



# SHALOM



The Journal of the Reading Jewish Community. Published as a community service by the Jewish Federation of Reading, Pa.

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## Shalit coming to Reading to tell remarkable story

Reading's Jewish community will mark Yom Hazikaron — Israel's Memorial Day — by spending an afternoon with Noam Shalit on Sunday, May 4, at 3 p.m.

Shalit will discuss his experiences campaigning for the release of his son, Gilad Shalit, who was held captive by Hamas for five years.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held at the Bernardine Lecture Hall at Alvernia University in Reading. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.



Noam Shalit, an engineer by profession, led an international effort to secure the release of his son Gilad, who was kidnapped in 2006. During those endless years, Noam worked tirelessly to keep his son in the forefront of national and international attention.

In 2011, they were reunited following a controversial deal in which more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners were released.

Noam will provide an insider look at the fight that he and his family waged to secure the release of Gilad from captivity and share the hardships and challenges that every Israeli family faces when they send their sons and daughters to war.

He will discuss the commitment of the IDF and the Israeli government to its soldiers; the controversial prisoner

exchange which ultimately won his son's freedom. He will also talk about what life is like for Gilad today.

The event is presented by the Jewish Federation of Reading and sponsored by Tali and Don Fox in honor of their daughter, Sgt. Mika Fox, IDF

Yom Hazikaron is held on the fourth of Iyar, the day preceding Israel's Independence Day. The Israeli Knesset (Parliament) designated it a Memorial Day for those who lost their lives in the struggle that led to the establishment of the State of Israel and for all military personnel who were killed while in active duty in Israel's armed forces.

Today young men and women from around the world serve in the IDF. On this day we remember those who gave their lives.

## Putting it in context

By Tammy K. Mitgang

It was Palm Sunday for some, Passover prep time for others, when the news began breaking. A well-known Ku Klux Klan leader had murdered three people at two Jewish facilities just outside of Kansas City. William Lewis Corporon, a 69-year old physician, and his 14-year old grandson, Reat Griffin, were gunned down at the JCC, where Reat planned to audition for a vocal scholarship. Terri LaManno, a 53-year old occupational therapist who worked with visually impaired children, was visiting her mother in a senior facility when she was shot and killed. The shooter came out of nowhere and slaughtered them.

For many reading this column — Jews and non-Jews, you may be surprised to know that leading up to our Jewish holidays, security at our facilities is heightened. History, old and new, does not allow us to forget that there are reasons for door locks, buzzers, security cameras and panic buttons. Our phone lines are often monitored due to threatening calls. We report people who appear to be observing our building or behaving strangely. If we see something, we say something. Sadly, it is our reality.

We are thankful that our law enforcement agencies often call us even before we reach out to remind them of an upcoming Jewish holiday. If you were not aware of security concerns, I suppose it is a good thing — we are all doing our jobs to make life seem normal.

Perhaps we should be more proactive in disclosing our behind-the-scenes efforts to prevent bad things from happening. We certainly do not want to scare people away from worship services, events and other activities at our facilities. In today's world of uncertainty and violence, I do not think I am heightening concerns by sharing our efforts. Everyone needs to "say something" when they "see something" unusual or suspicious. From Columbine to the Boston Marathon bombings, there is no shortage of violence in our country or around the world.

Federation's initial emails to our Jewish congregations and Federation board members went out later on Sunday evening after more information was obtained. The email informed leadership of the shootings and confirmed

that on Monday, our Center was on lockdown. Monday morning, I was met by a patrol car in our parking lot and Lt. Endy of the Wyomissing Police Department joined me for a telephone briefing with Jewish Federations of North America's national security initiative, the FBI and Homeland Security. Each of our synagogues was made aware of the ongoing security concerns. We stay in close communication.

I was anxious to close the Center early on Monday afternoon, admittedly more because I wanted everyone to go home safely than in anticipation of the First Seder. I worry; our Federation and congregational leaders and rabbis share those concerns; law enforcement understands our concerns and they remain especially vigilant.

Then, there were the flyers that were rumored to be circulating in Donetsk, Ukraine, on Thursday. The papers said Jews were required to register with the Nationalities Commissioner and pay \$50 or lose their citizenship and face deportation. If true, the pamphlet would be a troubling sign that a new phase of anti-Semitism was growing in the region some 60 years after the Soviet liberation of Auschwitz. The story went viral, news services quickly picked up on it and concerns escalated from Jewish communities all the way up to the US State Department. The flyer was later determined to be a disturbing political provocation, but the instructions were meant to recall the Nazi era and intended to intimidate the local Jewish community.

And, then on Good Friday, our local newspaper chose to reprint a syndicated cartoon about the shootings. The cartoon was by Lee Judge, a political cartoonist based out of Kansas City. It was a tipping point in a very long week of tensions. The cartoon, described by the newspaper's management as "ironic", was not well received by many readers — myself included. There were many conversations that day — some productive, others, not so much. In one discussion, the cartoon was likened to Stephen Colbert's "Ching Chong" punch line gone wrong. I will spare the hashtag(#).

Needless to say, the newspaper meant no wrong. Its editorial staff selected the

## JFNA responds to shootings

In the wake of the Kansas City-area shootings at the Jewish Community Center and Village Shalom Assisted Living Center on April 13, the United States Department of Homeland Security convened a high-level security briefing with the FBI and the Secure Community Network, the national homeland security initiative of The Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. More than 350 community leaders from Jewish Federations, JCCs, synagogues, and other organizations participated in the teleconference. Security officials provided updates on the situation and advised on protective measures Jewish leaders should consider.

cartoon not thinking about the readers' lack of the history of the cartoon and its creator and that it was originally created for Judge's hometown newspaper, *The Kansas City Star*. Out of "context" (the first lesson of satire), the initial read of the cartoon was inflammatory and insulting. And, "Yes", we do get it! But, the cartoon lost its relevance, especially on a page in the newspaper that many of us dread reading each day — *Reading Eagle* Opinion. Too frequently the letters remind us of just how hate-filled and intolerant our world can be. We have all read letters to the editor that cause us to gasp, many that should never be reprinted.

For most us, the readers' choice in the cartoon is obvious when asked to pick the "one that's ruining our country". And in a kinder more tolerant world, the editorial staff would be right.

**Tammy Mitgang**

P.S. — Special thanks to Rabbi Brian Michelson, Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom and Rabbi Minna Bromberg for helping to co-write a letter to the editor of the *Reading Eagle* signed by Federation Chairman Al Katz. Due to the newspaper's policy, a letter considered for reprinting may only have one name attributed to it. You should be aware that the letter represents a unified effort.



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**2014 totals as of April 18**

**Jewish Community Campaign \$237,477**

**\*Includes transfers from Donor Advised Funds**

# Federation News

## Do it for your future self

By Paul L. Landry



As you read this I will be at Disney World with my daughter, her husband and our three grandchildren. (Notice that they are not my daughter's children but MY grandchildren!). We're extremely lucky to have all three of them in town so that we get to spend a great deal of time with them. But the negative side of that is that we probably worry more about them than we would if they lived hundreds of miles away.

And as we worry we're constantly thinking about what we could do to help them or what community assets are available to help them. In truth, the issues we worry about are almost

always fleeting ones, and no help is needed as they just go away with time — but not always.

Some issues are more serious and require more serious help. And that is why a society (every society) maintains capabilities to deal with a variety of issues — police, fire departments, child welfare departments, hospitals, even the military.

And that is just what the Jewish Federation of Reading is! It's a resource for the Jewish Community of Berks County. It provides a wide range of services that help to make life better for the Jews of the county. It helps maintain Jewish traditions and culture. It helps provide continuing Jewish religious education for our older children. It helps to send children to Jewish summer camps

where their knowledge and appreciation of what it means to be Jewish can continue to grow. And at the other end of the journey, it helps to provide the culturally appropriate support that many of our seniors need as they age.

You may not personally need or avail yourself of these services at this time. But keep a couple of things in mind: you will almost certainly have

children/grandchildren at some time who will need these services; and you will certainly grow older and may well need these services in the future.

So you have a vested interest in making sure that the Federation is strong now and into the future. So please, give to the 2014 Jewish Community Campaign. If you don't want to do it for anyone else — do it for your future self.

## More happy campers

We are pleased to announce the addition of three new 'happy campers' to our list of Berks County Jewish students who are recipients of Student Camp and Education Awards, a Federation program that provides monetary awards to help support their participation in programs that nurture Jewish identity.



Danielle Radosh



Rachel Radosh



Eli Rotenberg

The following students will attend Camp Harlam in Kunkletown, Pa.

**Danielle Radosh**, is a third grade student at Green Valley Elementary School in Sinking Spring. **Rachel Radosh** attends Wilson West Middle School, where she is in the sixth grade. They are daughters of Jodi & Lee Radosh, Sinking Spring.

**Eli Rotenberg**, a sixth grader at Wilson West Middle School, will also attend Camp Harlam. Eli is the son of Stephanie Rotenberg, Sinking Spring, and David Rotenberg, Wernersville.

\*\*\*

For more information on Student Camp and Education Awards, visit [www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org) or contact Tammy Mitgang at the Federation office-610-921-0624.

## Save the Date Federation Annual Meeting June 8 at the JCC

Light brunch at 10:30 a.m.  
followed by meeting and entertainment  
by folk singer and Reading native  
Les"Doc" Rachlin

Rachlin plans to offer a folk singer's take on popular Jewish-American music from Gershwin and other standards to rock and roll favorites.

Expect to hear a wide range of styles, keys and moods,  
all written by Jews

Here are some songs you're likely to hear:

- "Hound Dog"
- "I Can't Help Falling in Love With You"
- "Dr. Freud"
- "Don't Think Twice It's Alright"
- "TV Theme Songs"
- "Diamond Joe"
- "Hatikva"
- "How Did I Ever Find You"
- "Making Whoopie/The Glory of Love"
- "Brother Can You Spare a Dime?"
- "For Emily, Wherever I May Find Her"

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From the President's Desk

# Last words

By **Tammy K. Mitgang**  
President



Six years have come and gone and it is time for me to write my final column as your Federation president. A lot has happened during my tenure. The community leadership successfully sold its JCC building, a facility that had become financially unsustainable as our Jewish community's needs and habits changed. There was the move itself; the task of cleaning out a 50,000 sq. ft. building that had become a vast repository for the needed and not so needed — records, broken equipment, forgotten supplies and many items saved for the "just in case." The sorting was cathartic and spanned weeks. Working together with our staff, we tossed, recycled, sold, stored and moved furnishings to our new space. The day I pulled the letters off the front wall of the building was a difficult one. Three of those letters, J-C-C, hang in our new Center space. They are a reminder that people make the community, not the building. I never looked back. Thankfully, you didn't either.

Admittedly, the move was a lot to ask of a community, as was the arrival of a new executive. I remember our first Purim celebration just weeks after moving into our new leased Center space. I was nervous, but I am sure you were apprehensive, too. There were more questions than answers, but together we moved forward to relocate the Lakin Early Education Center into temporary space at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom, the education wing that will become its permanent home beginning this fall. Our health and fitness needs continued to be met at Body Zone Sports & Wellness Center, and our synagogue spaces became the main stage for a myriad of programs and holiday celebrations. Thank you, Rabbis Bromberg, Lipsker and Michelson for

your gracious hospitality and spiritual leadership.

We strengthened our partnerships with our local colleges and universities: Albright College, Alvernia University, Penn State Berks and Reading Area Community College. This community is blessed with places of higher learning professionally staffed and guided by visionary leaders. We discovered friends, old and new, in our arts and cultural community: GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, Miller Center for the Arts, Reading Musical Foundation, Reading Public Museum, Reading Symphony Orchestra, Sovereign Performing Arts Center (now, Santander) and theater space at both Fox East and Berkshire. Thanks to their facilities, we enjoyed important music and dramatic performances, art and history exhibitions and provocative film screenings.

We celebrated our diversity with the Islamic Center and many of the churches that make up Reading Berks Conference of Churches and honored Israel with pastors Steve and Liz Defrain, Morning Star Ministries and Christians United for Israel. Collectively, we worked hand in hand with Berks County Community Foundation, United Way of Berks County, Pennsylvania Jewish Coalition, ADL and our local and state politicians to build a stronger, better Berks County.

We continued to benefit from generous community members such as David Camp and Rosalye Yashek, who along with their families, remember Leo Camp and Richard Yashek with free public lectures featuring esteemed speakers. And, thanks to a simple handshake some 20 years ago, Jewish Federation of Reading and Albright College celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Holocaust Library and Resource Center. The Center will be renamed this month to honor Edwin Lakin and his late wife, Alma, in recognition of their generosity and commitment to Holocaust education. Over the years, I have been fortunate to work with the Center's committed coordinators/educators, Dan

Tannenbaum, Jennifer Goss and most recently Amanda Hornberger.

As a community and more personally, we have learned together, laughed together and prayed together. We have said goodbye to many dear friends who have passed away, others who have moved on. There is not a day that goes by that I do not think of mentors like Dan Tannenbaum and Alma Lakin — two people who were great community leaders and dear friends. Death does not count years, and I was blessed to know beautiful young people such as Lisa Bratt, who exemplified grace and beauty and Adiv Lift, who lived life fully and spiritually until his recent death at 17 years of age. It is during times of loss that I am most reminded of the incredible power of community that sometimes gets lost in the hum of the day-to-day.

It was my great honor to lead the first community mission to Israel in 15 years. If during my time at Federation, you learned something important that connected you to Israel or you were inspired to study more, give more, or travel to Israel, I am especially satisfied. Together our financial support helped Yemin Orde Youth Village rise from the ashes after devastating wildfires and funded a commercial kitchen that will feed thousands of Israel's needy and underserved each day through the work of Meir Panim. Most recently, I found myself writing the letter for Rabbi Bromberg's aliyah along with her husband, Rabbi Alan M. Abrams. It was one of my greatest pleasures.

I find my friendships in other communities invaluable, where working relationships have been forged across the country with other small Federations as well as nearby with our neighbors in the Lehigh Valley. Mark Goldstein, you are both a friend and consummate leader. Thank you.

From Philadelphia, we enjoy the benefits of Israel's Consulate (Mid-Atlantic Region) led by Consul General Yaron Sideman. I was fortunate to have worked with Lou Balcher at the

Consulate for many years and engaged in round table discussions with some of Israel's brightest and most provocative speakers thanks to his invitations. Our young people continue to benefit each week from Reading's Gratz High School, a branch of Gratz College in Elkins Park, and its branch director, Rabbi Dov Lerner and fellow teacher, Andrew Apt.

Each and every day, the staff opens our doors to you — tirelessly and with dedication and enthusiasm. I thank them for working through the many changes and challenges and helping us all move forward. They are a great team!

And, we cannot forget our volunteer leadership — our officers and directors. When many communities are struggling to find exceptional, committed leaders, our community has and continues to enjoy some of the finest. Most recently, Al Katz stepped to the plate once more to guide the organization brilliantly. I wish him the best as he, too, begins a new phase of his life. During my time as your executive, I have worked side-by-side with my dear friend Yvonne Frey Oppenheimer through much of the heavy lifting and transition, and benefitted from Paul Cohn's understanding of rebuilding the infrastructure that has helped to strengthen our organization. Our directors are committed, diverse in skills and opinions and respectful. They bring a plethora of ideas to the Federation table. Thank you all.

There is a song by Carole King, "You've Got a Friend," and my successes over the years have depended on your friendship and the friendships that define this community. These relationships benefit the Jewish community and better the broader community. To those mentioned and so many more ... Thank you.

I have no doubt that the new director will bring fresh ideas, inspired leadership and a good healthy dose of "newness" to our community. I know that I leave them in very good hands.

**Shalom,  
Tammy**

## Expanding the concept, and reality, of Jewish community

By **Jerry Silverman**

*Reprinted from New York Jewish Week*

Nate couldn't decide what he wanted to be for Purim — follow his heart and dress as an alien or succumb to peer pressure and wear a superhero costume? It's a tough decision for a little boy, but he got some help from his two dads.

"The Purim Superhero" was one of PJ Library's book selections for March. For nine years, and in partnerships with various donors and Jewish Federations, PJ Library has been sending free monthly

book selections to Jewish children up to age 8. Created by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), it's a tremendous program that not only encourages reading but does so in a Jewish context. Each month, 130,000 books are sent to families in North America, including many in Berks County, and the program has expanded to Israel and additional countries as well. Many Federations, including Reading's, have PJ Library gatherings to connect and engage families. (Learn more about the local program in this month's Centerpiece.)

As "The Purim Superhero" demonstrates, children receiving those books learn about more than Jewish holidays and traditions. They learn about Jewish life, and their families find an entry to Jewish communal life. Indeed, a study of 20,000 American Jewish families participating in the project found 58 percent said the program has influenced their decisions to "build upon or add a Jewish tradition to their home life" and 62 percent said it "increased their families' positive feelings about being Jewish."

Through PJ Library, books that focus on families with adopted children, disabled children (and kids with disabled family members), interracial and intermarried families, Jews of color, secular and Orthodox families, and, in this case, LGBT Jews, young children are exposed to the multifaceted world that is today's Jewish community.

Books such as Elizabeth Kushner's "The Purim Superhero" reflect life that so many of us already see in our communities, our children's schools, our synagogues and Jewish camps and sometimes in our own families. Few among us can say that we don't know a child with two moms or two dads.

PJ Library predicted, though, that this particular book might raise questions, so it made the selection available only by request as an additional book. Some questioned why didn't they just automatically send it to all. I applaud the HGF for being

sensitive, realizing we have a community that is diverse and offering a choice. The response has been overwhelming. In less than two days, PJ Library had exhausted its stock of 2,000 books. They quickly ordered thousands more.

A very few in our community were alienated by the choice of this book and have dropped their subscriptions altogether, even though they had the option of simply not selecting the book. That's their choice, of course, but that's also unfortunate. Those few families that canceled entire subscriptions are missing out on a wonderful gift for their children — a gift that demonstrates that not all families are the same — and one that is so much bigger than this single great book.

At Jewish Federations, we believe that every Jew deserves a welcome place in our community. We encourage PJ Library to continue sending children books that reflect the Jewish community's wonderful diversity. We recognize that not every family will choose to read every Jewish book to a child, but each family should be able to make the decision on its own. But those families who do choose to read all the books will be giving their children a tremendous gift — a gift that allows them to see the richness and diversity of Jewish life.

*Jerry Silverman is president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of North America*

## SHALOM

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**General Offices:** 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125  
Wyomissing, PA 19610  
**Phone:** 610-921-0624 **FAX:** 610-929-0886  
**Web site:** [www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://www.ReadingJewishCommunity.org)

### Jewish Federation of Reading

**Chairman:** Alvin Katz  
**President:** Tammy K. Mitgang  
**Communications Director:** Mark Nemirow, Editor  
**Proofreaders:** Federation staff  
**Member:** American Jewish Press Association

The opinions expressed in Shalom are of the writers and not the Jewish Federation of Reading

**Deadline for the June issue is May 5**

## Making great plates for Passover



JCC Youth group members Nina, Harry, Ruby, Erin, Molly and Melanie proudly present the Seder plates they painted at Busy Bees Pottery during a JCC Youth Group event.

## It's Simcha Supplement time

If you had or are having a bar/bat mitzvah or graduation (high school or higher) in your family this Jewish year, share the good news with the community. Please submit a few sentences about the person and their accomplishment, along with a photo.

Text and photos can be sent to [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) or to the Federation office.

**IF YOU HAVEN'T SUBMITTED YOUR INFO AND PHOTO YET, PLEASE DO SO IMMEDIATELY**

## Sephardic celebration



Sheilah Kaufman presented a program on "The Sephardim: Who they Are and the Customs and Foods They Use to Celebrate Passover." This program was sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Reading and held at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Sheilah provided the attendees with a history of the Sephardim and their customs while they enjoyed Sephardic haroset, Abravanel's haroset and artichoke and lemon spread. A wonderful Sephardic Passover buffet followed.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO the following members of the Reading Jewish Cultural Center who have won prizes in the 2014 Jewish Cultural Center Membership Raffle

**George and Marlene Weiss** – 2 tickets to Menopause the Musical

**Alan and Margie Leisawitz** – Six general admission tickets to the Reading Fightin Phils courtesy of Met-Ed

**Joan Mellon** – A pair of movie passes to Fox Theatres courtesy of Fox Theatres

**Roz Hyman** - A pair of movie passes to Fox Theatres courtesy of Fox Theatres

**Bob and Shirley Kauffman** - A pair of movie passes to Fox Theatres courtesy of Fox Theatres

**Herb and Sue Wachs** - A pair of movie passes to Fox Theatres courtesy of Fox Theatres

**Dena and Vic Hammel** – 2 tickets to the Reading Symphony Orchestra's Season Finale courtesy of RSO

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**Turn to Page 14 and make a  
difference  
in your community.**

# Community gathers for JFS Sederim



Jewish Family Service held Seders at Berks Heim and at the Manor at Market Square in the days leading up to Passover, providing a special opportunity to celebrate for seniors and their families..



*Glenn and Bob Brok.*



*Arlene and Jacob Krumholz*



*Martin Rudolph and Floyd Rutenberg*



*Jeanette Saft and granddaughter Abigail Heisler*

# Gratz students head to GoggleWorks for exhibition

Students in Reading's Jewish Community High School (JCHS) of Gratz held classes at the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts March 23.

Students viewed the exhibition, "Your Fortunate Eyes – Photographs by Rudi Weissenstein," curated by Ben Peter, Michal Amram & Andreas Grau-Fuchs of Pri-Or PhotoHouse Tel Aviv.

The exhibition was in the Cohen Gallery through April 13. Tammy Mitgang, Federation President, introduced the exhibition to students and parents. Rabbi Dov handed out questions that challenged the students to closely observe the photographs in order to answer them.

Later the students went upstairs to reserved classrooms in the center for

class. Popcorn was served as a special snack.

Jewish Federation of Reading would like to thank GoggleWorks Executive Director Phil Walz and his staff for exhibiting the esteemed Israeli photographer's work and for their ongoing support and hospitality.

Weissenstein immigrated to Palestine in 1936 from Iglau (today the Czech Republic). He died in 1992. He created the largest private photo archive in Israel, containing more than one million negatives- the visual memory of his country. Originally, he worked as a freelance photojournalist for newspapers and press abroad, including the Berlin based *Jüdische Rundschau*. Most of his photographs were taken between the

1930s and 1970s.

Weissenstein documented the arrival of Jewish immigrants, the construction of new settlements and industries, the kibbutz collective and Bedouin Arabs, as well as military parades, cultural events and scenes from everyday life. He also followed the work of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra for 40 years and worked intermittently for the United Nations.

In 1940, World War II had already reached the Middle East and he along with his wife, Miriam, had founded Pro-Or PhotoHouse in Tel Aviv. His first clients were English, Australian and Canadian soldiers. Ultimately, his exceptional reputation as a photographer earned him sittings with Gold Meir, Menachem

Begin, Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peters and many of Israel's most celebrated figures. He also was invited to Tel Aviv Museum on Rothschild Boulevard on May 14, 1948, where he was the only official photographer asked to record the signing ceremony for the State of Israel's Declaration of Independence.

Encouraged by Rudi's grandson Ben Peter the traveling exhibitions not only generate interest in the history of Israel through the photography of Weissenstein but they help to generate revenues that are being used to offset the cost of digitizing the fragile negatives that are in jeopardy of being lost due to age. The National Library of Israel is taking part in the massive digitation process.



Tammy Mitgang introduces the "Your Fortunate Eyes" exhibition to Gratz JCHS students in the GoggleWorks.



# Community News

## All Around the Town

Congratulations to **Rabbi Yosef Lipsker and his wife, Chana**, on the engagement of their daughter Zeldi to Mendel Rosenfeld of Zurich, Switzerland.  
\*\*\*

Congratulations to **Jesse and Jessica Leisawitz** on the birth of daughter Rose Catherine and to grandparents **Doris and Elliott Leisawitz**.  
\*\*\*

Mazel Tov to **Ben and Michele Leisawitz** on the birth of their son, Adam Isaac and to grandparents **Doris and**

**Elliott Leisawitz and Jay and Evelyn Lipschutz** and great-grandparents **Sid and Esther Bratt**.

Welcome Elliot Baren Taylor to proud parents **Laura and Josh Taylor** and awesome big sister Clara. As well as very happy and proud grandparents **Susan and John Wagner**.

*Until next time: Shalom!*  
Please e-mail all your simcha news to [joaniedecorating@comcast.net](mailto:joaniedecorating@comcast.net)

## Obituaries

**Adiv Vivek Lift**, 17, of Enola, PA and formerly of Wyomissing. Adiv taught Hebrew School and was a member of BBYO. He also played soccer for East Pennsboro High School. Adiv is survived by his parents, Varsha Lift and Carl Lift, his brothers; Amit, Elan and Daveed Lift, his sister Priya and brother-in-law Adam Warren. Other survivors include a niece, Samara Warren and his grandparents Moishe and Ruthie Lift and Bipin and Urmila Shukla.  
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**Norman W. Hirsch**, 88, of Wyomissing. He is survived by his wife, Phyllis F. Hirsch, his daughter Amy Hirsch and his sons Bruce

Babitz and Corey Hirsch. Other survivors include his grandchildren: Danielle, Jonathan, Ben and Mel and his sister Patricia Frankel of Wyomissing.  
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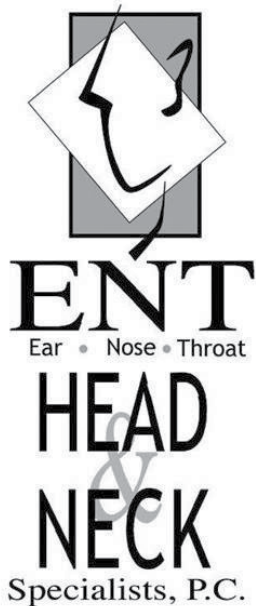
**Eugene Abramowicz**, 86, of Reading. Eugene was born in Berlin, Germany, and was a Holocaust survivor.

Before coming to the United States he spent five years working for the U.S. Army because of his ability to speak fluent English, Hebrew and German. He is survived by two sons: Sig Abramowicz of Florida and Robert of Temple. Other survivors include two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren and his brother Alexander Abramowicz of Mohnton.

## Thomas art exhibit opens



Artist Theodore Thomas with daughter Candice, left, and fiancée Linda Thompson Saknit at the opening reception of "Art and Remembrance — Memories, like the corners of your mind," on display through May 29 at the Jewish Cultural Center.



James P. Restrepo, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
Charles K. Lutz, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
Jeffrey S. Driben, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
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985 Berkshire Boulevard, Suite 101  
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Lunch: 12:00 noon/Presentation: 1:00pm

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# Congregational News

## Student volunteers lead special program to mark Passover



Some teenagers in our community have volunteered their time at least one time per month at the Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom Religious School the past two years. These teenagers have not only served as positive role models and guides to our younger

students, they have had an opportunity to develop their teaching and leadership skills while strengthening their Jewish identity. The students volunteering this year were Alexa Chronister, Bryce and Chase Weizer, Evan Cardinal, Hannah and Tobias Walker, Jamie Zamrin and

JoJo Ure. Cindy Chronister was the adult teacher/facilitator of the group. They all deserve thanks for providing such a great role model and being such a big help.

One of the programs the Madrichim coordinated was a Passover activity program on April 13. The students

taught and sang songs, played games, organized a Jewish Jeopardy game and planned Passover crafts. Grades Pre-K thru 3 made Afikomen bags and Grades 4 – 7 made Kiddush cups. Thank you to Rabbi Bromberg who led the group in some great Passover songs.

## Oheb Sholom hosts artist in residence for weekend



Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom hosted an artist-in-residence weekend featuring Cantor Ronni Pressman of Temple Ner Tamid in Bloomfield, N.J.

The event, held Feb. 28 to March 2, showcased Pressman's talent as a visual

artist as well as a singer.

There was a family-focused art activity before Friday night services, a Tallit-making class and Zen Tangle on Saturday, and various activities during Sunday Religious School.



# Remember what truly counts in our lives

By Rabbi Brian Michelson

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

I am a glass half full kind of person. I think it is one of the ways I keep my sanity. I could spend my days full of doom and gloom, bemoaning the things that are changing in my world and the world at large, but, personally, I find that this takes a great deal of effort and energy. It is exhausting to be Chicken Little, even when you are right.



As I see it, there are some things we

can control and we should do our very best to work and plan so they turn out as we would want them. However, there are even more things that we cannot. I know as well as anyone that this can be frustrating and disappointing. In these circumstances the one thing we can always control is the way that we respond to what happens around us.

We are constantly being asked to consider how we want our days, months, and years to be counted. Will they be counted as days of achievement or service, or as self-indulgent, or as missed opportunities. I know that all of us have days that are each of these, but what will

the final count be?

On the Jewish calendar, this time of the year is a gentle reminder of very idea. We are in the midst of Sefirat HaOmer, the seven weeks in between Passover and Shavuot. In the ancient world, this time was counted out by a special offering of barley. Each day was counted as we made progress from the early spring into the beginning of summer. I always think of the verse from Psalm 90, "Help me to number our days that we may attain a heart of wisdom."

One of the explanations for setting this time aside is that it is understood as the engagement period between God and the Jewish people. The relationship

begins with the exodus from Egypt and is sealed with the giving of the Ten Commandments on Shavuot.

In addition, at the end of Passover and on Shavuot there is the practice of reciting the Yizkor service as we do on Sukkot and Yom Kippur. This practice, I believe, is a constant reminder that death is very much a part of life and each day we record just a little bit of how we will be remembered.

As we move through this time of counting, may we remember what truly counts in our lives and may we learn to see the opportunities that life presents and use them wisely.

## Adult Education with Rabbi Minna Bromberg

### "Hot Topics in Halakhah"

Wednesdays, May 14 and 21  
at Kesher Zion Library, 2 to 4 p.m.

Contact the KZ office at 610-374-1763  
for reading material in advance.

## Healing Service at Kesher Zion

*Tuesday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.*  
in the KZ Chapel.

*All are welcome to join!*

## LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

CHABAD CENTER OF BERKS COUNTY (610) 921-0881  
Saturday mornings: 9:30 a.m.; Friday evenings: 6:30 p.m.

KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE (610) 374-1763  
Weekly services Saturdays: 9:30 a.m.; Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.  
Friday Evening Service – Please call for service information  
Babysitting available upon request with one week's notice

REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034  
Friday, May 2 at 6 p.m. with guest speaker Ryan A. Breisch  
Saturday, May 10: Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.  
Fridays, May 9, 16, 23 and 30: 7:45 p.m.  
Saturday, May 31: Jenna Schwartz Bat Mitzvah, 10 a.m.

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## Spring and Passover

By Anne Seltzer

Spring has finally decided to make an appearance in Berks County. Of course there was that little glitch of a dusting of snow during Passover, but it melted quickly. Don't know about you, but to me this appeared to be a long and unrelenting winter. It certainly makes me appreciate the beauty of spring flowers more. Even the budding trees and mulch, though they bring on allergies, are sources of wonder to me this year.



Springtime also brings Passover. It was our turn to host this year. I was in Wegman's in King of Prussia on Friday buying my Passover food when I spotted a lady with a cake in her cart that said "Kosher for Passover". Those magic words! And it looked pretty good so I asked her where she got it. She said, "Over by the kiosk in the center — good luck!" So off I zoomed before someone could possibly get the last dessert and behold my eyes encountered an entire display of what appeared to be tasty cakes! Being my usual decisive self I bought three. It is weird that I can decide what house I want to buy in five minutes but cannot decide whether seven-layer or nut roll is the cake to buy in 20. And of course I had to get rainbow bars. I got to the checkout and realized that the woman in front of me was none other than the lady who pointed me to the kiosk. Proudly I said, "Look I found it!" We started a conversation about Seders and how, like Thanksgiving, it doesn't really matter how many people you have, it is the same meal and the same amount of food. Of course in my case, that means enough food to feed my entire street and have leftovers. My mother taught me that it is always better to have too much than not enough when you are serving guests. How embarrassing would it be to run out

of a particular type of food before all of your guests have taken some? And how embarrassing if they could not only have seconds (which I beg people to do when I realize how much I really have left) and not take some home? Yes I have never wrapped my mind around the fact that most people do not eat like football players in training.

This year I have been particularly nostalgic for the Passovers of my youth. The days when my mother created the Seder. Her table was always beautiful, and the food not only smelled wonderful; it was wonderful. How she loved to sing the Passover songs and all we kids wanted to do was get the service over with eat and go out with our friends. Wish I had sat at the table longer and enjoyed the company of my relatives and friends. This year I used my mom's Seder plate and the recycled shank bone. Wish I had the Hagaddah that we used as kids. It would be nice to be able to still have that part of my childhood. Mom loved chocolate and I think she would have liked these cookies.

### Fudgy Chocolate Walnut Cookies

2¾ c. walnut halves (9 oz.) ¼ tsp. salt  
3 c. confectioners' sugar  
4 large egg whites, room temp.  
½ c. plus 3 T. unsweetened Dutch process cocoa powder  
1 T. vanilla extract

Toast walnut halves in oven at 350° for about 9 minutes until golden and fragrant. Let cool then chop finely. In a large bowl, whisk confectioner's sugar with cocoa powder and salt. Add egg whites and vanilla extract and beat just until the batter is moist. Do not beat until stiff. Spoon batter onto parchment lined baking sheets. Bake at 350° for about 20 minutes until tops of cookies are glossy and lightly cracked and feel firm to the touch. Shift pans in oven halfway through. Slide parchment paper off pans onto wire racks to cool completely before removing. Enjoy!

# Trip to Yemin Orde a highlight of Oziris' latest trip to Israel

By Lorri G. Oziri

My husband, Yoni, and I visited family in Israel this March. Yoni was born in Jerusalem and lived most of his youth outside Tel Aviv in a small, quaint neighborhood called Hadar Yosef. Currently, two of our nephews are living in the house where Yoni and his two brothers grew up, and they love it!

When Yoni's parents were alive we visited every year. Since our last trip, over five years ago, we noticed significant change and growth in the country. Many major corporations have international headquarters there. Israel is known for its start-up initiatives. All the high-tech companies are extremely prevalent. Driving up and down the highways the scenery has changed dramatically. Where there once may have been miles

and miles of dunes and sparse foliage, there are very impressive mega buildings all shapes and sizes.

This was my ninth or 10th trip. The first time I traveled to Israel the country was working hard to pull itself out of a "third world" image. Today, without a doubt, Israel is a thriving, growing, successful metropolis from north to south. The country has it all! The amazement that our ancestors had with the land of milk and honey still exists and perhaps even more so. I traveled through the country with fresh eyes, taking hundreds of photos. There is so much new to see and I was completely captured and astonished by how things have flourished.

One of our day trips took us to Yemin Orde Youth Village, which is located not too far from Haifa (as the Israelis say

Hai-FEH). I hope everyone from our community will someday have the good fortune to visit this village. It is strongly supported by our tiny community and they love us! They love all of YOU! And they appreciate the support that has been given by the Jewish community in Berks County. We met with Racheli and Susan, who work in the Village. They literally welcomed us with open arms and hugs. They made it a point to tell us who they have met from our community and how wonderful everyone is.

Yemin Orde Youth Village was founded in 1953. In the aftermath of World War II, the 77-acre village atop Mount Carmel provided a safe haven for Holocaust orphans and immigrant children. Today Yemin Orde is home to children from around the world who have suffered trauma

in their lives; from isolation and neglect to abandonment and extreme poverty. The village welcomes children from North Africa, Iran, India, Yemen, Eastern Europe and South America. It was wonderful to see the smiles on these beautiful faces. The programs at the village offer life-changing experiences for the children, who have many adult size issues to deal with. But most obvious was the love they are given by the staff and volunteers.

The time we had with the members of the village was too short. However, it left us with a loving, lasting memory. We plan to visit again and will include our new friends at Yemin Orde on our list of family visits.

It is well worth learning more about this fantastic place. Additional information is available at [www.yeminorde.org](http://www.yeminorde.org).



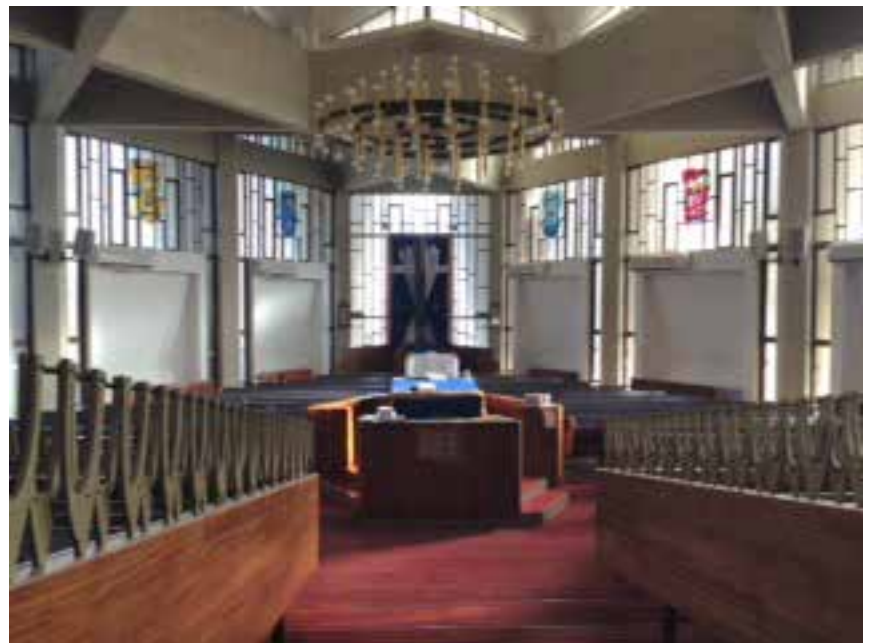
Yoni Oziri with Racheli, who works at Yemin Orde Youth Village, a facility in Israel supported by contributions to the Jewish Federation of Reading's Israel Now campaign.



The view on the way into Yemin Orde Youth Village..



New condos in Ramat Aviv



The synagogue at Yemin Orde



Yoni Oziri with relatives at Haifa beach



A wall hanging that commemorates the Reading Jewish community's support of Abraham Lincoln House, part of Yemin Orde Youth Village.

# Jewish Family Service

# United Way



## Our volunteers deserve many thanks

By Sari Incledon, M.Ed.

Next month at the Federation's annual meeting, Jewish Family Service will honor the volunteers whose contributions have meant so much to our programs. Many volunteers work at our monthly food pantry — unloading the delivery



truck, sorting groceries, helping clients and delivering food to homebound clients. As a result of their efforts we distributed more than 40,000 pounds of food to more than 100 families each month in 2013.

Our volunteers also help us with programs that benefit seniors who live in the community and in long term care residences. Many volunteers helped us with our Thursday luncheons for seniors — Friendship Circle. Some provided informative, stimulating and entertaining programs, others helped serve lunch.

In addition, volunteers helped us run Shabbat and holiday programs and were friendly visitors at retirement communities. In addition we are grateful to the rabbis and synagogues, with whom we work hand in hand to promote the welfare of all.

### 2013 – 2014 Volunteers

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Cindy Balchunas  | Barbara Bender  |
| Amy Bloom        | Ken Bloom       |
| Sheila Bornstein | Ivan Bub        |
| Harriet Comite   | Lynn Driben     |
| Matthew Driben   | Michael Fidler  |
| Sarah Flamholz   | Abigail Heisler |

- Laine Heisler  
John Incledon  
Nancy Knoblauch  
Margo Levin  
Haia Mazuz  
Marjorie "Tootie" Moyer  
Carol Perlmutter  
Sue Schlanger  
Vee Vee Scott  
Charon Snyder  
Janine Ure  
Phyllis Warshaw  
Mary Wexler

- Lorrie Heisler  
Eddie Kazin  
Jennifer Koosed  
Michelle Mart  
Solange Mintz  
Yozef Nijboer  
Michael Robinson  
Paul Schwartz  
Jan Simon  
Gail Tomrell  
Michael Warshaw  
Laurie Waxler

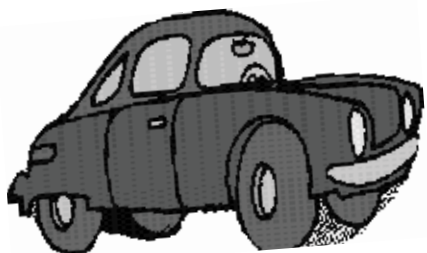
## Living with Loss

Monday, April 28

3 - 4:30 p.m. at the JCC

For more information, call Sari at 610-921-0624

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Jewish Family Service Food Pantry Collection



We are serving more families each month! Please bring donations of canned tuna, soup, fruits and vegetables to Keshar Zion or the JCC. Thank you!

We also need plastic and paper grocery bags!

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### Contributions as of April 18 Holocaust Library and Resource Center

**In honor of:**  
Birth of Esther and Sid Bratt's great-grandson Adam Isaac Leisawitz – Rosalye Yashek  
Birth of Jay and Evelyn Lipschutz's grandson Adam Isaac Leisawitz – Rosalye Yashek

### Jewish Family Service

**In honor of:**  
Esther Bratt's birthday – Kevin Horowitz  
Sue Viener's special birthday – Debbie Goodman and John Moyer  
Birth of Sid and Esther Bratt's great-grandson Adam Isaac Leisawitz – Ruth Isenberg, Louise Zeidman, Dr. Sandra K. Rowan  
Birth of Ben and Michele Leisawitz's son Adam Isaac – Louise Zeidman, Jackye and Jim Barrer  
Birth of Doris and Elliott Leisawitz's granddaughter and grandson – Betsy and Al Katz  
Birth of Jay and Evelyn Lipschutz's grandson Adam Isaac Leisawitz – Betsy and Al Katz  
Jeri Kozloff receiving the Ruth and Irvin Balis Volunteer Award – Berna Sherman  
Birth of Gaye and Glenn Corbin's granddaughter Claire Corbin – Laurie and Jim Silverstein

### Get well/speedy recovery:

Sylvia Sulman – Kevin Horowitz  
Iris Ocasio – Edith Mendelsohn  
Norma Greenberg – Edith Mendelsohn

### In memory of:

Elizabeth Ehrlich – Marcia Gross  
Sue Wolfe – Marcia Gross  
Grace Lewis – Marcia Gross  
Nancy Dickson (Jeri Kozloff's mother) – Berna Sherman

### Honorials and Memorials

Contributions may be made to the following Funds:

<b>Federation Jewish Community Campaign</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Jewish Family Service</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Leo Camp Lecture Fund</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>JFS Food Bank</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>JFS Taxi Transportation Program</b>	<b>\$20</b>
<b>Holocaust Library &amp; Resource Center</b>	<b>\$18</b>
<b>Doris Levin Fund</b>	<b>\$10</b>

### Federation Jewish Community Campaign

**In honor of:**  
Birth of Doris and Elliott Leisawitz's granddaughter Rose Catherine – Kevin Horowitz  
Birth of Doris and Elliott Leisawitz's grandson Adam Isaac – Debbie Goodman and John Moyer, Dena and Vic Hammel, Jackye and Jim Barrer  
Birth of Sid and Esther Bratt's great-grandson Adam Isaac Leisawitz – Debbie Goodman and John Moyer, Dena and Vic Hammel, Jackye and Jim Barrer  
Birth of Gaye and Glenn Corbin's granddaughter – Dena and Vic Hammel, Jackye and Jim Barrer  
Birth of Jay and Evelyn Lipschutz's grandson Adam Isaac Leisawitz – Jackye and Jim Barrer

### In memory of:

Adiv Lift – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer  
Norman Hirsch – Rosalye Yashek, Judy and Bob Pollack  
Richard "Dick" Henry – Jackye and Jim Barrer

### JFS Taxi Transportation Program

**In honor of:**  
Birth of Doris and Elliott Leisawitz's grandson Adam Isaac – Rosalye Yashek  
Birth of Ben and Michele Leisawitz's son Adam Isaac – Rosalye Yashek

### In memory of:

Richard "Dick" Henry – Ivan Gordon  
Grace Lewis – Ivan Gordon

### Leo Camp Lecture Fund

**In memory of:**  
Richard "Dick" Henry – Sheila and Gary Lattin

### Friendship Circle Fund

**In memory of:**  
Adiv Lift – Gaye and Glenn Corbin  
Eugene Abramowicz – Kevin Horowitz

The Family of Richard "Dick" Henry would like to acknowledge with grateful appreciation all the kind expressions of sympathy we received.

Most Sincerely –  
*Maxine Henry and Family*

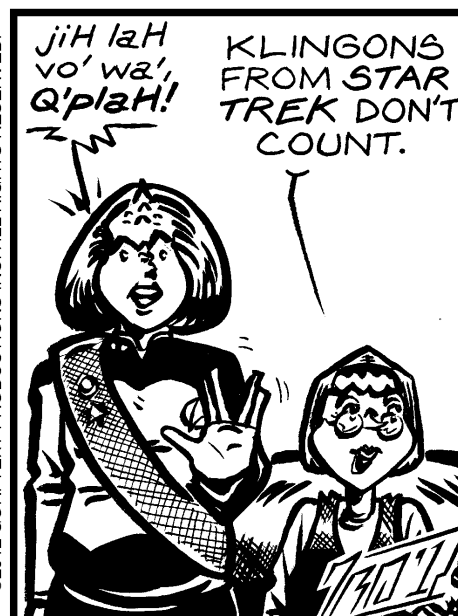
With Sincere Thanks

Our family wishes to express our sincere gratitude to the entire Jewish community for the thoughtfulness and caring that was shown to us at the recent passing of our beloved Adiv. We thank you so much for embracing us during this very difficult time.

~ Varsha Shukla Lift and Family ~

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