commemoration experience. We are honored to spotlight Geizhals and her story from her January 2020 interview with Jewish Broadcasting Service. Check [jewishnewhaven.org](http://jewishnewhaven.org) for more details on the online event.

Geizhals, born in 1929, was the daughter of food store owners in Łódź (Lodz) in Poland. She recalls growing up in a nice Jewish home with traditional Shabbat meals on Fridays and Saturdays spent with her grandmother. But even as a young child, she remembers young hoodlums running after them after school yelling, calling them Jews and throwing stones as her and her friends.

She was 10 years old when Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. "I recollect everyone, especially the older people, being scared. But I don't remember being scared because I had a loving family and parents around me. I didn't know that anybody could come and hurt us like this," she said.

But her life changed when she was 14 years old. Her family was taken to Auschwitz. "We went into cattle cars. There wasn't enough room to sit. There was not a drop of water, and it was August. People were dying around us...The stench was horrible. A lot of things I don't remember, but this I do remember."

When they disembarked at Auschwitz, she was immediately separated from her family. Mengele himself looked at them and directed her mother, younger brother and aunt to go to the left and Esther to the right. She vividly remembers crying, saying that she wanted to go with them but an inmate stood with her and refused to move, telling her not to take a step to the left at all. "Had I taken a step to the left, I would have been in the gas chambers. She stood with me until the group left. And I was crying that I want to go with my mother," she recollected with tears. "It was too late. Everybody had left to the left." That was the last time she saw them. Her father, who survived, was taken in another direction to work.

She was at Auschwitz for six weeks. They didn't have time to give her a number as

the Russians were starting to close in. She was then moved to Bergen-Belsen for over a month, then to Rochlitz concentration camp in Czechoslovakia and, ultimately, walked in the Death March.

"We were skeletons in rags. They tortured us. The villagers would come and look at us. They didn't understand who we were because we didn't resemble human beings." In the end, a group of five girls, aged 15-20, were able to escape from the march and find their way to a Czech village. A farming family took her in. Even though the American soldiers that eventually came told them not to return to Poland because of the anti-Semitism there, she wanted to go back to find family.

"We didn't know about the gas chambers until we went back. Who could have thought of something like that? I couldn't comprehend that this was happening."

She, with her uncle and later her father, who ended up remarrying a woman who resented Esther for having survived when her own children had not. And then Esther met a wonderful man in a displaced person camp who would become her husband of 51 years. She was 16 years old and Benek Geizhals was 24. Esther immigrated to the U.S. on Valentine's Day in 1947. She married Benek at 18, and they eventually settled and brought up their three children in New Hyde Park in New York. He passed away from lung cancer. They now have nine grandchildren.

"This is the beauty of America. If you work hard and you love the country, you get places."

Esther did fall in love again and remarried for another 12 years before her second husband passed away.

"You have to associate with people who are up beat. I belong to the JCC in Scarsdale and I see a lot of Jewish things...I go to many schools and they all say I inspire them. That they will never forget me," she speaks of her life now. "I learn something from everybody. Every day I don't learn something is a lost day."

To respect one another, to give to one another is the message she wants others to remember. Be kind to one another.



## Protective of Religious Beards, Israel to Produce Fitted Face Masks



April 6, 2020 - JERUSALEM (Reuters) - Israelis who have beards for religious reasons will get the option of custom-made face masks to protect them from the coronavirus rather than being told to shave, a government official said on Monday.

As part of measures to combat the epidemic, Israeli authorities last week told people to cover their mouths and noses in public.

Many of the country's Jews and Muslims, and some Christian clergymen, wear beards as a mark of faith, and the order raised questions as to how facial hair would be accommodated.

Read more at [reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-israel-beards/protective-of-religious-beards-israel-to-produce-fitted-face-masks-idUSKBN2100VY](http://reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-israel-beards/protective-of-religious-beards-israel-to-produce-fitted-face-masks-idUSKBN2100VY)

## Millions Going to Holocaust Survivors for Coronavirus Help

April 6, 2020 - BERLIN (AP) — Millions of dollars in additional funds are being made available to agencies around the world that provide aid to Holocaust survivors, whose advanced age and health issues makes them particularly vulnerable to the new coronavirus, the organization that handles claims on behalf of Jewish victims of the Nazis announced Monday.

The New York-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany said Monday the \$4.3 million in initial funding would be made available to agencies around the world providing care for some 120,000 survivors.

The emergency funding includes 200,000 euros (\$215,000) from the Alfred Landecker Foundation, established last year by one of Germany's richest families, whose assets include Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, as a way to help atone for its use of forced laborers during the Nazi era and support of Adolf Hitler's regime.

Read more from [apnews.com/66e6ed4fbd84d8ec5db54e9d3b3b2e28](http://apnews.com/66e6ed4fbd84d8ec5db54e9d3b3b2e28).

## Yad Vashem to mark Holocaust Remembrance Day with global name-reading from home initiative

April 6, 2020 - JERUSALEM (JTA) — Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial based in Jerusalem, is creating a global name-reading initiative to mark Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Since gathering for the annual national Yom Hashoah ceremony, and smaller community ceremonies are impossible this year, Yad Vashem is working to ensure that the names of Holocaust members are read out and remembered, the institution announced Monday.

The campaign, #RememberingFromHome #ShoahNames calls on the international public to record themselves reciting the names of Holocaust victims and share the video on social media using the campaign's hashtags. Videos should be no longer than 15 seconds.

Read more from [jta.org/quick-reads/yad-vashem-to-mark-holocaust-remembrance-day-with-global-name-reading-from-home-initiative](http://jta.org/quick-reads/yad-vashem-to-mark-holocaust-remembrance-day-with-global-name-reading-from-home-initiative).

# Jewish Values for Being Outside This Spring

## CONNECTING WITH THE PASSOVER MESSAGE

by *Stacey Battat*

Our world has been slowed down and changed with the onslaught of a tiny plaque—along with the world's reaction to it. How can we find the resilience we need to sustain and thrive?

During these beyond challenging times of COVID-19 we can be brought to a halt, which can feel paralyzing or overwhelming.

Our bodies know how to breathe and to slow us down, if only we are able to listen—even with our children—to the messages. This is only part of a possible lesson we all need to take from this time when our nerves are on edge and our stories race in our minds. This is a time we can do our best to connect with our senses, which is a lesson Passover teaches us. A silver lining of the slow-down is that it is happening during the springtime. Being home with our children requires a lot of planning and resources. Did you know that the Jewish Federation and JCC of Greater New Haven are providing virtual programming on their websites?

We hope that, for adults with families, you find time for yourself early in the morning or after kids go to bed—or even for five minutes during the day—to just breath into your body and help you slow down.



**RECONNECT WITH NATURE AND THE SENSES**

Ideally, and definitely on weekends, you can use this time to be out in nature with your five senses. Become a sensation scientist with your kids. Begin with finding a new area of your yard or neighborhood to explore the trees and how they are faring through this time. Notice them visually. When you see flowers, smell them; when you hear birds, listen to them. Truly listen and take the time to feel the sunshine or roll around in the grass.

This is the slowing down we all need during this challenging time—to reconnect with nature, and with our own bodies and breath. It is also a time to gain resilience from the story of our ancestors who made it through with faith in their journey after their Exodus from Egypt. There are many resources for indoor crafts and science experiments, as well as storytimes and songs online to explore. But with this gift of beautiful springtime, let your senses be your guide;

use your imaginations to develop games and explorations that work for your unique family. Build a fort with branches or create works of art with fallen flora or fauna. There are so many ideas you can incorporate to be outside.

Share your ideas for being outside with PJ Library's Mindfulness Educator Stacey Battat at [pjlibrary@jewishnewhaven.org](mailto:pjlibrary@jewishnewhaven.org).

## Connect Online with PJ Library!

**TURN TO PJ LIBRARY AND OUR COMMUNITY FOR JEWISH RESOURCES FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.**

- Check [facebook.com/PJLibraryofGNH](https://facebook.com/PJLibraryofGNH) or [jewishnewhaven.org/pjlibrary](http://jewishnewhaven.org/pjlibrary) for links to new upcoming online events.
- Consider the national Facebook page ([facebook.com/PJLibrary](https://facebook.com/PJLibrary)) and [pjlibrary.org](http://pjlibrary.org) for resources and advice for parents.
- Many other craft, art and story activities from our JCC's staff can be found at [jccnh.org](http://jccnh.org).
- How to Talk to Your Kids about Scary Situations contains an evolving list of resources to help parents talk to their children about evacuations, quarantine and other scary situations.
- PJ Library Resources for Quarantined Families ([pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/january-2017/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-scary-situations](http://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/january-2017/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-scary-situations)) includes recipes for cooking with kids, learning languages, hands-on crafts, podcasts and more.
- Bring a smile to someone special with ([youtu.be/la7DYvHdGpU](https://youtu.be/la7DYvHdGpU)) this colorful project with JCC Arts Teacher Shilo Ratner.

## Have My Books Arrived Yet?

Are your children excitedly awaiting the arrival of their PJ Library envelope? Here is a list of some of the PJ Library books being sent to our youngest readers for April.

Check out the books for other age groups at [pjlibrary.org/April2020Books](http://pjlibrary.org/April2020Books).

**6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS**

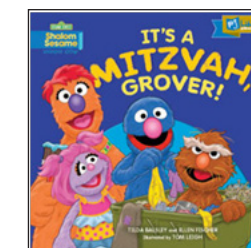
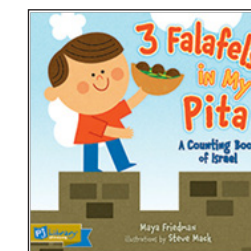
- 3 Falafels in My Pita, by *Maya Friedman*
- Nosh, Schlep, Schluff, by *Laurel Snyder*

**2-3 YEARS**

- A Hoopoe Says Oop, by *Jamie Kiffel-Alchek*
- Lilah Tov, Good Night, by *Mister G*

**3-4 YEARS**

- It's A Mitzvah, Grover! by *Tilda Balsley*
- In the Jerusalem Forest, by *Devora Busheri*



## Bagel & Babies Online

On Wednesdays in April, join PJ Library's Mindfulness Educator Stacey Battat online in a Zoom meeting at 11 a.m. Bring your own bagel (or matzah) and tea/coffee while you connect with other parents with babies and toddlers. We will discuss how to calm ourselves, our babies and our families during these challenging times. Join the Zoom meeting at [zoom.us/j/199593502](https://zoom.us/j/199593502). (Download the Zoom app at [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) before the meeting.) The meeting ID is 199 593 502. To call in, dial (929) 205-6099,,199593502#. Contact [pjlibrary@jewishnewhaven.org](mailto:pjlibrary@jewishnewhaven.org) with any questions.

## Help Your Child Help Others

If you would like to call seniors with your kids to comfort them, you can volunteer at [jewishnewhaven.org](http://jewishnewhaven.org).

## Shabbat Shalom Reading

with *PJ Library's Stacey Battat*:

**The Cholent Brigade**  
([youtu.be/RKyD-8Tq1hU](https://youtu.be/RKyD-8Tq1hU))



**The Cricket and the Ant**  
([youtube.com/watch?v=NNRfqwEnprO](https://youtube.com/watch?v=NNRfqwEnprO))



Welcome to America

# How a Jewish Immigrant United People from All Over the World

by Yelena Gerovich  
New American Acculturation Coordinator

Jan Koum is an Ukrainian American entrepreneur of Jewish origin, who cofounded WhatsApp in 2009. It is now the world's biggest mobile messaging service. A billionaire today, Koum was once so poor that he had to live off food stamps and rental subsidy programs. He was born and raised in a small village outside of Kiev, Ukraine, the only child of a housewife and a construction manager. His house had no hot water.

Koum immigrated to the United States as a teenager with his mother and grandmother. His father did not follow them to the U.S. Koum's initial years in the new country were very difficult. Their situation worsened when his mother became ill with cancer and eventually passed away. Koum had to sweep the floor of a grocery store to help make ends meet.

He was a troublemaker at school, but by 18 had also taught himself computer networking by purchasing manuals from a used bookstore and returning them when he was done. In 1997, Koum was hired by Yahoo! as an infrastructure engineer. He dropped out of college shortly thereafter. Koum came close friends with Brian Acton, another Yahoo! employee with whom he would form a long-term collaboration in the future.

They decided to leave the company and travel around the world together. When their savings started to run out, they applied for jobs with Facebook, which didn't work out as planned. While they were quite disappointed, this failure led them to start a new journey of their life with WhatsApp.

In January 2009, Koum bought an iPhone; he realized that the new product would create a new industry of applications. He named his new iPhone application WhatsApp. On February 24, 2009, he incorporated WhatsApp Inc. in California. There are several applications on the market that perform functions similar to WhatsApp, such as Skype and FaceTime. However, WhatsApp is quite popular because it is easy to use and works well on iPhones. It is especially common in Israel, where it is often used as a substitute for a standard cell phone service.

Russian-speaking Jewish families in our community are used to virtual communication. However, in the past, it was impossible to see the person on the other end of the line unless you came over to visit.

These video call applications perform an important function of bringing families together, which is especially important for our Russian-speaking community members who have so many relatives residing in other countries. After the State of Israel was formed in 1948, many Soviet Jews openly expressed the desire to emigrate. However, the Soviet government made it almost impossible for them to leave the country.

With the support of the international Jewish community, 163,000 exit visas were granted in the late 1960-1970s. Starting from the mid-1980s, Soviet Jews were finally allowed to leave. Between 1988 and 2010, over 1.6 million Jews left the former Soviet Union and settled in Israel (over one million of that total number), the United States, Canada, Germany and Australia.

This month, we will be celebrating Pesach. These are difficult times for the world. It will not be as easy to celebrate this year as it was in the previous years. However, we can still enjoy the holiday. Many years ago, in the Soviet Union, the Jews

were not allowed to celebrate Pesach freely. In 1962, a law was passed by the Soviet government that prohibited anyone from selling or distributing matzo. The law was strictly enforced, and many Jews were arrested in Moscow and other cities. Several international Jewish organizations organized shipments of matzo to the USSR. However, most of those shipments were stopped at the border.

On an official level, the Soviet leaders claimed that there was no discrimination based on religion in the Soviet Union. The USSR submitted a formal report to the United Nations claiming that state bakeries produced matzo and matzo products, and made them available to the public for Jewish holidays. However, Jewish organizations around the world protested, and several demonstrations were organized in protest in Western countries. The Soviet government decided to loosen the restrictions on matzo production after Nikita Khrushchev was peacefully removed from power in 1964. In 1965-1966, the authorities allowed some production and sales of matzo in Moscow, Leningrad, and other major cities. In reality, most of the sales were still done under the counter. Very few families had access to a haggadah. Most of the stories and prayers had to be told from memory. Haggadahs had to be smuggled from Israel.

This year is a difficult year for all of us. No large gatherings will be allowed this year, and the variety of food may be limited due to quarantining. However, we can still celebrate the holiday. We can enjoy the Passover seder virtually if we are unable to see our friends and relatives in person. Software applications such as WhatsApp make it possible for us.

The New American Acculturation program continues to provide the Russian-speaking community with community updates and requested information online and over the phone. Jewish families from the former Soviet Union—and especially the elderly—are grateful that, in these difficult times, food is delivered to them and that they can celebrate Pesach freely in person or virtually with their families and friends.

For more information about the New American Acculturation Program, including sponsorships of specific program, contact Yelena Gerovich at (203) 387-2424 x321, or email [ygerovich@jewishnewhaven.org](mailto:ygerovich@jewishnewhaven.org).



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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH: A Personal Reflection

by Robyn Teplitzky  
Senior Development Consultant  
Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven



Over the past several weeks, as our world continues to unravel, volunteers and professionals of the Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven have been calling over 10,000 households in our database to ensure their well-being.

For many years, I have made solicitation calls to raise the necessary funding our community needs on behalf of the Federation Annual Campaign. I was more than happy to make check-in calls to ensure connection and concern at this time of crisis. One conversation in particular gave me pause and reminded me of the fundamental Jewish value of gemilut hasadim, of loving kindness and the act of caring for others.

I connected with a local woman who lives alone. She told me she was fine and had enough food but has no family and was concerned about someone knowing if she had to go to the hospital. I assured her that the community was here for her and that I would be her contact. We exchanged phone numbers and she expressed her gratitude by telling me she had been praying for something like this to happen. I assured her I would check in frequently.

I called again a few days later and became concerned when there was no answer over a 24-hour period so I called the local police to ask for a well visit. Within minutes, I received a call from my outreach and started to cry. I was so happy to learn she was okay. When I inquired about the calls and messages I left, she told me she didn't recognize my number and thought someone was calling to solicit her for money. I asked her if she was okay with me sharing her name with Jewish Family Service, and that the Jewish Federation and community are here to ensure her safety and to provide a lifeline.

Every day, our Jewish Federation strives to meet the needs of our entire community. Often, we all get complacent and don't appreciate all the positive things our thoughtful and caring community members and professionals do; but we know that in a crisis, we are strong. The Greater New Haven Jewish community has sustained nursing home strikes, hurricanes, fires and now COVID-19. We will emerge united and continue to ensure that we are one. Kol Yisrael arevim zeh la-zeh; all Jews are responsible for one another.

When we say a misheberach, a healing prayer for one who is suffering or ill, we think of those who are terminal. Today, we are all in crisis. I pray that this virus passes soon and that we all stay healthy and strong so that when we are physically reunited, together we will say, "Am Yisrael chai, the Jewish community lives!"

## An Outsized Thank You to the Ezra Community Leaders

School closures related to COVID-19 have deeply affected our children. Julie Katz, Ezra Academy' Board President, wrote a letter touching base with the Ezra Academy community.

The theoretical physicist Carlo Rovelli describes our reality as interactive relationships. A short time ago, most interactive relationships at Ezra Academy took place in the classroom, on the playground or at the lunch table... [In March,] Ezra went virtual in response to the Coronavirus crisis. More than any other institution, Ezra was prepared. The foresight and leadership of Ezra's administration and teachers made me think more about the everyday leadership that makes our community successful and how we pass those skills to our students so they may be competent leaders, too.



There is an abundance of Jewish leaders to look to as models in this period between Purim and Pesach. Mordechai's quiet observance and nudging, Esther's stealthy slide into royalty, Moshe's ability to coalesce the Israelites around the idea of a god they couldn't see, Aaron's willingness to give voice to Moshe's ideas. Each of these leaders contribute despite—or maybe because of—their imperfections. They model behavior for their followers, they solicit help, and they know when to act and when to hold back. They lay the groundwork for plans to prepare for crises.

Melanie Waynik and her staff had to make some challenging decisions, like postponing educational field trips to Israel and Alabama, and extraordinary preparation, like arranging online lesson plans for students in kindergarten through 8th grade in the event of a lengthy school closure. Our Montessori preschool teachers have also been involved in keeping the younger children active and entertained through daily emails to parents with tips on how to engage the children with gross motor, numbers, letters and sounds, and art activities all within the classroom's weekly theme. Ezra's upper school has been engaged in online learning with students from a network of Jewish day schools throughout the country for three years. Students were already comfortable joining Zoom sessions online. They work together on Google Docs and submit assignments remotely regularly. Learning, in subjects from math to Judaics and everything in between, progressed smoothly and joyfully so far and will continue in the coming weeks...

...[T]he entire Ezra community comprises the most generous group of leaders I have encountered. This generous spirit and willingness to step up models for our youngest students what it means to be a leader. They hear stories of Jewish leadership from the Torah as young as preschool and throughout their Ezra experience. And they see the strength of the head of school, the composure of their teachers, and the willingness of their parents to guide them through this new experience of virtual school. They see the eighth graders stepping up to lead Tefillah every week and read the Megillah on Purim. They see their fellow classmates sharing what they've learned through regular presentations. I know that throughout our now virtual interactions, Ezra students, teachers, administrators and the community at large will continue to exhibit virtuous leadership



Jewish Federation OF GREATER NEW HAVEN | Women's Philanthropy

CHECK OUT OUR NEW  
2020 Online  
PASSOVER  
Recipe Book @  
[jewishnewhaven.org/wp](http://jewishnewhaven.org/wp)



Jewish Federation OF GREATER NEW HAVEN | Women's Philanthropy

# Tributes & Remembrances

## JEWISH FEDERATION

In memory of Joel Teller, brother-in-law of Jeffrey Hoos  
*Marjorie Weiner*  
 In memory of Paul Caplan  
*Jane Tendler*  
*David & Cynthia Greenblatt*

## JCARR

In honor of Sheldon Natkin and his volunteerism with JCARR  
*Arlene & Peter Schwartz*  
 In honor of Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus  
*Beverly Proppen*  
 In honor of Jean Silk's birthday  
*Ron Apter & Carrie Berman*  
 In memory of Lillian Rappaport  
*Janet Sendler*

## COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND

In memory of Luciano & Giorgina Vitale  
*Miriam Vitale*  
 In honor of Evan Wyner for his work in Philanthropy and the example he sets  
*Dina Fusco*

## JCC

In memory of Sidney White  
*Allan & Ellen Greenberg*  
*Crest Lincoln Mercury*

To purchase a tribute card:  
[jccnh.org](http://jccnh.org), [jewishnewhaven.org](http://jewishnewhaven.org), [newhavenjewishfoundation.org](http://newhavenjewishfoundation.org)

\*Tributes listed are up to March 25, 2020.

## JEWISH FOUNDATION

**BECKERMAN FAMILY SUPPORTING FOUNDATION, INC. JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER ENDOWMENT FUND**  
 In memory of Mrs. Hannah Malkin  
*David & Ruthann Beckerman*

**JEWISH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW HAVEN OPERATING FUND**  
 In memory of Norman Fineberg  
*Tobi Fineberg*

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# WOMEN OF VISION: Grant for Horseback Riding Changed Girls' Lives in Israel



The small city of Tzfat, Israel, perched high up on the Upper Galilee mountains, is known for the golden age of its 16th century kabbalists and Torah luminaries. Today, with a population of nearly 22,000, the newer neighborhoods are home to a large mix of families that emigrated from North African countries shortly after 1948. Tzfat is also home to two large absorption centers which still actively house Ethiopian immigrants. Additionally, Tzfat in the last few years has been a settlement site of scores of immigrants hailing from the "Bnei Menashe" tribe, which formerly lived on the northeastern border of India. This "Ingathering of the Exiles" is prophetic prophecy, very much a reality of life in Israel today. Not all of these disparate immigrant groups transition into their new lives smoothly. Women and children are often victims of dysfunctional families, the direct result of unemployment, marital stress, and emotional and economic instabilities.

Israel's welfare and social services predominantly grapple with these issues. And even Tzfat, with its shangri la atmosphere in the Old City, is not immune to these stresses. In fact, it suffers more being in the social and geographic periphery of the country, out of the line of vision of government and private foundations, which favor the glamour of giving aid to prominent organizations in the larger cities.

The Shaalim Network, in its 30th year, has created and operated grassroots social service and welfare programs across the country. From feeding program for infants, to social programming for the elderly and Holocaust Survivors, and everyone in between, Shaalim is there. It is reaching out to Israel's neediest and most vulnerable populations, easing poverty and despair, and bringing about a brighter future.

Alice's House was opened by the Shaalim Network several years ago in Tzfat, in cooperation with the municipality's welfare department, as a shelter for at-risk teen girls. It is one of seven at-risk homes launched in different locations in the country. The "home" in Tzfat is limited to 15 young girls, aged 13-16. The girls come directly after their school day at 1 p.m. and are given a nutritious hot lunch. The



She said that it helped her overcome some of her fears. Then I spoke with Gaya, whom I had been told about. She too was in the very limited program the year before, and suffered from a wide range of anxieties. She was initially petrified of the horses, but told me that the horses were somehow sensitive to her fears and helped to calm her. They brought about greater self-confidence, which carried over to other aspects of her life. The social worker had told me, even before I met Gaya in person, that she underwent a significant improvement in coping with her anxieties after her limited course.

Across the lounge, I was pleasantly surprised to hear two young girls chattering away in English. One girl looked vaguely familiar (not

an uncommon occurrence when you live in a small town) and the other was distinctly from the Bnei Menashe community. I approached them and asked them their names, and informed them that money was secured to provide a therapeutic horseback riding course as soon as most of the winter would be behind us. Devorah was so happy to hear this. She was familiar with this therapy from another framework. She said, "it made me forget about the bad stuff." It also helped her learn to cope. Yemima, the second girl, was convinced she would be afraid to get up on a horse, but Devorah was assuring her otherwise, that it was "the best fun."

Therapeutic horseback riding has been well documented for bringing out much desired outcomes among at-risk teens and other groups. People who were not in trusting relationships, learned to trust. Those with low self-confidence, discovered their inner strengths and abilities. Those with anxieties found the horses to be calming and great fun. This program was not in the budget of Alice's House, but a loving gift from the Women of Vision in Greater New Haven and others has helped to change this.

On a recent visit to Alice's House, I spoke to Liraz. The young girl graciously took her eyes off her cell phone to meet mine for a fleeting moment when I spoke to her. She was at Alice's House last year when funds were found to provide the girls with a just a few sessions of therapeutic horseback riding. She said, repeatedly, that the riding was "keyf retzach." There was close to a 50-year difference in our ages, but I had never encountered this phrase before, which literally means, "murderously fun."

Again, I would like to express our gratitude to the Women of Vision at the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven for your gift, which will go towards the cost of providing a therapeutic horseback riding course to these 15 young women. Just imagine the impact you are having on their young lives; they will each be positively transformed, and emotionally strengthened to face the challenges of their lives. It is a gift that they will carry with them always. What a priceless investment in the future of these brave Israeli young women!

Submitted by Tzivia Polsky, Resource Development, Shaalim Network in Israel. She can be reached at [tzivia@sto.org.il](mailto:tzivia@sto.org.il).

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