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Celebrating 49 Years!

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We've Made It. Now What?



By Keith Krivitzky, Managing Director
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The United States has been an amazing country for Jews. The Golden Medina. We have been welcomed and accepted – and, in turn, reached heights of success, prosperity, and comfort like no place else in the world.

It takes more of our Jewish community coming together to really make a difference.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of our country, it is worth recognizing and honoring this.

For many Jews, living the “American Dream” went beyond leading quiet lives in peace or attaining success in business or a profession; the best form of success was fitting in and being just like everybody else. After being kept out of many clubs and professions, we succeeded in that arena as well and were welcomed with open arms – in country clubs, in universities, in Hollywood.

We’ve made it. Congratulations to us.

Now what?

We currently face a wave of antisemitism and unfair opposition to Israel that is dwarfed only by what we see in Europe. And Canada. And we have huge numbers of Jews, especially younger Jews, who don’t see the benefit of defining who they are as Jewish. Not just Jew...ish, but fully embracing their identity as part of a particular people, a giant extended family, complete with crazy relatives but also ties that bind.

Our making it in America certainly helps with our ability to respond to the myriad challenges our community faces today. But I wonder if our focus on “fitting in” American society, trying to be like everybody else in order to gain acceptance, has been a bit misplaced. Jews have been some of the biggest donors to civic and cultural causes, leaders and contributors to political parties, leading advocates in civil and human rights causes – and where has it gotten us today?

Would a stronger, internally-oriented focus on strengthening Jewish education and connection have made a difference? If we focused more on strengthening our Jewish institutions, culture, and solidarity, would we be both more self-confident and resilient in the face of the challenges we face today?

I think so.

I also believe it is not too late to make those investments and strengthen our pride and resolve in being Jewish. That’s what we are focused on as a Jewish Federation. And it takes more of our Jewish community coming together to really make a difference.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for being our partners.

Beloved Are Converts



By Rabbi William Gershon
Congregation B’nai Israel, Toms River
www.cbtr.org

One of the most famous letters of the Rambam (Maimonides) was a response to a question posed to him by a certain convert to Judaism, Ovadiah. Ovadiah wanted to know if it was permissible for him to say in his prayers Eloheinu V’elohay Avoteinu – “Our God and God of our Ancestors” (in the Amidah) or Asher Kiddishanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu – “You who have sanctified us through Your commandments,” or “You have chosen us” or “You who have brought us out of Egypt” and so forth. Ovadiah was questioning whether he was fully part of the Jewish people and connected to its past since neither he nor his ancestors were Jewish and thus not part of that past.

The Rambam’s answer is epic [Rambam’s Letter to Ovadiah the Convert]:

You ask me if you, too, are allowed to say in the blessings and prayers you offer alone or in the congregation. Yes, you may say all this in the prescribed order and not change it in the least. In the

same way as every Jew by birth says his blessing and prayer, you, too, shall bless and pray alike, whether you are alone or pray in the congregation. The reason for this is, that Abraham our Father taught the people, opened their minds, and revealed to them the true faith and the unity of God; he rejected the idols and abolished their adoration; he brought many children under the wings of the Divine Presence...Ever since then whoever adopts Judaism...is counted among the disciples of Abraham our Father, peace be with him. These men are Abraham’s household, and he it is who converted them to righteousness.

In the same way, as he converted his contemporaries through his words and teaching, he converts future generations through the testament he left to his children and household after him. Thus, Abraham our father, peace be with him, is the father of his pious posterity who keep his ways, and the father of his disciples and of all proselytes who adopt Judaism...Therefore, you shall pray, “Our God” and “God of our Ancestors,” because Abraham, peace be with him, is your father...do not consider your origin as inferior. While we are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, you derive from Him through whose word the world was created. As is said by Isaiah: “One shall say, I am the Lord’s, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob” (Is. 44:5).

The Rambam makes it very clear that a

convert is a Jew in all respects and is part and parcel of the Jewish family.

Therefore, one of the most disturbing features of Jewish life today is the tendency among many Jews to consider converts to Judaism as somehow deficient in their Jewish identity. Converts are held to be less than “full Jews” or “real Jews.” This attitude flies in the face of everything our Tradition holds with regards to converts.

The entire enterprise of the Jewish people began with conversion: “And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan.” (Genesis 12:5). Rashi brings the Midrash that says Abram converted the men and Sarah converted the women. The Jewish people began as a group of people who were converted to Abrahamic monotheism.

According to the Talmud, once a person converts to Judaism one may never again refer to him or her as a convert. In other words, once a person converts to Judaism, they must be considered a Jew in all respects and the Rambam makes it very clear that a convert should receive God’s special love since he or she entered the covenant of their own volition, while those who are born Jewish are Jewish by virtue of an accident of birth.

So important is the concept of the free

acceptance of the Torah that converts make to be Jewish that the rabbis choose the Book of Ruth to be read on the festival of Shavuot. Shavuot is the holiday that celebrates the giving of the Torah at Sinai. Ruth, who is not Jewish, decides to cling to her mother-in-law Naomi after Ruth’s husband dies. She joins the Jewish people with those famous words: “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back from following you. For where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people are my people, and your God my God; where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. (Ruth 1:16-17)

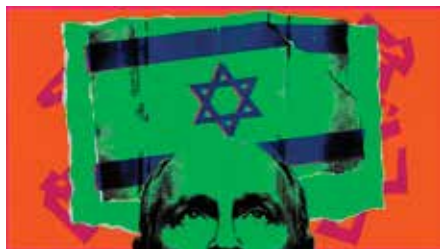
A convert is a Jew in all respects and is part and parcel of the Jewish family.

Ruth became the archetype for conversion in the Jewish Tradition. The fact that the rabbis choose Ruth as the model for the acceptance of the Torah is perhaps the greatest testimony for the place of converts in Judaism.

The Jewish Journal is pleased to host a monthly Rabbi Column, rotating among our community’s pulpit rabbis. The views and opinions expressed are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of The Jewish Journal, the Jewish Federation of Ocean County or the author’s Congregation.

If I Were Jewish

A non-Jewish Canadian teacher asks the questions every Jew struggles to answer.



By Patrick Mascoe
April 19, 2026
Aish.com

I'm not Jewish, but if I was, I think the first lesson I would teach my children is that life isn't fair. How else can a Jewish parent explain to their children the injustice and discrimination they will be forced to face as they grow up? How else can parents answer questions that have no logical answer?

Why are Jews worldwide held responsible for the actions of the Israeli government? How come Jewish high school students living in Canada and the United States get blamed for the actions of Benjamin Netanyahu? No one blames Muslim students for the actions of Hamas or Boko Haram. As a matter of fact, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, politicians both in the United States and Canada advocated for the public not to stereotype or blame members of the Muslim community for the actions of the minority. Yet today, Jews are seen as universally homogeneous.

Why does the term Zionist take on such a derogatory tone? People resent the idea of a Jewish state but take no offense of Islamic Republics run under Sharia law. The Jewish State protects women's rights and recognizes same sex partners, while non-Jews are granted the same legal rights as Jewish citizens. Islamic Republics treat women as chattel and homosexual behavior is punishable by death, while non-Muslims are treated as second-class-citizens. Despite the obvious imbalance of human rights, Islamic States face little criticism while Israel is constantly bombarded with condemnation.

Why is there only condemnation of the

Jewish state? Public demonstrations against Israel are relentless. How come when Bashar al-Assad in Syria used chemical weapons against his own citizens no one took to the streets? Why aren't there demonstrations in support of women's rights in the Middle East? What about human rights in China?

Why do we hear the claim that Israel has no right to exist? Why is the only country on earth whose majority population just happens to be Jewish the only one being referred to as an illegitimate state? The reality is that Israel has existed for more than 75 years and is among the older half of all countries in the world. Countries either exist or they don't exist. There is no such term in international law as an "illegitimate" state. So why is this used when describing the Jewish state and no other country?

**If I were a Jewish parent,
I would tell my children
that you belong to
something remarkable.**

In 1949, after Chiang Kai-Shek lost the Chinese civil war to Mao Zedong, he moved his government to Taipei. Mao Zedong declared that government an illegitimate entity, yet today Taiwan is universally recognized as a legitimate country. Pakistan was formed in 1947 as a result of Muslim separation from India. Bangladesh won its independence from Pakistan in 1971 through an armed conflict. These countries, even those established by violence – once established – become part of the international community and gain acceptance.

Why do people call Israel an apartheid state? How can you be an apartheid state when all your citizens have equal voting rights, freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press? How does that resemble the apartheid of South Africa?

Why is Saudi Arabia not called an apartheid state? Freedom of religion does not exist. The government prohibits the private or public practice of any religion other than Islam. Freedom of speech and press are restricted. It has only been in the last ten years that women have been able to drive or vote in elections. So why is it Israel that gets labeled?

After the horrendous terrorist attack of October 7 where Israeli citizens were targeted, no one took to the streets to denounce such a barbaric act. But they did take to the streets and campuses to protest against Israel over a war that they did not start. Many of those same protesters readily acknowledge Ukraine's right to defend itself. But inexplicably deny Israel's right to do the same.

If I were Jewish, I would wonder why so many people choose to ignore history. Not all history, just Jewish history. No one questions the Cambodian genocide, the Darfur genocide, or the Rwanda genocide. Yet, the largest and most historically documented genocide to ever take place is often up for debate as to whether it happened or not. Why is Holocaust denial even a thing? There is only one reason and that is because it happened to Jews.

Israel, a country historically inhabited by Jews is now being labelled as colonizers by pro-Palestinian supporters. Does this not strike people as ironic? The world's one Jewish nation, with a population of seven million Jews, is being labelled as colonizers by the world's two billion Muslims. The religion of Islam has colonized 52 countries, yet the Jews and their one country are colonizers. These facts are there for all to see. Sadly, people will believe a lie that is continually repeated and accept it as fact rather than ask questions and apply critical thinking.

When one country and one group of people are held to a higher standard than others, one must wonder why? Everyone publicly agrees that racism and discrimination is wrong, yet antisemitism is systemic. How do you tell your children

that a world preaching tolerance excludes them?

What I Would Tell My Jewish Child

If I was Jewish, perhaps this is what I would tell my child. Jews have been the designated scapegoat of civilization for two thousand years. Every era finds its own justification: religion, race, nationalism, now geopolitics. The packaging changes but the target doesn't. Antisemitism isn't a reaction to what Jews do. It's a pattern so deeply embedded in human history that most people who carry it don't even recognize it in themselves.

But here is what that history also shows: Every empire that tried to erase them is gone. The Egyptians who enslaved them, the Romans who exiled them, the regimes that built industries around their destruction. All of them are footnotes, but the Jews are still here.

That is not an accident. It is the result of a civilization that chose meaning over despair, memory over forgetting, and morality over convenience. A people who, in the aftermath of the worst atrocity in human history, built a thriving nation, won Nobel prizes, pioneered medicine and technology, and continued to ask the oldest Jewish question: how do we make the world better than we found it?

If I were a Jewish parent, I would tell my children that you belong to something remarkable, a tradition of wisdom and values that has outlasted every force that tried to extinguish it. That is a legacy worth carrying with pride.

Patrick Mascoe is a Canadian teacher based in Ottawa. Mascoe was the first Canadian to ever receive the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem's Catalyst for Change Award and was also the recipient of the Arie Van Mansum Award for excellence in Holocaust education. Patrick Mascoe completed his graduate thesis at the University of Ottawa on the topic of antisemitism.

War with Iran - Daily updates are available

at www.jewishoceancounty.org/israelupdate.

Donate now: www.jewishoceancounty.org/IsraelEmergency.

Local News

Beth Am Shalom, Lakewood, Held Music Concert



On Saturday evening, April 18, at Beth Am Shalom, Noah Aronson presented “An Evening of Music” and sang many songs, often accompanied by a trio of Rabbi Stephen Gold, Cantor Jon Saouma and Rabbi Eli Perlman. It was a great night of song. For information about future events, call the BAS Office at 732-363-2800.

Women of Beth Am Shalom, Lakewood, Holds Book Group

On Sunday, April 26, the Women of Beth Am Shalom Book Club met and discussed the book “The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell” by Robert Dugoni, an inspiring look about how people react to people who are different. Last month, they discussed “We Were Never Here” by Andrea Bartz, a page-turning mystery. At their meeting on May 31, they will discuss “Sadie on a Plate” by Amanda Elliot. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Missy Francis at the BAS office at 732-363-2800.



Congregation Ahavat Olam, Howell, Hosted Family Friendly Shabbat Across America

On March 20, members and guests of Congregation Ahavat Olam joined to celebrate the annual, continent-wide initiative Shabbat Across America, with dinner followed by the Shabbat service. After a full, delicious traditional chicken dinner, Rabbi Michael Kline and Cantor Eddie Roffman led the CAO community in a lively, musical Shabbat service. This experience was enjoyed by all and offered everyone a new taste of Shabbat. Desserts and treats on the Oneg table – provided by Sisterhood – highlighted by conversation and camaraderie concluded this wonderful evening. For information about future events, call the CAO Office at 732-719-3500. Shabbat Across America is coordinated through NJOP (formerly the National Jewish Outreach Program).



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Local News

Trivia Comes to Congregation Ahavat Olam, Howell



After having to cancel in March due to the blizzard, Congregation Ahavat Olam members and friends gathered together on April 19 for a fun-filled evening of Trivia with snacks galore and pizza, salad, and a delicious “Make Your Own Sundaes” bar to round off the evening. For the first time, two teams tied as winners for the evening, and each player received a scratch-off as a prize. Trivia is a go-to event at Congregation Ahavat Olam, having it at least twice a year. The MCs for the evening, Rob and Linda Friedman, were fabulous

and helped make the evening a very successful, entertaining, and enjoyable event that members and friends keep coming back to year after year. For information about future events, call the CAO Office at 732-719-3500.

Temple Beth Or, Brick, to Hold an Open House

You're invited to check us out! Temple Beth Or's Open House on June 14th, beginning at 10 am. Food and fun! Meet our Rabbi and Board. Discover a place where you belong. Visit our website or contact the office at templebethorbrick@gmail.com for more information.

Many congregations are conducting prayer services and classes online which may be accessible from a computer or a telephone. Contact each congregation for further information to access these events.

Congregation B'nai Israel, Toms River, Hosted a Talk about Jewish Geniuses



(photo credit: Martin Abramson)

From 1847 to 1947, Jews emerged from the shtetls and ghettos of Eastern Europe and left an indelible mark on the fields of politics, philosophy, medicine, science and entertainment, among others. It was an era of Jewish geniuses, where scores of Jews broke out from their “intense insularity” to make their scholarship, knowledge and brilliance “visible to the world,” said Susan Addelston, a popular local lecturer.

Addelston provided an overview of that century, and the men who defined it, in a talk, “100 Years of Jewish Geniuses,” at Congregation B'nai Israel in Toms River on April 23. The event was organized by CBI's Adult Education Committee and drew dozens of congregants in person and on Zoom to hear about the accomplishments of remarkable men who redefined their fields.

Addelston, a former Brooklyn and Manhattan high school social studies teacher, noted, with apologies, that most of the geniuses she cited were men – but only because information about the accomplishments of women went largely unrecorded in those days. She also apologized, she joked, “if you all thought [this talk] was going to be about your children and grandchildren.”

Addelston said her subjects were selected from a list of people who rose from a changed social and political landscape in Europe in the decades after the American Revolution. Their genius was also untethered following the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte, who helped lift the Medieval constrictions imposed on Jews

and broke down the ghetto walls. That, she said, “was the first time Jews had the ability to use their intelligence in the larger world.”

In her talk, she told the stories of the composer Felix Mendelsohn; the father of communism Karl Marx; the physicist Albert Einstein (and fellow physicists Edward Teller and Leo Szilard, who fled Germany and alerted Einstein about efforts there to develop an atomic weapon; Einstein then brought that information to the attention of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, spawning the Manhattan Project); the father of Zionism Theodor Herzl; the entertainer Ehrich Weiss, more popularly known as Harry Houdini; the father of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud; the statesman Benjamin Disraeli; the Soviet revolutionary Leon Trotsky; and the linguist Solomon Schechter. She also mentioned a number of other figures – and one woman, the American actress Sarah Bernhardt.

In not all cases was the “genius” used for the public good, she noted. Marx's legacy “led to some of the most murderous dictatorships in history,” all in the name of social equality. Fritz Haber, a Nobel Prize-winning chemist, figured out how to synthesize ammonia from nitrogen gas and hydrogen gas for use in fertilizer. But he was also the inventor of deadly chemical weapons used by Germany in World War I. And that gas was later altered to make Zyklon B, used in the Nazi death camps to carry out “The Final Solution.” Ironically, Haber had been driven out of Germany by the Nazis and died in Switzerland in 1945.

Nevertheless, Addelston said, most of the era's geniuses had made great contributions to humanity. “They came out of the ghettos, got educated and, I submit to you, benefitted the world,” she said.

Overall, Jews make up 27 percent of all Nobel laureates, 25 to 30 percent of recipients of Turing awards and about 50 percent of chess champions, Addelston said. Not bad for a people who make up less than a third of 1 percent of the world's population.

Local News

Jewish War Veterans of the USA Update

"A Jewish Voice for Veterans, A Veterans Voice for Jews"

By Al Adler

The calendar says it's spring but we have had some strange days. Temps in the 80s and the next day it is in the 40s. I can't wait for summer.

JWV and JWVA have been very busy this past month. On April 12, JWV Post 178 held a post meeting in Lakewood. The guest speaker was a member of the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office who spoke on senior scams. Unfortunately, seniors are a trusting group of citizens which makes them a prime target for scammers.

On April 12, JWVA National President Carol Adler and I attended a state meeting of the Department of New York. That afternoon we visited the Ronald McDonald House and presented a Grant A Wish gift to a terminally ill patient. We were given a tour of the facility, which is very beautiful.

On April 13, JWVA National President Carol Adler visited St. Mary's Children's Hospital where she presented several items to the staff from their wish list. Later that day we went to the Bronx VA Hospital where another Grant A Wish was presented to a chronically ill patient.

On April 14, two members of JWV, Bob Jacobs and myself, participated in the Honor Flight of South Jersey. The Honor Flight takes veterans from the Korean War and Vietnam War to Washington, DC, where the veterans visit the World War II Memorial, the Iwo Jima Monument, the Korean War Memorial and the Vietnam Memorial. In some cases, veterans are flown to Washington, DC, but in our case we took a very comfortable bus. That morning we were treated to breakfast at Williamstown High School where all the students cheered and saluted us as we walked to the cafeteria. That evening we were treated to a delicious dinner and once again the students greeted us with banners and cheers. If you have a chance to go on the Honor Flight please do go, you will never regret it.

On April 17, 18, 19 and 20, JWV Ladies Auxiliary National President Carol Adler and I made a visit to the Dallas JWV Auxiliary. Also on this visita was JWV National Commander Scott Stevens and his wife Bonny. On Friday night (April

17), JWVA National President Adler attended Shabbat services at a synagogue in Plano, Texas. On Saturday morning (April 18), we visited the Holocaust Museum and Human Rights Memorial. This was very special for Carol since her father was a survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camps. Next, we visited the Texas School Book Depository building and museum. We saw the window that Lee Harvey Oswald looked through when he assassinated President Kennedy and many other items related to that trajectory. That afternoon we were treated to a real Texas barbecue. It was very, very delicious.

On Sunday morning (April 19), JWV National Commander Stevens and JWV Ladies Auxiliary National President Carol Adler were guest speakers at the Dallas JWV Meeting. The breakfast was delicious and our guests were very kind and generous. That afternoon we went to the North Texas VA hospital where a Grant A Wish program was held for a patient. Sunday evening, we all attended the Heritage Ranch Golf Club and Country Club where a very special program was held highlighting the National Defense Briefing Series. The very interesting guest speaker was Gen. Kevin McLaughlin. Gen. McLaughlin worked for Presidents Reagan through Obama where he presented intelligence information each morning for the Presidents.

On Monday (April 20), our JWV and JWVA group visited the Fischer House in Dallas. The Fischer House was designed to house veterans and their families where they undergo medical services and treatment. JWVA presented the Fischer House with many items that they needed. After our visit to Fischer House we visited the Dallas VA Medical Center where Grant A Wish gifts were presented to a deserving veteran.

On Thursday, April 23, JWV Past State Commander Al Adler and JWVA National President Carol Adler attended the installation meeting of Post 125 in Deal, NJ. Congratulations to all of the installed officers.

I hope many of our dedicated readers will have attended JWV's Legislative Breakfast on May 3. This year we honored Assemblywoman Melinda Kane as our Legislator of the Year and the Bob Woo-



JWVA National Judge Advocate Natalie Blank, Department of New York JWVA President Stephanie Naftelowitz and JWVA National President Carol Adler at the Department of New York JWVA Meeting at Ben's Deli in Queens



JWVA Department of New York President Stephanie Naftelowitz, JWVA Past National President Petra Kaatz, JWVA National President Carol Adler and the Grant A Wish Recipient



Al Adler and others attended the Honor Flight.



From the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum



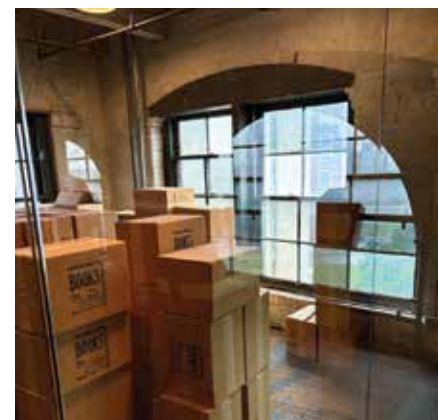
Members of JWV and JWVA at the Dallas VA Medical Center for Grant A Wish



JWVA Past National President Sandra Cantor and JWVA National President Carol Adler at the Department of Texas Meeting

druff Foundation as Organization of the Year. Congratulations to our honorees.

Till next month, God bless our troops, care for their families and never forget our veterans.



From the Dallas Schoolbook Depository 6th Floor Window

Local News

Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day

By Ellen Keller
(photo credit: David Kulchinsky)

A ceremony for Yom HaShoah, the day when we remember the Holocaust, was held at Beth Am Shalom in Lakewood, on April 14. It was presented by: The Jewish Federation of Ocean County; Beth Am Shalom, Lakewood; Congregation B'nai Israel, Toms River; Congregation Ahavat Olam, Howell; Jewish Community Center of Long Beach Island, Spray Beach; and Temple Beth Or, Brick. The clergy of these congregations participated in the ceremony.

Chairperson Fran Gimpel welcomed those in attendance. After opening remarks by Rabbi Eli Perlman, we sang both "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "Hatikvah." Survivors, as well as children and grandchildren of survivors came forward to light memorial candles, followed by Cantor Vadim Yucht's rendering of "Ani Ma-amin." Rabbi Michael Jay read the touching poem, "The Butterfly."

Ms. Gimpel then introduced Naomi Miller who presented "You are the Future." Ms. Miller was born in a displaced persons camp; her first language was Yiddish. Actually, one of the reasons I attended the ceremony was to see Naomi, who had been my Yiddish teacher on Zoom for over a year, a few years ago. Despite a recent illness, she has not lost her ability to entertain, a passion from childhood.

With visual aids, she lyrically introduced people from the Holocaust, including her own mom, whose doll she sang to, remembering her mother's little friend who was murdered. The friend's doll is on display in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

She sang of potatoes, a common staple during the years following the war, holding a potato. The mother of a deaf son, Naomi signed a song, while her pianist narrated, what life was like for a deaf person in the camps. Her presentation made the unthinkable real, through tender music. Her voice and charm made us "see" the events described.

After a Hannah Szenes piece "Halicha LeKesariya" (otherwise known as "Eli, Eli") was sung by Cantors Ruth Katz Green and Daniel Green, "El Malei Rachamim," the memorial prayer for our martyrs, was chanted by Cantor Jon Saouma. Rabbi William Gershon recited the prayer in English. Cantor Yucht recited "Kaddish Yom HaShoah," with Rabbi Michael Klein responding with the names of the concentration camps and other places of martyrdom. Cantor Yucht also sang the "Song of the Partisans." The audience then recited the "Mourners Kaddish." Included in the printed program was a reading from "Night" by Eli Wiesel about the importance of bearing witness: "To forget would be not only dangerous but offensive; to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time." The ceremony concluded with a prayer offered by Rabbi Chaim Respes

Thanks to the committee: Chairperson Fran Gimpel, Rabbi William Gershon, Rabbi Michael Jay, Rabbi Michael Klein, Rabbi Eli Perlman, Rabbi Chaim Respes, Carol Adler, Sharron Greenberg, Ethan Perks, Anise Singer, and Judie Singer, for facilitating this moving evening. Additional thanks to: Cantor Jon Saouma, Cantor Daniel Green, Cantor Ruth Katz Green, Cantor Vadim Yucht, and pianist Ken Lipkowitz.

May the honored survivors continue to be well and strong. May our youth, who represent our future, learn that WE WILL NEVER EVER FORGET!



Holocaust Survivors Alert

If you are a Holocaust Survivor who has never applied for compensation, or was turned down previously, there are new funds and guidelines. For more information, you may call the Claims Conference in NY at 646-536-9100 or go to their website: www.claimscon.org. Click on survivor resources, then click on compensation programs. They have a FAQ (frequently asked questions) section which should be read prior to applying.

Dr. Irit Cohen L.Ac.

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Local News

Beth Am Shalom, Lakewood, Celebrated Baby Namings

During Kabbalat Shabbat Services on May 1, six children from three different sets of parents joined the congregational family at Beth Am Shalom to receive their Hebrew names. There were about 100 people who came to welcome the six children into Am Yisrael. Rabbi Eli Perlman and Cantor Jon Saouma conducted a very moving ceremony. It was obvious that everyone in attendance was deeply touched as the tears of joy were palpable.

Steve Joseph Groom and Ashley Michelle Weiss-Groom brought their son Lincoln Joseph Groom who was given the name Levi Yoseph Ben Avraham v'As-hamnu Michaella. Scott and Samantha Baron brought their daughter Camryn Ellis Baron who was given the name Zisel Ester Bat Shmuel Beryl v'Sara D'vora. Brian and Laura Hoicker brought their four children: Nicholas Aiden Hoicker who was given the name Asher Nissim Ben Beryl v'Sara, Brynleigh Eve Hoicker who was given the name Ester Bailah Bat Beryl v'Sara, Theo Vincent Hoicker who was given the name Tovia

Baruch Ben Beryl v'Sara, and Raelynn Mae Hoicker who was given the name Shoshana Gila Bat Beryl v'Sara.

On another note, Rabbi Perlman has received several requests from people who want to convert to Judaism. He began working with them to ensure that is what they really want to do and to help those who are serious through the process. While missionization is not a Jewish priority, it is a joy and honor to help those who truly want to join Am Yisrael.

For further information, call the BAS Office at 732-363-2800.



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The Elderly Were Among the Most Vulnerable in the Holocaust – and the Most Overlooked

“Eldercide,” on display at London’s Wiener Holocaust Library through April 30, explores how older Jews were especially unlikely to survive the Nazis, while those who did faced enormous challenges



German police search an elderly Jewish man at gunpoint in Kolo, Poland, circa 1941. (Courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum/ Instytut Pamieci Narodowej)

By Robert Philpot
April 3, 2026
timesofisrael.com

LONDON – It is a picture that speaks a thousand words: An image taken by an aid agency shows three generations of Holocaust survivors – and the markups to prepare it for publication that crop out the elderly grandmother.

“Eldercide: Older Jews and the Holocaust,” a new exhibition at London’s

Wiener Holocaust Library, explores the largely untold story of older Jews during the Shoah, examining stories of flight, persecution and survival through rare photographs, personal stories and objects. The exhibit runs through April 30.

In Britain, the stories of Jewish child refugees who escaped the Nazis on the famous “Kindertransport” are well known. But the plight of the elderly relatives they left behind is much less familiar.

It wasn’t until the 1980s and 1990s – by which time those older survivors had long since died – those researchers began to systematically record the audiovisual testimony of survivors. Organized programs for survivors to speak in schools or on Holocaust Memorial Day – instituted in the UK in 2001 – also came too late to capture their experiences. “Our stories of the Holocaust are somewhat skewed by survivors today because they were children, and so they’re talking about their parents’ experiences or remembering their grandparents, but we don’t necessarily have those voices of el-

derly survivors,” says Christine Schmidt, acting co-director of the library.

The experience of the generation born in the wake of the Industrial Revolution is both unique and difficult to piece together. Some of those featured in the exhibition were born before the Russian Empire abolished serfdom, others in the immediate aftermath of the US Civil War and the unification of Germany. “It stretches your mind from the 20th century into the 19th,” says Schmidt. “It allows you to think of a longer timeline for people who were impacted by the Holocaust.”

Most older Jews who were deported to the camps did not come out alive. The Nazis deemed the elderly, like children, “not fit for work,” meaning they were often selected first for transports and then for the gas chambers.

In the first liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto in the summer of 1942, for instance, the elderly, children and the sick were singled out as “unproductive”



An image of three generations of Holocaust survivors is prepared for cropping by an aid agency ahead of publication. The elderly member is left out. (Wiener Holocaust Library Collections)

and sent to the Treblinka extermination camp. Within months, only a few hundred elderly ghetto residents – some of whom tried to disguise their age, present themselves as fit for work, or hide in cellars or attics – remained. “The exhibition tries to strike a balance between the particular vulnerability of the elderly due to age and the physical challenges of the persecution they faced,” says Schmidt, “but also their agency, and the fact that there were people who managed to esca-

Continued on page 24

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Jewish Federation of Ocean County Impact

You Made an Impact through the Jewish Federation of Ocean County – Yad Ezra v’Shulamit

Thank you message from Aryeh Lurie, Founder, Yad Ezra V’Shulamit



Well Done. Together we gave 62,113 food baskets!

Dear Friend,

This year Pesach was challenging. Missiles were flying, sirens blaring, and many people across Israel were in need of food, so many that our food basket waiting list reached over 5,000 families. And even with the US Dollar at a record low, we set out to feed them all. With your help, we gave 62,113 food baskets, feeding our entire Pesach list plus 2,113 families from the waiting list!

What 62,113 food baskets looks like



863,582 potatoes 993,808 carrots 310,565 pounds of matzah 124,226 bottles of grape juice



Thank you for being our partner in giving! Wishing you and your family blessing and abundance.

out to us for help before Pesach, and thanks to your donation, we got Sarit and her girls off the waiting list and gave them food for the Seder!

As we approach Holocaust Remembrance Day, we want to make sure that no matter what the survivors endured, they should never suffer from hunger again. Yad Ezra V’Shulamit proudly stands with thousands of Holocaust survivors across Israel, giving them food baskets every week in dignity.



YOU Made an Impact through the Jewish Federation of Ocean County - Jewish Relief Network Ukraine



Visit: www.jewishoceancounty.org/ukraine

YOU made an Impact through the Jewish Federation of Ocean County – Joel E. Perlmutter Memorial Food Pantry

Anabel Lindenbaum, co-chair of the Jewish Federation of Ocean County, joined other leaders from Ocean County for the ribbon cutting of the pantry's new location, sponsored by Somebody Cares Inc., located at 48 Schoolhouse Road in Whiting.

This special occasion marked the official re-opening of a resource that will make a lasting impact on those in need throughout our community.

Pat Donoghue, Executive Director of Somebody Cares, welcomed Jennifer and Julie Perlmutter, to help cut the ribbon in honor of Joel's legacy. It was a powerful reminder of how one family's dedication can create something that will help so many others.

The underserved population of Whiting is mostly made up of seniors and families from the local joint military base. The pantry is designed as a store that clients can "shop" to choose their own food. There are also many other services located at the same facility, including a lawyer.

Jewish Federation of Ocean County has been a supporter of the Perlmutter Food Pantry as part of our commitment to addressing food insecurity in Ocean County and helping underserved populations.

Also in attendance were Mayor Joseph Hankins; Commissioner Robert Arace; Senator Carmen Amato; Councilwoman Sandy Drake; and Captain Al Vega, Corporal Rob Maccaquano, and Corporal Ryan Saul from the Manchester police



department; along with volunteers, staff, and community partners who came together to support this important initiative.

The Joel E. Perlmutter Memorial Food Pantry is now open and ready to serve, and we are proud to continue supporting an initiative that reflects the very best of our community!

Introducing: Ocean Inc. Veterans EZ Ride Transportation Program

The program provides a monetary credit in an EZ Ride account that veterans use to book Uber/Lyft rides to and from medical appointments, grocery/retail shopping, military organizational social and any other community event. A spouse/caregiver is able to ride with the veteran. Participants must own a cell phone to utilize the program. If you or someone you know is a veteran and requires transportation services, contact the Ocean Inc. Veterans Transportation Coordinator, Carmine Czaplak at (732) 496-3704 or via email at cczaplak@oceaninc.org. During the registration process, be sure to have available a Drivers License, Military ID or Veterans VA ID and a copy of your DD214 Form.

Advertise in The Jewish Journal 732-534-5959

FedBeat from JFNA – Jewish Federations of North America

jewishfederations.org

Federations Mobilize Against Growing K-12 Antisemitism to Protect Students



From JFNA

Across the U.S. and Canada, Jewish students, teachers, and parents have faced a torrent of antisemitism in K-12 schools since the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack against Israel. Rather than staying on the sidelines, the Jewish community has mobilized to protect its rights in the classroom – emphasizing the need for inclusion, representation, and a commitment to learning. Jewish Federations are at the forefront of building relationships with superintendents, district leaders, and the leadership teams of independent schools to ensure we are working in partnership to protect Jewish students.

Recent initiatives hosted by Jewish Federations throughout the U.S. demonstrate the power of this intentional engagement.

In January, Jewish Federation Los Angeles (JFEDLA) hosted its third annual Education Leaders' Summit, bringing together over 100 superintendents, district officials, DEI directors, and independent school leaders to discuss Jewish inclusion and curricular considerations. The event included speakers from Jewi-

sh Federations of North America, the Anti-Defamation League, and Project Shema, who shared best practices for understanding and combating antisemitism and identifying key considerations for schools. It also featured a panel on Jewish diversity, comprised of members of different Jewish communities who shared personal narratives about their backgrounds, and a panel of local educators who had successfully addressed antisemitism and ensured Jewish inclusion in their classrooms. By the end, participants were prepared for ongoing engagement and partnership, with a fuller understanding of the issues affecting the Jewish community.

In February, Jewish Federation of Cleveland hosted its second annual Education Leaders' Summit. The 2025 inaugural summit was modeled after JFEDLA's initial convening. This year's summit brought together over 100 superintendents, district officials, and independent school leaders. In partnership with the local Anti-Defamation League and American Jewish Committee branches, Cleveland Federation also brought in additional local and national organizations leading efforts to ensure Jewish inclusion in the classroom and curriculum, including the Institute for Curriculum Services and Facing History and Ourselves. In addition to panels on key subjects, administrators worked through case studies involving complex situations of antisemitism in schools, providing them with collaborative opportunities to establish local best practices.

“The relationships and knowledge generated through the School Leaders' Summit have translated into stronger partner-

ships, and a deeper understanding of why and how to support Jewish inclusion and address antisemitism in K-12 spaces,” said Debby Berman, Vice President for Education and Advocacy at Jewish Federation Los Angeles. “We are so glad to see the program and its powerful impact recreated in other communities.”

These large-scale summits are not the only models for successful engagement.

Jewish United Fund (JUF) in Chicago regularly convenes superintendents in smaller groups, establishing deeper, cohort-oriented relationships. Since launching this program three years ago, JUF has seen significant decreases in antisemitism across the district.

In New York State, Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester hosts an annual fall K-12 leadership breakfast featuring a keynote speech on current events and, like Cleveland, opportunities for school leadership to model best practices that have enabled them to adequately address antisemitism in their schools. Other Federations also have similar models.

Given the different composition and background of every community, Federations sometimes need to adjust their content and language accordingly. In March, Jewish Federations of North America convened a conversation on best practices for engagement in red states, where laws around diversity initiatives and norms around classroom content are different than in bluer areas.

Douglas Greene, whose leadership as JCRC Director of Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte has given him a unique

perspective, has shared best practices for propelling successful partnerships and engagement with superintendents and district leadership with professionals in over 20 other Federations – enabling expanded partnerships with schools and districts throughout North America, and ensuring that K-12 leadership in every community is aware of the needs of Jewish students.

“While communities may differ in their exact approach to superintendent engagement, the effects of strong relationships and education opportunity aimed at school and district leadership are making clear change wherever they are implemented,” said Lauren Steinberg, Managing Director of K-12 and Campus Engagement at Jewish Federations of North America. “We are eager to see more and more Federations implement this programming as they strengthen their K-12 engagement capabilities.”

(Editor's Note: The Jewish Federation of Ocean County works with our local superintendents throughout the year. Dr. Henry Jackson has made presentations on our behalf at the superintendents' roundtable. Each year we offer them the opportunity to send schools to our Student Leadership Conference and sponsor students' attendance at Chhange's [Center for Holocaust, Human Rights and Genocide Education] Colloquium; leveraging our partnership with Ocean County Cultural & Heritage to provide bussing. We work with the superintendents down through principals and teachers to provide resources to combat hate of all kinds and ask them for their nominations for our Student Heroes Against Hate honorees.)

Jewish Federations Mobilize Over \$30 Million for Operation Roaring Lion

From JFNA

Jewish Federations of North America have mobilized over \$30 million in emergency response in the first four weeks of Operation Roaring Lion to support our brothers and sisters in Israel. Funds are supporting victims of terror, the displaced, vulnerable Israelis, reservists and their families, and those spending hours in shelters. They are powering mental health hotlines, matching volunteers with needs in the field, and strengthening resilience nationwide.

This figure does not include the tens of millions of dollars in funding that support the core emergency response capabilities of the Jewish Agency for Israel, JDC (Joint Distribution Committee), and the dozens of partnerships between Jewish Federations and communities and kibbutzim across Israel, all of which also are being used to assist in this time of war.

“We are proud to make a difference in the lives of Israelis – those who have been displaced, who have lost loved ones, who need shelter, economic support, or other

essential services,” said Gary Torgow, Chair of the Jewish Federations of North America. “The funding we have provided since October 2023 is at work alongside new resources being deployed now to meet evolving needs. We will always do whatever is necessary to support our brothers and sisters in Israel.”

At the same time, Federations continue to assess and respond to emerging needs on the ground.



Securing Our Community

Secure Community Network Update – April Report

By Michael G. Masters
National Director & CEO
May 5, 2026

Our community recently observed Passover and Yom HaShoah, marking freedom and a responsibility to bear witness to the consequences of hatred and violence. That responsibility sharpens our focus on facing the threats confronting our community today.

Recent incidents underscore both the complexity of the threat environment and the impact we can have when we work together to stop those who seek to do harm.

In Houston, TX, and Lexington, NC, arrests were made in connection with threats against a synagogue and a school. SCN worked proactively with multiple Federations, institutions, and public safety agencies in the midst of these threats; we continue to support law enforcement partners in these ongoing, multi-state investigations.

We saw a similar proactive law enforcement action in Atlanta, where an individual was indicted on firearms charges and for making interstate threats against the Jewish community, first identified and referred to authorities by SCN's Duty Desk.

As I shared with Bloomberg Businessweek, "As a community, we have doubled down on security because it's a necessity." That reality is reflected in our sustained investment across the community – and the strength of the shield we have built, ensuring a prepared, protected, and empowered community.

Our experience informs us that the safety of our community depends on proactive preparedness. This is not built in a moment. It is built through experience, coordination, and continuous practice.

As we mark the anniversaries of the 2014 Overland Park and 2019 Poway shootings, we are translating memory into future readiness through Standing with Strength: Stories of Survival, a groundbreaking video oral history project produced with Emmy-nominated director Craig Turk. The project features ten survivors of major attacks and disasters, bringing firsthand accounts to life to inform the training programs and community engagement that SCN, in partnership with Federations and other organizations, is making available across our community. We kicked off the rollout with a pre-screening in Dallas, which included a fireside chat with survivors Jeff Cohen (Colleyville 2022) and Audrey Glickman (Pittsburgh 2018).

Our work is guided by the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "On your walls I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night, they shall never be silent." That charge is one to all of us: from the receptionist to the rabbi, and from the trained professional to all members of the community. Through our shared commitment to preparedness, vigilance, and empowerment, we will live openly and proudly as Jews.

SCN will continue to stand watch, adapt, and ensure Jewish communities can live and thrive with safety and confidence for generations to come.

Stay safe.

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) established the Secure Community Network (SCN) in 2004. The SCN is a nonprofit organization that works to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish community in North America. The SCN's mission is to help individuals and organizations develop a culture of awareness, preparedness, and resilience through training, consultation, and information sharing. The SCN works with over 300 independent communities, 146 federations, and 50 partner organizations, as well as with partners in the public, private, academic, and non-profit sectors.



Jewish Community Calendar – June 2026

Compiled by the Jewish Federation of Ocean County based on submissions from the event hosts – Events can be submitted at www.jewishoceancounty.org/calendar. Most of the Jewish Virtual University webinars are emergent with only a few days' notice and are updated on the page www.jewishoceancounty.org/jvu and our facebook page facebook.com/jewishocean.

Friday, May 29, 12:00 Noon – Shared Stories, Shared Futures: Jewish American Heritage Month and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, presented by the Jewish Federations of North America, see www.jewishoceancounty.org/jvu for details

Sunday, May 31, 11:00 AM – Jersey Shore Blue Claws: Calling All Teens, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Ocean County, see page 28 for details and registration

Monday, June 1, 12:00 Noon – To Die Bringing Relief – The Travel of Israel Friedlander and Bernard Cantor in Ukraine: Insights From the JDC Archives, see www.jewishoceancounty.org/jvu for details

Tuesday, June 2, 1:00 PM (and every Tuesday) – Grief After Loss Group led by Rita Sason, Jewish Family and Children's Service, virtual online, 732-363-8010

Thursday, June 4, 12:15 PM (and every Thursday) – Torah with the Times: Timeless Torah, Timely Wisdom; study and discussion of the weekly Torah portion with Rabbi Isaiah Rothstein, see www.jewishoceancounty.org/jvu for details

Thursday, June 4, 1:15 PM (and every Thursday) – Queering the Parsha: A Weekly Study Group toward an LGBTQ+ Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion, with Rabbi Nikki DeBlosi, Ph.D., a Laasok program cosponsored by Keshet and A Wider Bridge, see www.jewishoceancounty.org/jvu for details

Thursday, June 4, 7:30 PM (and the first Thursday of every month) – Caregivers Group led by Rita Sason, Jewish Family and Children's Service, virtual online, 732-363-8010

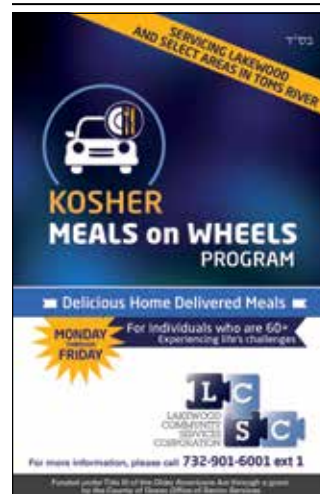
Monday, June 8, 3:00 PM – Protecting LGBTQ+ rights: A Jewish View, with Rabbi Micah Buck, see www.jewishoceancounty.org/jvu for details

Tuesday, June 9, 11:00 AM – Yiddish Book Discussion, about "The Zelmeyaners" by Moyshe Kulbak; at the Lakewood Branch of the Ocean County Library, 301 Lexington Avenue, Lakewood, see ad on page 30

Wednesday, June 17, 6:30 PM – Let's Connect, featuring Iris Bahr and her many characters, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Ocean County, see pages 1 and 16-17 for information and registration

Friday, June 19 – Juneteenth

For information, contact the event host or see related publicity in this issue of The Jewish Journal.



HELP WANTED

Volunteer Opportunities — You can make an IMPACT!

ENGAGING ADULT COMMUNITIES

The goal here is to find ways to engage the Jewish populations in adult communities/Shalom Clubs with the Jewish Federation and to connect them to other Jewish activities/opportunities.

- Identify contacts and key “network nodes” in these communities to serve as influencers, networkers, and communicators
- Manage and follow through on ongoing communications and sharing opportunities with these networks
- Help identify/explore/shape opportunities that can be offered/delivered to these communities to help strengthen ties with the Federation/Jewish community
 - Films
 - Speakers
 - Topics
 - Sponsorships of programs

IDENTIFYING/EVALUATING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Identify and vet possible grant opportunities for the Federation.

- Explore opportunities for Israel, overseas grantmaking that fall within the Federation’s priority/focus areas
- Help evaluate effectiveness and impact of grants through these possible partners
- Can also include identifying opportunities locally for the Federation to have an impact...beyond our current partners/grantees – what would enable us to maximize impact?

HELPING PROMOTE FEDERATION ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

We can always do a better job promoting our activities and impact, through media, email/other engagement, and delivery of promotional materials.

- Identification of new places to deliver materials
- Ongoing updates/communications to local papers and adult community newsletters
- Ongoing updates/communications/promotions through local synagogues/Chabads

PLANNING EVENTS

We organize approximately 3 in-person events a year, to enable our community to come together, connect, and celebrate (hopefully) with each other.

- We are looking for people to help spearhead the framing and organizing of these events
- While this can include logistics and actual set-up, prep...this ideally includes positioning, promotion, and framing of these events
- This also can include volunteering on-site and engaging with guests/others at these events... ideally to help build affinity and connection to the Federation and Jewish community

HEROES AGAINST HATE

The opportunity for this program goes beyond just event promotion and set-up. This can be a platform for expanding reach in the broader community and engaging other groups/individuals in the mechanism of countering hate, spearheaded by the Federation.

- Sticking with the framework for Heroes awards discussed thus far...help identify other groups, organizations, places to look for and nominate Heroes
- Explore ways to expand awareness of the awards and the event
- Expand recruitment of participants and sponsors for the event/program

PJ PARENT AMBASSADOR

We now have over 1700 kids participating in our PJ Library program. We’re looking for some parents who can commit to:

- Identify the needs of families, and develop engagement opportunities that meet their needs
- Develop, plan and organize intimate small-scale engagement opportunities at family friendly destinations or home-based gatherings
- Encourage parents to be involved in planning and organizing programs and gatherings

Contact Avi at kotleram@gmail.com for more information and to get started!



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FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US ONLINE AT **www.OHINJ.org**

Combating Hate



Heroes Against Hate

NOMINATE A HERO!

Who belongs on this year's list? At the Jewish Federation's annual Community of Caring celebration in December, we will be honoring local "Heroes Against Hate". We are seeking your help in identifying and nominating possible Heroes to recognize.

Ideal candidates would be individuals who or organizations that have had a concrete impact in our area:

- Countering hate or bigotry through individual action or initiating programs or activities to encourage standing up to hate
- Educating the community (especially younger audiences) about tolerance, diversity, and respect for differences
- Stepping up to respond to a crisis dealing with hate, bigotry, or bias
- Working to build bridges between different groups in our community, especially those where there may be differences or lack of understanding

When it comes to hate, bigotry, and discrimination no one community stands alone. Intolerance and attacks may be targeted to one particular group, but they seldom stop there; hate metastasizes and can spread easily. It takes people of faith and principle to step up, be upstanders, and to say: enough. That is the aim of honoring these Heroes Against Hate...to encourage more in our community to stand up, to speak out, and to make a difference. Please help us by identifying some of these local Heroes.

JFOC is proud to honor our county's Heroes Against Hate each year at our Community of Caring Celebration held in December.

2025 HONOREES

Sheriff Michael Mastronardy
Christ Episcopal Church
Daniel Hoffman

2024 HONOREES

Avi Kotler
St. Junipero Serra Parish
Chief Gregory Meyer
Reisa Sweet
Dr. Henry Jackson
Ariel Ifrah

2023 HONOREES

Prosecutor Bradley Billhimer
Caroline Winn
Jasmine and Mateo Guarin
Toms River Jewish Community Council

2022 HONOREES

Trevor Kalb
Ian Rosenzweig
Chief James Riccio
Sgt. Jim Kelly
Exit 82 Theatre

2021 HONOREES

Randy Bergmann
Sophie Braun
Tova Herskovitz
Chief Mitch Little
Toms River NAACP

Heroes Against Hate

YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME OF NOMINEE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

WHY THIS PERSON/ORGANIZATION IS A HERO AGAINST HATE. PLEASE BE SPECIFIC AS TO WHY THE PERSON DESERVES TO BE RECOGNIZED.

TICKETS
\$36/person

Tickets and after
 show Meet & Greet
\$100/person

Join your friends for a community night out at

LET'S 
CONNECT

"Bahr has more voices at her command than a symphony has strings." - Variety



iris
bahr

ACTOR
 WRITER
 DIRECTOR
 COMIC



WEDNESDAY | JUNE 17 | 6:30PM

Join award-winning American-Israeli actress and comic Iris Bahr (Curb your Enthusiasm, Hacks, Dai (enough)) as she shares true and hilarious tales from her life and her travels, and meet some of her popular alter-egos as they engage with the crowd for a funny communal evening!

Visit www.jewishoceancounty.org/letsconnect to get your tickets.
 Location details shared after registration.

2026 Sponsorship Opportunities & Benefits



JEWISH FEDERATION OF OCEAN COUNTY
COMMUNITY OF CARING



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- Patron Sponsor: \$1,000** – Includes tickets for events and name listing in Ocean JPages

All sponsorship levels are listed in multiple issues of the Jewish Journal and featured on our website, in community emails and social media.

WWW.JEWISHOCEANCOUNTY.ORG/SPONSORSHIPS

----- The deadline to be in the next issue of the Jewish Journal is the first Thursday of each month -----

Name _____

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CVV _____ Expiration Date _____

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Signature _____

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My check in the amount of \$ _____ is enclosed.
(please make checks payable to: Jewish Federation of Ocean County)

Full Series Discount Sponsor Level: ___ Gold@ \$5000 ___ Silver@ \$2750 ___ Bronze@ \$1500 ___ Patron@ \$1000
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Single Event – Fill in Sponsor Level: ___ Gold@ \$1800 ___ Silver@ \$1000 ___ Bronze@ \$540 ___ Patron@ \$360
(Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors, please email camera-ready logo to sharron@ocjf.org)

Please list your name/business exactly as you prefer it to appear: _____

Let's Connect : Tickets ___@ \$36/person Tickets and Meet & Greet ___@ \$100/person
have a code: _____

Send form to: Jewish Federation of Ocean County · 1235A Route 70 · Lakewood, NJ 08701 · 732-363-0530



As One

**we secure. we support.
we respond. we engage.**



As one, we're a source of strength and resilience through adversity and prosperity.

As one, we bring our communities together to extend a helping hand to those in need.

As one, we're a living testament to the power of unity and shared purpose.

At the heart of this unbreakable spirit lies the Jewish Federations - the bedrock of Jewish communities around the world. We're the collective force that keeps Jewish life thriving, not just in times of crisis, but every single day.



As one, we uplift Israel and Ukraine by offering our unwavering support.

As one, we take a stand against the rising tide of antisemitism.

As one, we pledge to ensure the safety and security of Jewish communities worldwide.

Our mission is fueled by the generosity of community members like you. Your annual contribution empowers us to provide humanitarian aid to our allies, combat antisemitism, and nurture vibrant Jewish communities.

As one, we will lead the way to a brighter tomorrow where Jewish life flourishes for generations to come. Join us, and we will rise as one.



Shared Stories, Shared Futures: Jewish American Heritage Month and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

May 29th • 12:00 PM ET

In honor of Jewish American Heritage Month and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, this gathering will explore identity, resilience and belonging. Together, we'll reflect on the histories that shaped our communities, the values that sustain us, and the futures we are building.

To register for this webinar, see the Jewish Community Calendar on page 12.



"For the Lord thy God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and grapevines, figs and pomegranates; a land of oil olives and date honey."

Deuteronomy/Devarim 8:7-8

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helped to build Israel.
Today, we help keep it strong.**

Am Yisrael Chai - The people of Israel lives!

Five-star hospitality with excellence



Everyone who visits our mansion
will relax like royalty and leave
well-rested

A hidden gem in the heart of downtown Toms River Today's luxury, yesterday's comfort. Voted one of the best tea rooms in New Jersey! The Mathis House at 600 Main is a Victorian bed and breakfast and tea room where you can reward yourself by connecting with tranquility and creating memories that will last a lifetime. We are the perfect choice for overnight stays, afternoon tea, dinner or choosing a place for a special event.

Just minutes from the beach!

While we provide five-star hospitality with excellence, everyone who visits our mansion will relax like royalty and leave well-rested. The Mathis House is ideal for the corporate traveler, tourists from abroad or couples looking for a romantic getaway. Whether you're hosting an event for your club or entertaining a business meeting, our standards and attention to detail will create an experience like no other.



JUNE 2026

- June 6th** 7:00 PM Chef's Night Out German Dinner \$50 Adults
- June 8th** 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM Realtors Breakfast for Information and Meeting Space
- June 10th** 6:30 PM Mr. Magic Show with Ice Cream Buffet, Adults \$20, Children \$10
- June 11th** 6:30 PM Cooking Class with Chef Bill Ball \$25 a person
- June 12th** 7:00 PM Father's Day Sherlock Holmes Murder Mystery Dinner Show \$75 Adults
- June 13th** 1:00 PM 3:00 PM Huddy House Open House, Complementary Event
- June 13th** 7:00 PM Movie Night and Fire Pits with Charcuteries and S'mores \$35 a person
- June 17th** 5:00 PM Ladies of History Celebrating America's 250th Birthday Full Tea \$50 Adults
- June 18th** 6:30 PM Teatime for Children and Their Special Guests \$20 Adults and \$10 Children
- June 19th** 7:00 PM Elvis Tribute Dinner Show \$50 Adults Sock Hop Murder Mystery Dinner

- June 21st** 9:00 AM Father's Day Breakfast \$20 a Person
- June 21st** 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM Father's Day Teatime
- June 23rd** 6:00 PM Month Tea Club Meeting, Complementary Event
- June 24th** 6:30 PM Princess Tea Party with Elsa \$20 Adults \$10 Children
- June 25th** 6:30 PM Open House- tours and tastings for Special Events, Complementary
- June 26th** 7:00 PM Singles Meet and Greet with Charcuteries \$35 Per Person
- June 27th** 7:00 PM Bridgeton Murder Mystery High Tea \$75 Adults
- June 28th** 3:00 PM Outdoor Afternoon Farm Stand with Vendors

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May all have peace.

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We invite our community members to submit a few photographs of their family's recent holiday celebrations. Include a one-line caption describing the activity in the photo.

You may include everyone's name or just your family's name or without any names at all.

All submissions are subject to our editorial review, and we do not promise that all submitted photos will be published.

Email your submission to jewishocean@gmail.com.

We invite our community members to submit original poetry or short essays (500 words or less) to the Jewish Journal. All submissions are subject to our editorial review, and we do not promise that all will be published.

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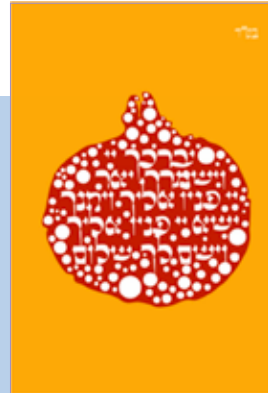
Jewish Federation of Ocean County accepts a minimum donation of \$18 and sends a Tribute card as well as lists your tribute in the Jewish Journal to anyone you may want to acknowledge; a simcha, graduation, an award, new grandchild, starting a new adventure, get well, loss of a loved one, or any other life-altering event. Call the Jewish Federation of Ocean County at 732-363-0530, email federation@ocjf.org or visit our website www.jewishoceancounty.org/tribute.



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JFOC Tributes

April 14 – May 4

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 Lillian's graduation by Barbara & Ernie Mathias
 Rita Sason by Rosa Geller

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Rita Amanik by Oscar Amanik
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PJ Library Photos with Children



Do you have a photo of your child reading or holding a PJ Library book? We would like to publish some of them. We omit the names of children. The names of any adults in the photos could be included or omitted based on the guidance of the adult submitting the photo(s). Email them to jewishocean@gmail.com.



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We are recording Holocaust survivor and witness testimonies across the United States and the Ceci Chan and Lila Sorkin Memory Studio at our headquarters in Los Angeles.

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The Jewish Journal of Ocean County is dedicated to the dissemination of information concerning significant events; social, cultural, and educational, that impact upon the Jewish community of Ocean County.

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Elderly

Continued from page 9



**Wiener Holocaust
Library curator
Christine Schmidt
(Richard Lewisohn)**

pe and there were people who survived.”

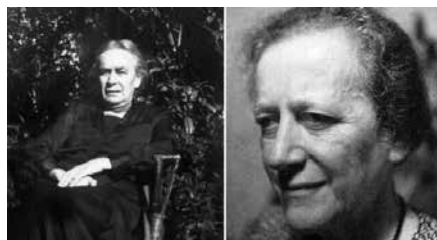
It was, the exhibition notes, especially difficult for elderly Jews to flee Poland. Some chose to stay, believing the Germans would behave “civilly” as they had in World War I. Attempting to flee east to the Soviet Union was, however, a perilous form of escape: The Soviet authorities deported many Jewish refugees to Siberia or central Asia, subjecting them to long journeys in cattle trucks with meager supplies of food and water. And those that made it to the settlements, camps and gulags faced forced labor, hunger and illness. Their best chance of survival then came if families remained together, with younger adults working while the elderly cared for their grandchildren.

But some did make it out to safety. Antonia Jacoby, aged 61, and her mother, Fanny Behrendt, aged 83, fled Breslau (today’s Wrocław) in 1940, undertaking a journey across the Soviet Union, Manchuria, China, and Korea, before reaching Kobe, Japan. Fanny, whose pension savings had helped fund their journey, died a month before the end of the war, having been born in 1857. Antonia moved to Israel in 1947, where she died in 1968.

The depths of Nazi subterfuge

The warped nature of the Nazis’ attempts to disguise their intentions is underlined once again in the experience of older Jews. Elderly German Jews, for instance, were forced to buy “retirement home contracts” – a way of conning them out of their life savings and presenting a false impression of their eventual fate. With good reason, many distrusted the Nazis and, as these forced retirements commenced, opted to take their own lives. In late 1942, 75 percent of those committing suicide in Berlin were Jews — the majority of whom were women aged over 60.

The Nazis also attempted to deceive the Red Cross in June 1944 by presenting Theresienstadt as a retirement settlement for older German Jews, rather than, as it was for many, a point of transit to the death camps further east. In reality,



Fanny Behrendt, left, and Antonia Jacoby, in undated photos (Courtesy of Yael Naaman)

while the elderly were not murdered on arrival at the camp, they suffered the harshest treatment, with many succumbing to hunger, illness and disease. Amid the suffering at Theresienstadt, some stories highlighted by the exhibition stand out.

Philipp Manes, who was in his late 60s when he and his wife, Gertrud, were deported from Berlin in 1942, established the Orientation Service. Initially intended to help newcomers, it morphed into a cultural hub which organized more than 500 events, including lectures, readings, theater and musical performances. Manes himself interviewed many prominent ghetto residents. Tragically, Manes and Gertrud were sent on the last transport from the camp to Auschwitz in October 1944 and murdered.

Very few older Jews who were deported survived their ordeal, although the precise number of elderly survivors is unknown. Grim statistics offer pointers. By 1948, the elderly constituted just 1.5% of displaced survivors of the camps.

Another clue is provided by data compiled by UN and Jewish relief agencies, which recorded the number of elderly survivors in displaced persons camps or Jewish old age homes. The numbers in American Joint Distribution Committee-funded care homes in Germany and Czechoslovakia were bleak: 92 residents in Berlin, 80 in Cologne, 100 in Dresden, and 30 in Bratislava. The largest group of elderly survivors is thought to have come from Theresienstadt, where around 4,800 people over the age of 65 survived.

Liberated, but not free

Liberation from the camps brought new challenges. “They had physically survived, but having seen the wreckage of family, of community, of their homes, it’s also clear that liberation isn’t just freedom. It came with all sorts of other difficult realities,” says Schmidt. “We old people are completely desolate,” Richard Feder, a survivor of Theresienstadt who went on to become chief rabbi of Slovakia, wrote in 1947. “We have lost our brothers and sisters, children, grand-



Swiss Red Cross workers distribute food to elderly Jews rescued from Theresienstadt in a school in St. Gallen, Switzerland, February 11, 1945. (Walter Scheiwiler/ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum/ Public domain)



Photos from an album documenting the Jewish Relief Unit’s activities in Germany, offering snippets of daily life for displaced persons and aid officers in places such as Bergen-Belsen, Kaunitz and Bar Harzburg immediately after the Holocaust (Wiener Holocaust Library Collections)

children, everything that was dear to us, everything that made life beautiful. We have lost everything... Only death will rid us of our grief.”

Thanks to Nelly Wolffheim, a German-Jewish feminist and writer who fled to Britain in 1939, the stories of some elderly survivors didn’t go unrecorded. In the 1950s, she conducted at least 30 interviews with survivors – many of them elderly – for the Wiener Library’s eyewitness testimony project. The interviews reveal the challenges faced by older refugees – loneliness, financial insecurity and the loss of their status and professions – but also underline their strength and contributions later in life. The resilience of some elderly survivors was remarkable.

Mordechai and Sheindl Rajs fled into Soviet-occupied territory in 1939. After the war, they traveled through Czechoslovakia and Austria back to Germany. Initially, they lived at a displaced persons camp. Owing to health problems, they were forced to wait until 1951 to secure visas to the United States.

Gabriele “Jella” Caro was 70 when the Nazis annexed her native Austria in 1938 and was deported to Theresienstadt four years later. In the camp, she spent long hours peeling potatoes and plucking horshair to earn a small amount of extra food, although that didn’t prevent malnutrition from damaging her eyesight. After the war, she returned to Vienna,

living for a time in a room with 14 other survivors at a home for elderly returnees. The exhibition displays a letter she wrote at this time. “I am completely alone here. My friends are all gone, some have died, many took their own lives or were deported. It really is a miracle that I returned. It is very sad to be so alone at age 77, without a home.”

Despite all she had endured, Caro lived to see her 100th birthday. In a strange twist of fate, a descendant of Caro – unaware that she featured in it – visited the exhibition in December. He has subsequently donated another letter and shed additional light on her experiences.

For the descendants of these elderly survivors, treasured heirlooms provide a link with the past. Avril Stone, for instance, now has tongs given to her Lithuanian grandparents, Bertha and Yitzhak Gutman, as a wedding present in 1903. The couple escaped to a forest when the Germans invaded. While Yitzhak became ill and died in hiding in 1942, Bertha survived. In the early 2000s, Stone was given the tongs by relatives in Israel who had taken them for safekeeping when they escaped to Russia. “Being in possession of the tongs is highly emotional, and they are greatly treasured,” Stone is quoted as saying in the exhibition.

For her grandparents – and many others – the Holocaust, Schmidt notes, marked “the very end chapter” of their lives. They had worked, raised families, had grandchildren, only to now be faced with a “cataclysm in their twilight years.”



Mordechai and Sheindl Rajs in an undated photo (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum/ Courtesy of Lillian Rajs Gewirtzman)



Family portrait with Bertha Gutman née Kronick, at center, in Lithuania, circa 1948 (Courtesy of Avril Stone)

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JEWISH FAMILY AND changing lives...

Seven Principles for a Successful Marriage

By Rita Sason, LCSW, Director
 Jewish Family & Children's Service

Although the month of June is the most popular month of the year to marry, the months of August and July follow close behind. Every year millions of people walk down the aisle and begin their new lives together as a couple.

Much preparation goes into making the wedding a memorable day. The focus is on the flowers, dress, food, and pictures. Couples want to share the love they feel for each other with the friends and family members who are in attendance.

Most couples start to have difficulty because our culture does not emphasize the tools needed to maintain and strengthen the bonds felt on that wedding day. Dr. John Gottman and Dr. Julie Schwartz Gottman of the Gottman Institute have developed seven points to improve and maintain a successful marriage long after the honeymoon is over.

1. Have high standards. In the research conducted by Dr. John Gottman, he found that the most successful couples are those who refused to accept hurtful behavior from one another. Low tolerance for bad behavior, even as newlyweds, make for a happier couple down the road.

2. Let your partner influence you. Margarita Tarakovsky, MA writes that "Happy couples are a team that considers each other's perspectives and feelings." Couples that make decisions together feel the partnership. This process allows each to feel honored and respected.

3. Soften your "start up." Gottman describes that arguments often "start up" because one partner escalates the conflict by making a critical or contemptuous re-

mark. Bring up problems gently and without blame. People are conscious of this technique at work, but it is useful in all relationships. Constructive criticism is still criticism, so being mindful of each other's feelings enhances the sense of respect and caring within the relationship.

4. Learn to repair and exit the argument. Happy couples have learned to end the argument or repair the situation before things get out of control. Using humor, acknowledging that this is a touchy topic, backing down, or even taking a break from the discussion agreeing to discuss it again later are all useful tools.

5. Learn to edit yourself. Good communication is not saying every critical thought that comes to mind. Thinking about the impact of a comment on your partner improves communication.

6. Focus on the positives. Romance isn't a vacation, expensive meal or flowers. It is in the day to day thoughtfulness that allows each to know they are valued. Text a message of encouragement if you know your spouse is having a difficult day or say, "I know this is important to you, we'll talk later," rather than saying "I don't have time." These examples may seem simplistic and mundane, but they demonstrate caring. Gottman states, "Happy couples have more goodwill and positivity stored in their bank accounts, so when rough times hit, their emotional savings cushion conflicts and stressors."

7. Seek help early. Gottman found in his research that the average couple waits six years before seeking help for relationship problems. Think about the consequences of waiting that long for any problem.

Together with the **Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference)** and a grant from the State of New Jersey, the Jewish Family and Children's Service of the Jewish Federation of Ocean County



has been providing the sacred obligation of pikuach nefesh (saving a life in jeopardy) to Holocaust Survivors for many years. We realize that unless you are impacted directly, you may not fully appreciate how important this work is. **Every dollar you contribute will be matched 25 times!**

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Great Summer Reading Tips



Summer is on the way. With camp, the beach, playdates, and the great outdoors calling, it can be easy to let good reading habits slip. We're happy to tell you that it's easy to integrate reading and stories into your everyday summer schedule. Whether you're slipping books into the beach bag or taking advantage of the public library's free air conditioning, there are many ways to make sure your family keeps reading all summer long.

Here are our tried and true summer reading tips:

Take Books with You – Toss books in your beach bag, your vacation carry-on, or in the stroller. On hot days at the park, encourage your child to take a minute enjoying some shade with a book of their choice. If you're packing for a vacation, make a big deal out of selecting a special "vacation read" together with your child.

Read Aloud Together – Studies show that children whose parents read aloud to them have a leg up on literacy and reading comprehension. Feel free to read aloud to children of all ages. Make silly voices, take turns, stop to answer questions your child might ask. You'll have fun and you'll be increasing your child's vocabulary while cementing a love of reading and stories.

Go to the Library – Local libraries often offer cheap or free children's programming throughout the summer. Hit up a program at your library or take a break from the summer heat to visit the

children's section. If your child is old enough, sign them up for their very own library card. Encourage your child to make their own selections at the library from the varied media available such as books, CDs, DVDs, and games.

Let Kids Choose – Let your children pick out what they want to read. If your school has a summer reading list, make sure to give them some free choice materials as a reward for working through their list. Don't shy away from unconventional reading materials like magazines or graphic novels either.

Set an Example – This one is pretty simple. If your child sees you taking time to read and write (and enjoy it), they'll model that behavior.

Make It Social – Join a summer reading challenge or a children's book group (or start your own). Join our PJ Library Facebook group and plan Get Togethers; this way you can build playdates and making new friends into your summer reading.



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Blessed are You, Ad-nai our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the light of Shabbat.

For Shavuot Night 1:
Blessed are You, Ad-nai our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the light of Holiday.

For Shavuot Night 2:
Blessed are You, Ad-nai our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the light of Shabbat & Holiday.

For Shavuot Nights 1 and 2:
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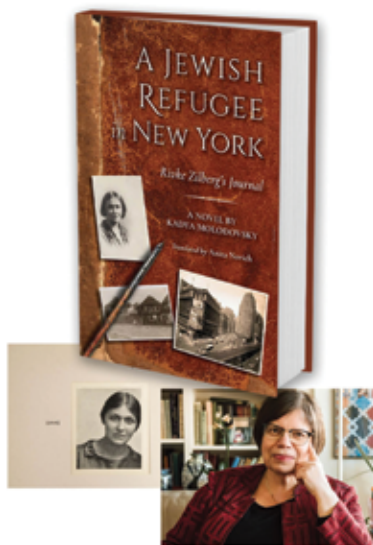
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May 12th – Tevye the Dairyman by Sholem Aleichem

June 9th – The Zelmanyaners by Moyshe Kulbak

July 7th – A Jewish Refugee in New York by Kadya Molodovsky

August 4th – The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen by Isaac Blum



Presented as part of the Yiddish Book Center's Public Libraries Program, in partnership with the ALA and funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

The Jewish Federation of Ocean County wishes everyone a happy Shavuot - Chag Sameach!

Green Cheesecake at Midnight

*By Sarah Rochel Hewitt
Jewish Treats by NJOP*

The Jewish Holiday of Shavuot is on 6-7 Sivan. (Editor's Note: This year it is on Thursday night-Saturday, May 21-23.) The holiday has three well-known, and well-loved, customs:

1) **Decorating our Homes and Synagogues with Plants and Flowers:** According to the Midrash, at the time of the giving of the Torah, Mount Sinai burst forth in blossoms of verdant greenery, covered with plants and flowers. This is the basis for the custom of decorating our homes and synagogues with plants and flowers on Shavuot.

2) **Dairy Foods:** On Shavuot, it is customary to eat dairy foods – cheesecake and blintzes are particular favorites.

Among the reasons given for this custom are: Once the Torah was given, the Israelites refrained from eating meat because they needed to learn the laws of kosher slaughter and to make their utensils kosher. They specifically chose to eat dairy and give themselves the time necessary to learn the laws. On a more mystical level, the gematria (numeric value of the Hebrew letters) of the word chalav, milk, is 40. Forty corresponds to the forty days and nights that Moses spent on Mount Sinai learning the Torah.

3) **All-Night Learning:** To demonstrate our love for Torah and our appreciation for God's revelation on Mount Sinai, it is customary to stay up all night on the first night of Shavuot either studying Torah, listening to lectures on Torah topics, or simply discussing Jewish ideas.

Another reason given for the custom of learning all night is to atone for the apathy of the Israelites, who, according to tradition, actually overslept on the morning that they were to receive the Torah, rather than being wide awake in excited anticipation.

(For other "Jewish Treats: Juicy Bits of Judaism, Daily" and many other Jewish resources visit www.jewishtreats.org and www.njop.org.)

What's the Recipe for Vibrant Jewish Life?

By Heather Morgan, Managing Director
JDC Global Marketing & Communications

At JDC (Joint Distribution Committee), this question is at the heart of our 111-year mission – lifting lives and strengthening communities in 70 countries. Though the ingredients for cultivating a proud Jewish future differ from place to place, the timeless value of arevut – the Talmudic notion that all Jews are responsible for each other – is always part of the mix. For the many Jews we serve around the globe, food is a crucial way they put this value into action. From JDC volunteers delivering challah to elderly, isolated Jews in Ukraine to a young leader in India making her grandmother's fish curry, Jews everywhere draw physical, spiritual, and emotional sustenance from dishes passed down generation to generation. I want to give you a taste of this dynamic Jewish world – as well as some much-needed joy – with this delicious cuisine. I hope you find the recipes as delightful as I do. Let's take inspiration from the rich and diverse culinary traditions that unite Jews everywhere.

Editor's Note: Here is one of the recipes – Discover Mengty's Milk Pie (Pie Susu). Watch future issues of the Jewish Journal for more recipes or check them all out at www.jdc.org/learn/recipe.

This recipe is particularly appropriate for the Jewish holiday of Shavuot (which begins on Thursday night, May 21) on which it is customary to eat dairy foods.



“Though the recipe looks easy, making milk pie requires patience as well as practice. Something I truly believe is that when you cook with love, the taste will touch every heart.”

~ Mengty Dese Benu, Program Officer at Pusaka Indonesia, a JDC partner



Ingredients –

Crust:

¾ cup all-purpose flour (100 grams)
3 tbsp. + 1 tsp. margarine (50 grams)
½ tsp. vanilla
1 tbsp. cold water

Filling:

~¾ cup sweetened full-cream or chocolate condensed milk (185 ml)
3 eggs + 1 egg yolk
1 cup + 2 tbsp. warm water

Instructions –

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees and prepare a heat-resistant dish (about 7 inches or 17 cm wide) with aluminum foil on the bottom for easy removal of pie. Mix the crust ingredients together and then pour it directly into the heat-resistant dish. Mix the filling ingredients together, then pour the filling into the crust. Sieve to get a smooth mixture. Bake for about 30 minutes, until the surface of the pie hardens. After the pie is done, let it cool. For an optional finish, top the pie with cheese, fruit, or chocolate.

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