



SHALOM



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IYAR-SIVAN 5776



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2016 totals as of May 20
Jewish Community Campaign
\$312,736
***Includes transfers from Donor Advised Funds**

A great time for all at Annual Meeting, Family Fun Day

Community gathers at Wyomissing Hills Park for May 22 event



Yemin Orde Youth Choir completes whirlwind U.S. tour

With an incredible display of talent, teamwork and friendship, the Yemin Orde Youth Choir completed a whirlwind performance tour of U.S. cities singing for a combined audience of more than 1,000 people in various venues.

The choir, which started its tour in Westchester County, NY, gave concerts in a performing arts center, synagogues, Jewish day schools, a children's hospital, a private home and at the World of Children Award Honors gala in Los Angeles. In between their concerts, the teens explored their host cities and visited many popular tourist sites such as Times Square in New York City,



the Georgia Aquarium, Warner Brothers Studios in Los Angeles as well as Universal Studios Hollywood.

Choir members range in age

from 15 to 18 years old and are from Ethiopia, France, the former Soviet Union, Brazil as well as Israel-born and reflect the diversity of the 440 youth at risk who live

and learn at Yemin Orde Youth Village.

Yemin Orde graduate Sandro Golis, who originally is from Soviet Georgia, also joined the choir and has shared his personal journey from the former Soviet Union. Sandro will soon graduate from the Technion, Israel's prestigious Institute of Technology, where he studied Computer Science.

During its two-week U.S. tour, the choir and chaperones stayed with local host families. This arrangement presented a great opportunity for the Israeli youth to meet American families and learn about each other's culture, traditions and lifestyle.

From the President's Desk

Much to celebrate as year comes to an end

By William D. Franklin
President

What a month! Starting with Passover, we celebrated our liberation from Egypt and the birth of our nation. In less than a week, we moved quickly to Yom HaShoah, where we remembered the 6 million lost in the Holocaust. In commemoration, we saw the movie "50 Children." It is the story of the heroic efforts of Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, who traveled to Nazi Germany in 1939 and saved 50 Viennese Jewish



children from likely death by finding them new homes in Philadelphia. Only a week after that, on Yom Hazikaron, we had a moving ceremony with prayers, poetry, and shofar blowing to remember the 27,447 Israeli soldiers who gave their lives defending Israel. Later that same evening we celebrated Israel's Independence Day, Yom Ha'Atzmaut, with songs and great Israeli desserts.

At the same time, mishegas in the external world goes on. We observed the uncivil divisive discourse of our political campaign, there were more anti-Semitic and terrorist acts in Europe, and efforts to impose a solution on the Israeli and

Palestinian peoples continues ... as do our challenges.

We are developing programs to address these challenges. Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner and Shira Simon of our Jewish Community High School will be working with next year's high school seniors so that they will be prepared to deal with anti-Israel and BDS activities they may encounter in college. To engage our next generation we will build upon our Chevra's success with new programs, such as obtaining funding to support the formation of several 3-4 family Shabbat groups.

It is an unfortunate reality that our strong feelings about geopolitics, social policy, and the religious-secular divide with respect to Israel are making discussion on this topic increasingly toxic. We must remember the extraordinary significance of living at a time in which an independent Jewish state is both a beacon of hope and a guarantor of our self-determination. We are working to create "safe spaces" where we retain our diversity while maintaining our unity as we talk about Israel. One of these safe spaces is our Israel Book

Group, which will be meeting again on Wednesday, July 27, to discuss Dov Waxman's book "Trouble in the Tribe." In addition, with your help, we continue to build strong relationships with our non-Jewish partners, collaborating on social justice issues of vital importance.

I hope you were able to attend our Annual Meeting where, after taking care of business, we enjoyed wonderful food, Israeli dancing, and each other's company. If you weren't able to attend, I encourage you to stop by our office to get a copy of our 2016-16 annual report or email Brenda in our office (brendas@jfreeding.org) to receive an electronic copy. It highlights our many community programs and service, summarizes quick facts about the Israeli and overseas agencies we support, and provides details about where your Federation dollars go.

It has been my great pleasure and good fortune to have worked with Dr. Larry Rotenberg the last two years. I look forward to building upon his successes with Haia Mazuz, our new Board Chairperson.

Have a wonderful summer.

Learn about Ten Commandments at PJ Library event on June 26

By Amanda J. Hornberger

The holiday of Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah to Jews, and we will learn all about the Ten Commandments and Shavuot at our PJ Library event on June 26!

We'll meet at 4 p.m. at the JCC and read stories on Shavuot and play fun games around the Ten Commandments. Then we'll enjoy a

dairy treat!

PJ Library programs are open to all children through age 8. The program is free and parents are encouraged to stay and join in the fun!

Please RSVP to Amanda at amandah@jfreeding.org or 610-921-0624 by Friday, June 24. For additional information or any questions please also contact Amanda.

Suggestions wanted for technology classes

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Due to the success of our recent Seniors and Tech classes the JCC is looking to continue to offer technology classes in the fall. But we need YOUR ideas and suggestions for classes! What topics do you want us to cover? What do you struggle with on your devices? Are there new programs or apps that you want to discover?

Looking to gain new skills or learn how to best manage photos, documents or security?

Please send your ideas and suggestions for topics for technology classes to Amanda at amandah@jfreeding.org or 610-921-0624. We look forward to offering more tech related classes for ALL ages starting in September.

Holocaust victims remembered every day through Meir Panim

Israel is home to the largest number of Holocaust survivors in the world. Tragically, however, about 60,000 of these survivors live below the poverty line.

"As we commemorated another Holocaust Memorial Day, it is a tragedy that every day Meir Panim witnesses Holocaust victims suffering from hunger, poverty and loneliness," stated Goldie Sternbuch, Director of Overseas Relations for Meir Panim — an organization fighting poverty in Israel. "Meir Panim makes every effort to help as many Holocaust survivors as possible to live out their final years in dignity."

Meir Panim does this through its network of free restaurant-style soup kitchens, Meals-on-Wheels programs, pre-paid food cards, a "Warm Winter" project, and various activities geared specifically to Holocaust survivors.

"Between 15 to 20 percent of Meir Panim patrons are Holocaust survivors," explained Benny Eldad, manager of Meir Panim's northern Israel Safed branch. "Not only do we provide fresh, hot meals but we also give a warm feeling of care and friendship as so many survivors struggle with loneliness."

In fact, in addition to providing food, physical necessities and social activities, Meir Panim arranges special entertainment to warm the hearts of Holocaust victims and the elderly. Musical shows and sing-alongs are offered in Yiddish, Russian and Hebrew.

With the median age of Israeli Holocaust survivors at 82, there is a pressing urgency to ensure that their last years are lived with a respectable quality of life.

"Unfortunately, previous Israeli governments have not done enough on behalf of Holocaust survivors," Kahlon stated at the annual Knesset Holocaust Memorial event. "In addition, there has not been enough done for the economically-disadvantaged elderly population... As the years pass, we see a decrease in the number of Holocaust survivors in Israel. However, what is not decreasing is our desire to listen to their stories, which are an inseparable part of the country's founding, as well as our desire to enable them to grow old with dignity."

"Many Holocaust survivors enjoy volunteering in Meir Panim soup kitchens," shared Eldad. "They feel that they are doing tikkun olam (repairing the world) by assuring that people should not go hungry or scramble for a piece of bread the way they did during the Holocaust."

Noting that this volunteer work gives a lot of meaning to the lives of Holocaust survivors, Eldad pointed out that it also helps bring psychological healing to survivors who suffered so much and seek to return the world to a place of beauty and love.

"Meir Panim does all it can to fulfill tikkun olam," Eldad said. "I love this place and so do the thousands of people we help every day."

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Changing our tune

By Richard Nassau
Development Director

At some point this past month; rugs were switched at our house. The rug in the living room traded places with a rug that was not in our living room. I'm not sure when it happened, though I was assured it was only a couple of days before I took notice. This was good to hear. The rugs are the same size and do have similar colors. I will however admit their patterns are not the same and their colors could be considered distinct; though for non-rug people like me this is mostly noticeable when they are next to each other.

OK, so this is not about how Federation is redecorating its offices. It is about noticing the changes in our Jewish community this past year. Some of the changes are readily



visible. They can be seen and counted like the grant we received to start Better Together, an innovative intergenerational program. High school students and older adults get together to discuss and study Jewish topics of interest. They each bring their unique perspective to the topic.

Better Together is also a good example of community changes that are not easily visible. These are the changes that reflect new community connections or our outreach efforts to be a more inclusive community. These type of changes are noticed usually when we pause to look around and realize that something is different. You see it with Better Together by the noise volume and energy in the room. You see it through the many discussions taking place contributing to new connections being made.

Better Together is only one of our new programs this past year.

A few months ago we were accepted by the H. Grinspoon Foundation to expand our PJ Library program to children in our community who have aged out of PJ Library at age 8. The new program, PJ Our Way, each month offers the gift of exceptional books with Jewish themes to kids ages 9-11 that they choose themselves. We estimate there are more than 40 children who can participate in PJ Our Way. This is in addition to the 78 kids in our community currently using PJ Library.

This past year also saw the reactivation of our Maimonides Society. Forty members of our medical community joined the Society and are participating in programs designed to integrate both medical and Jewish concerns. Chevra is another new group that was formed this past year. Members of Chevra are helping to expand the many programs and activities offered by Federation.

These programs are targeted to bringing our community together in new ways. Another new program is Life and Legacy. Life and Legacy is about continuing the strength of our community. Life and Legacy helps people develop their own Jewish legacy through a future gift. In doing this, they are ensuring that we remain a strong Jewish community.

New programs are only part of our story. We celebrated holidays together as a community, increased the amount of food distributed through our food pantry, and sponsored speakers at 9 events held throughout the area. These are a few of the more than 45 programs and services Federation offers.

Take some time and notice our Jewish community. We at Federation will also continue to notice you and how by working together our partnership ensures we remain a vibrant and welcoming Jewish community.

Book club: ‘Saving Israel’ offers powerful message

On May 18 our Israel Book Club met to discuss Daniel Gordis' book "Saving Israel: How the Jewish People Can Win War That May Never End."

The book is written in English since its target audience is North American Jews. Gordis organized the book along three major points.

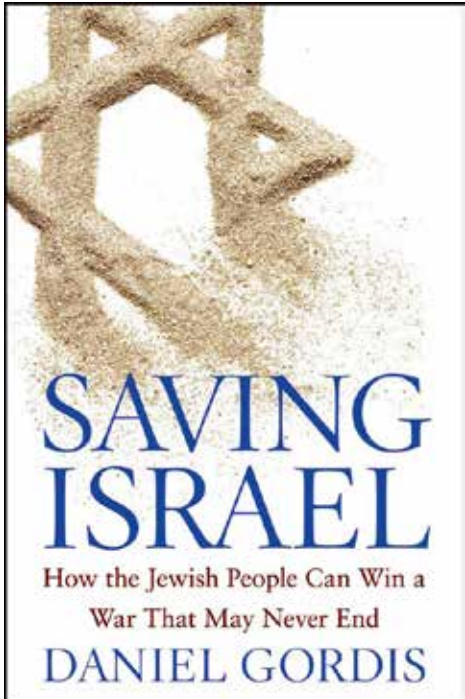
The first is -Why Jews need a Jewish state. Gordis begins the book with the 1967 War. Israelis were beyond worried. Huge armies were massing on her borders; Egypt on her south, Jordan on the east, Syria and Lebanon on the north. All vowed to destroy Israel. In the days prior to the war, Israelis were digging trenches, hospitals were readied, schools were refitted as bomb shelters and some 10,000 graves were dug. But in lightning pre-emptive strikes Israeli jets destroyed the Arab air force and won the war.

Earlier Amos Oz, Israel's greatest novelist, describes the day of creation of Israel in 1947. Cries of "The Jewish people lives" rang out through the night ... the implicit message of the State of Israel. His father climbed into bed with him and said "From now on you will never be bullied, just because you are a Jew... never again... Forever." The emergence of the Jewish State of Israel restored hope at the moment when it seemed that hope had perished. Israel is about the possibility of a Jewish future and a guarantor that Auschwitz and Majdanek would never happen again.

Gordis' second point articulates the factors that threaten Israel. In the book he mentions the many attacks by both Arab armies and terrorists. In addition, Israel is the only country about which there is a discussion as to whether it has a right to exist. He states that evidence shows that



Daniel Gordis



what Palestinians want is not the creation of a Palestinian state but the destruction of the Jewish one. The author talks of the sadness that came from the sudden clarity that Israel could sign a peace treaty, could withdraw from territories, could create powerful military, and still be far from peace.

In addition, Israelis now face a hostile and critical international community. Further, an army of intellectuals and academics has started massive campaigns of delegitimization and dehumanization of Israel and Israelis. Today, Gordis points out that the combination of technology and favoritism make possible the obliteration of another 6 million Jews of Israel and once again, the author says with despair, the

world is basically silent.

The last and most difficult challenge Gordis cites is that Jews in Israel and worldwide have internalized an incorrect reading of the role of war and self-defense in Jewish traditions. They have been taught that Judaism is a pacifist religion, and they incorrectly believe that being required to fight is un-Jewish. Gordis states that Jewish people learn about our heroes, such as Judah Maccabee, but he speculates that we may be more comfortable in the role of victim.

Gordis suggest several necessary steps. The first is to understand that the long-term challenge to Israel's survival is not Iran, not terror and wars that will never end, but that Israelis and Diaspora Jews know why

Israel must exist. We must be comfortable with and willing to defend ourselves. It was Jewish courage and sacrifices that liberated Jerusalem and Judea in the past. If Israel has any hope of survival, at times, it must wage war. What is at stake is not just the Jewish state but the Jewish people

Gordis concludes that Jews will need to prepare themselves for a conflict that may not end for generations. Nothing more ambitious is possible and nothing less will suffice.

The Israel Book Club will meet again on Wednesday, July 27, to discuss Dov Waxman's book "Trouble in the Tribe." Please join us.

— *Moisey Schneider and the Israel Book Club*

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SHALOM

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

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Our 2016 graduates



Joseph Abramson, son of Ellen and Don Abramson, is graduating with a Master's of Business Administration from the NYU Stern School of Business, specializing in Accounting, Corporate Finance and Strategy. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and is a graduate of Exeter High School. He works at Morgan Stanley in New York.



Alexa Chronister, daughter of Cindy and Brett Chronister, is graduating from Wilson High School. Alexa has played the violin with the Reading Symphony Youth Orchestra since 7th grade. At Wilson, she has participated in student government, various community service clubs and is a member of the National Honor Society. Alexa will be attending the University of Delaware Honors Program and majoring in Public Policy.



Sarah Erlikh, daughter of Oleg and Tatyana Erlikh, graduated from Schreyer Honors College at Penn State with major in Premedical Science in May. Sarah will continue her education at Hershey College of Medicine in the fall.



Casey Fromm, daughter of Susan and Michael Fromm, received a Master's Degree in Social Work from Columbia University in May. With her clinical focus in Contemporary Social Issues, Casey plans to pursue a career working with individuals suffering from homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health issues.



Jake Gunter, son of Ellice and Richard Gunter, graduated from Temple University with a bachelor's in business administration. He will be pursuing a career in marketing.



Rachel Jeffers, daughter of Susan and Gerald Jeffers of Douglassville, will be graduating from Daniel Boone High School in June. Rachel has been a cheerleader for the Blazers since first grade. She did competition cheer since middle school and became a co-captain of her varsity squad her senior year. Rachel will be attending Bloomsburg University in the fall and will be studying elementary and special education.



Megan McIntosh, daughter of Dwight and Mindy McIntosh, is graduating from Antietam High School. Megan also studies culinary arts at Berks Career and Technology Center. Megan is a senior class officer, member of the softball team, tennis team and art club, 6 year veteran with the school musicals, BBYO member and an Ambassador Girl Scout. Megan plans to attend the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y. and major in Baking and Pastry Arts.



David Safir, son of Amy and Jay Safir of Matthews, N.C., will graduate from Butler High School. He is captain of the swim team, runs cross country and plays lacrosse. David is a National Honor Student, a member of student council and Model U.N. He is secretary of the North Carolina council of BBYO. David will attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the fall. He is a grandson of Elaine Safir and the late Paul Safir, and Jane and Warren Miller.



Sara S. Saidman, daughter of Howard and Amy Saidman, graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering, Minors in Petroleum Engineering and Chemistry in April 2016. Sara has accepted a position as a Drill Engineer with Schlumberger. Sara will be based in Texas, with rotating Domestic and International assignments on land and ocean based oil rigs.



Johanna Ure, daughter of Janine and Bruce Ure, will graduate from Wyomissing High School in June. JoJo is a member of National Honor Society, captain of the Girl's Lacrosse Team and proud member/leader of Berks Chai BBYO. In the fall she will attend Temple University and study Strategic Communications.



Bryce Weizer, son of Jeffrey and Ilene Weizer, is graduating from Blue Mountain High School. He will spend the summer as a counselor at Camp Harlam. Come fall, he has chosen to attend Drew University where he will study consumer psychology and religion. Bryce was recruited to play tennis for Drew and plans to be active in their Hillel.

B'nai Mitzvot 5776



Luke Berger, son of Lee and Amy White Berger, will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah on Friday, June 10, at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Luke is an active, athletic 13-year-old who likes chess, archery, and bike hikes.



Molly Brant, daughter of Amy and Kyle Brant, celebrated her Bat Mitzvah at Keshet Zion Synagogue on May 21. Molly is an Honor Student in 7th grade at Exeter Junior High School. She is on the junior high varsity soccer team and plays travel soccer year-round with a club team. Molly is a member of the Antietam Swim Team in the summer. She has a love for animals and volunteers at the Animal Rescue League of Berks County as a dog walker.



Molly Nemirow, daughter of Geraldine and Mark Nemirow, celebrates her Bat Mitzvah June 4 at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Molly is an Honor Student in 7th grade at Exeter Junior High School. She loves singing and was selected to Berks County Junior Chorus this year. She is a member of Berks Youth Chorus and active in local theater.



Andrew Primack, son of Pam Charendoff and Jonathan Primack, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on May 21 at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Andy is a 7th grader at Wyomissing Junior-Senior High School, and loves sports, listening to music, and being with friends. Most of all, he is a baseball fan, and enjoys cheering on his favorite minor league team, the Reading Fightin' Phils, and his favorite major league team, the Boston Red Sox.



Rachel Radosh became a Bat Mitzvah Oct. 3 at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Family and friends celebrated with her, and helped create an outRACHous day! Her parents, Jodi and Lee Radosh, as well as sister Danielle are very proud of her poise and accomplishments. She is an 8th-grader at Wilson West Middle School.



Samuel Strieb, son of Ron and Heidi Strieb, will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, June 11, at Keshet Zion Synagogue. Sam attends Wilson Southern Middle School, where he is on the high honor roll. He is a swimmer and a runner. He also plays the piano in the Jazz Ensemble at school. Sam participates in the student government and is a volunteer coach for the Special Olympics swim team.



Harrison Frederick Weiss, son of Mark and Tracy Weiss and grandson of Jack and Teri Lefkowitz, will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah on Sept. 17. Harry is in 7th grade at Wyomissing Area Jr Sr High School. He is a high honors student and plays on the junior high soccer, basketball and baseball teams.

Challah baking program a treat for students and seniors

By Matthew Driben

On Sunday, May 14, I joined the Jewish Community High School of Reading's Better Together program for a challah-baking event at Chabad Lubavitch. Participants in the Better Together program, which combines students and seniors to study Judaism together, had the privilege of preparing challah, the traditional Sabbath bread, with Rabbi Lipsker. After explaining the significance of challah as a commandment, Rabbi Lipsker demonstrated how to make and braid the challah dough. I had no idea there were so many ways to braid a challah! Then everyone received dough to create their own challahs. Rabbi Lipsker's challah recipe and insightful tips produced a combination of a crisp crust and a doughy inside that simply cannot be matched. Eating the challah was a scrumptious reward, but the real treat was spending time with community members of all ages.



Good News Israel: Spotlight



IsraAID does lifesaving humanitarian work around the world

Founded in 2001, IsraAID is a non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to providing lifesaving disaster relief and long term support. Its mission is to efficiently support and meet the changing needs of populations as they strive to move from crisis to reconstruction/rehabilitation, and eventually, to sustainable living.

For over a decade, its teams have been first on the front lines of nearly every major humanitarian response in the 21st century. During the past decade, IsraAid has...

- Responded to crises in 35 countries
- Reached over 1 million people
- Distributed over 1,000 tons of relief and medical supplies
- Trained more than 5,000 local

professionals

- Mobilized over 850 staff, volunteers, and professionals (a majority of them doctors, nurses, therapists and social workers).

Examples of its work:

Emergency Response & Humanitarian Aid: Relief teams among the first to arrive on the ground, providing lifesaving medical care, food and supplies, as well as cleaning and construction materials.

Sustainable Development: Once the immediate needs have been addressed, IsraAID considers the long-term question of how it can help communities attain stable living without relying on humanitarian aid. To succeed in this most important phase of development, we strongly emphasize

developing local abilities through training, social empowerment, and economic growth is strongly emphasized.

Some of the countries IsraAID has helped recently are:

South Sudan: IsraAID's activities in this troubled region aim at: 1) Building the capacity of service providers working with vulnerable communities (especially women and children); 2) Accompanying these providers in their efforts to provide direct sustainable assistance to these communities; and 3) Accompanying the local actors in their efforts to design, implement and evaluate their own programs.

Jordan: IsraAID is helping meet the overwhelming humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees living in camps throughout

Jordan. Since the civil conflict in Syria began in 2011 it has emerged as one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, with over 4 million displaced within Syria and more than 2 million refugees fleeing the violence into neighboring countries. Currently there are over 500,000 refugees in Jordan, with 3,000 crossing every day.

United States: IsraAID supported the physical and psychological needs of millions of Americans struggling to rebuild in the wake of several natural disasters across the country. Since 2005, IsraAID has been sending relief teams to the United States to support, facilitate, and implement relief operations. The most recent of these were Superstorm Sandy in 2012, and the tornadoes that swept through Oklahoma in 2013.

Jerusalem doctors help Palestinian child with rare foot defect

An 8-year-old Palestinian boy from Beit Jala, who suffered from a rare defect in his foot is now relieved of his pains thanks to an unusual operation carried out at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Center.

The young patient, Hana Zeitun, who had not left his home for years due to his condition, can now get out and play with his friends. "We, family members, used to take turns massaging his foot night and day to try to alleviate his pain. This was the only thing that reduced his pain along with huge amounts of pain killers. But now the leg has recovered from the surgery and the pain is much

reduced," said Zeitun's father, Malki.

Hana suffered from arteriovenous malformation (AVM), an abnormal connection between his arteries, taking oxygen from his heart and veins and carrying blood with carbon dioxide and wastes back to the heart – thus bypassing the capillary system. AVM can appear in various parts of the body, but in the foot area it is especially painful and debilitating. Symptoms can be noticed soon after birth or several years later.

When Hana's condition worsened more than two years ago, he was unable to leave his home anymore. All

he did was play virtual games on his PlayStation. He underwent integrated treatment in several hospitals, but none of them succeeded in assisting the child. Then, blood clots appeared in his vessels. Most of the doctors said he would have to have his leg amputated at the knee.

At this point he was referred to Shaare Zedek in Jerusalem, where Dr. Adam Farkash, head of the hospital's vascular defects unit, decided to try closing the sickly connections between the blood vessels.

The operation was carried out by Dr. Ehud Lebel, head of the pediatric

orthopedics unit, together with pain experts and surgeons. His foot was saved, and he is expected to walk again without crutches. The Shaare Zedek doctors described Hana as an "incredible child with great powers who understands every stage of his treatment. He always asked to participate in decision making. "We held many conversations with him to prepare him emotionally for the possibility that he might lose his toes. Only a small bit of the front of the leg had to be removed and his pain has almost abated. Today, he is busy thinking of the new shoes he will get," Farkash said.

Life is better on remote Indian island since an Israeli came to visit

Israel21c.com

Gili Navon didn't intend to start a nonprofit organization when she traveled to Majuli, a remote island of about 200,000 in Assam, northeast India. It was 2007, and she came with a photographer friend to explore a rural culture she'd heard about from a yoga teacher during her yearlong backpacking trek through India after her army discharge in 2005.

Something about the place attracted her intensely. Though she did not speak Assamese or any local dialects, Navon bonded with the families – and particularly the women — of Majuli's peaceful Mising tribe. She accompanied them to the jungle to pick herbs and helped with household chores. She watched them spin raw silk and cotton into colorful garments. She saw the struggle for sustenance in this low-caste subsistence-farming society where tourists rarely venture and river erosion has caused mass relocation. "We came to have a real relationship. Slowly I learned the language and visited many times. They knew I cared about them," Navon said.

That caring led her to do a four-month internship in Majuli during her studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Glocal ("global" and "local") Community Development Studies master's degree program. "Coming in with an Israeli education, where you continually search for ways to improve and innovate, together with my love and appreciation of the local culture and way of life, I felt I have something to contribute."

Navon organized 24 tribal women into a weaving cooperative in 2011 to help them turn their cultural tradition into a more viable source of income from items such as table runners, scarves, wallets and yoga bags. One project led to another, one trip to another. In 2013, Navon and fellow Glocal student Shaked Avizedek partnered with local youth and women to establish Amar Majuli ("Our Majuli"), a grassroots not-for-profit organization. In Israel, Amar Majuli functions within Tevel b'Tzedek, a nonprofit that runs long-term volunteer projects to enhance the livelihood and wellbeing of communities in developing countries.

The heart of Amar Majuli's community work is the Rengam (United) Women Weavers Cooperative, whose goal is to provide members and their families with independent sustainable livelihoods from handloom work and eco-tourism while gaining leadership skills. The weaving cooperative includes about 100 women, ages 18 to 60, from 20 villages. The project's headquarters doubles as a meeting place for lectures on topics such as women's health, and has also become an informal hostel for unmarried women who otherwise have no place in society.

To enhance the mobility and independence of the members, Amar Majuli established two bicycle banks. Navon said Majuli's villages are far from infrastructure such as markets and hospitals, necessitating many hours of walking. Cycling provides an easy solution. An innovative system allows each woman gradually to buy her own bike by paying pennies per use.

In addition, Amar Majuli runs a sustainable agriculture program in cooperation with the Farm2Food

Foundation. The program provides practical tools for poor farmers, aiming to increase sustainable agro-economic productivity in an environmentally friendly manner. "The main part of our work evolved around the establishment and operation of five demonstration plots equipped with drip-irrigation systems donated by Netafim," Navon says. During the monsoon season, the island suffers from floods and Amar Majuli shifts into relief mode, organizing medical clinics and giving out water filters. "This is a very hard period of the year. Roads are blocked, there are sanitary problems and shortages of drinking water, and many people get sick without access to medical treatment," says Navon, 32.

Since its inception, the organization has worked alongside the local community without a formal budget or paid staff, developing solutions for social and economic problems. This year, Navon is curtailing her visits in a conscious effort to turn the leadership reins over to the local three staff members and eight board members.

Mayo Clinic launches initiative to invest in Israeli medical technology

In the first initiative of its kind, the Mayo Clinic, one of the best-regarded medical research and practice groups in the world, will seek to partner with Israeli life science and medical technology companies.

"We recognized the amount of start-up companies generated in Israel to help clinical practice and improve patient care and we wanted to explore the possibility to partner with them," said Dr. Amir Lerman, the medical director of the Mayo Clinic Israeli Startup Initiative, The clinic's

first country-directed investment and partnership program.

"We have been thinking for some time how to effectively interact with Israeli companies. We think the startup community in Israel is very robust on the cutting edge, doing very creative things, and we think we should be part of that," said James Rogers, the chair of Mayo Clinic Ventures.

The Mayo Clinic is sending a team to meet start-ups, learn about their technology, and potentially make

investments.

Mayo Clinic Ventures has three seed funds as well as a \$100 million venture growth fund, and is looking to partner with start-ups on a variety of levels. In some, it will seek to make an equity investment. In others, it will seek to partner on clinical trials and advancing technology, and take a royalty position.

Though the group is interested in a wide variety of medical technology (Rogers cites therapy, diagnostics, prognostics, devices, IT, individualized

medicine, regenerative medicine), they will also be looking for good strategic fits. "We're not interested in being investors for the sake of being investors, we want a real value exchange," Rogers said. "My advice to companies is that we like to understand a clear thesis for what they're doing and how it can differentiate our practice, take costs out of the system, or help patients." Lerman adds: The whole concept of partnering with the technology and talent in Israel, is part of the philosophy we have."

Congregational News

Getting ready to receive the Torah

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker
Chabad Center of Berks County

A friend recently brought to my attention a tragic story. This friend's grandmother, in her 90s, had taken ill. At some point, workers at the hospital where she was a patient gave this woman something to drink, without the knowledge of her family. She was gone within 24 hours.

Helping a person to commit suicide (called "mercy killings") is a controversial topic. According to Jewish law, this would be considered murder. All would agree, though, that such a move without consent of the patient or family runs against any and every decency and civil law imaginable. Regardless of the patient's condition, no one has the right to take matters into his or her own hands and choose to kill people.

Where does a person get the feeling to perform such an action? The same question can, essentially, be applied to other, less severe crimes, such as robbing, stealing, cheating, and lying.

When one wishes to harm another one, direct confrontation is normally avoided. One goes, instead, behind the other's back and pulls off the terrible deed.

People who behave in this manner are missing the message from the festival of Shavuot, a holiday celebrated this year from Saturday evening, June 11 thru Monday, June 13. This festival commemorates the day the Ten Commandments, together with the rest of the Torah, were given to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai.

Some may suggest that the Torah is a book of instructions. This is the document — they propose — given to a new people, plucked out of the confines of Egypt, traveling through a desert, and eventually setting up a kingdom in their own land, the Holy Land. They needed a guide, and guidelines, to help them grow and settle.

This is not true for many reasons. The Torah was given to the people for all time. The Torah itself references situations long after the actual date of those living during biblical times.

Moreover, the Torah was not given to the people as they left Egypt. It took 49 days, at a distant location from Egypt,

called Mount Sinai, for the Torah to be given to the people. If the Torah were merely a list of rules, it should have been given at, or before, the Exodus from Egypt.

The Torah is a uniquely Divine document. Its every single letter was dictated by the Almighty to be pertinent for all generations and for all time. It is through this document that a human has the ability to connect with the Divine. And it is through this document that the Jewish people are a people for all this time, even with language, country and culture differing from place to place.

According to the aforementioned, the question turns the other way: Why wait 49 days for the Jewish people to arrive at Mount Sinai. Why not give this document called "Torah" at the Exodus, or immediately after leaving Egypt?

The answer lies in the number 49 and its relationship with the number 50.

The number 50 plays a pivotal role in the receiving of the Torah by the Jewish people at Sinai, and in the festival of Shavuot, designed to relive and re-experience this monumental occasion each year. The Torah, in its directive regarding the days between the festival of Passover and Shavuot, instructs the following: "From the day following the rest day (of Passover) ... you should count for yourselves seven weeks. They should be perfect ... you should count 50 days." (Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:15-16.)

Seven "perfect" weeks does not equal 50 days. They equal 49 days. How, then, does one count seven weeks and 50 days?

The yearly counting during this time mirrors the counting the Jewish people were performing following their Exodus from Egypt. In those days, the Egyptians were not just the oppressive and enslaving people. Egypt was, culturally, a location of spiritual depravity and uncleanness.

When the Jewish people physically left Egypt, it was a challenge to remove the "Egypt" — its culture and manners

— that had become entrenched within them. The 49 days then served as a springboard through which to climb up, level by level, day by day, until the people had completed the work required for the entire gamut of human characteristics.

It was after completing these 49 steps, on the 50th morning, that the Almighty responded to their efforts by appearing in His full glory on Mount Sinai delivering the Ten Commandments, together with the rest of the Torah.

In other words, day 50 was the response to the 49 preceding it. It was the revelation of the Divine reaction, so to speak, to their human efforts. It was, in fact, the greatest Divine revelation ever seen.

Ever since that time, as the festival of Shavuot approaches each year, this same count reminds and enables the person to prepare properly for the annual revelation of this great Divine Energy. Once humans complete 49 levels, the highest, most Divine level, is gifted to the people as a response. Hence, "you should count 50 days."

The Torah is not merely a book of behavior codes but is a G-dly revelation. It is an opportunity to connect with a transcendent, Divine energy; with the number 50. It could not have been given coming out of Egypt, for this type of revelation is best appreciated and accepted when humans have done their part in the preparation.

When a person truly appreciates this Divine document for what it is, it is clear that all its rules, regulations, and parameters are designed to make a human more Divine. With this blueprint, it should be impossible for one person to stoop so low as to harm another. On the contrary, the Torah continues to allow humans to be elevated to greater heights.

Hoping to see you all as we read the Ten Commandments at our annual Ice Cream Party at Chabad (see ad, Page 8).

June ☆ Iyar-Sivan



Shabbat Candle Lightings

June 3
8:11 p.m.

June 10
8:15 p.m.

June 17
8:18 p.m.

June 24
8:19 p.m.



Torah Portions

June 4/Iyar 27
Bechukotai (Leviticus 26:3 – 27:34)

June 11/Sivan 5
Bamidbar (Numbers 1:1 – 4:20)

June 18/Sivan 12
Naso (Numbers 4:21 – 7:89)

June 25/Sivan 19
Behaalotecha (Numbers 8:1 – 12:16)

July ☆ Sivan-Tammuz



Shabbat Candle Lightings

July 1
8:19 p.m.

July 8
8:17 p.m.

July 15
8:13 p.m.

July 22
8:08 p.m.

July 29
8:02 p.m.



Torah Portions

July 2/Sivan 26
Shlach (Numbers 13:1 – 15:41)

July 9/Tammuz 3
Korach (Numbers 16:1 – 18:32)

July 16/Tammuz 10
Chukat (Numbers 19:1 – 22:1)

July 23/Tammuz 17
Balak (Numbers 22:2 – 25:9)

July 30/Tammuz 24
Pinchas (Numbers 25:10 – 30:1)

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

REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034
Friday, June 3: 6 p.m.
Saturday, June 4: Molly Nemirow Bat Mitzvah, 10:30 a.m.
Friday, June 10: Luke Berger Bar Mitzvah, 7 p.m.
Fridays, June 17 and 24, 7:45 p.m.
Saturday, July 9: Jacob Sileski Bar Mitzvah

CONGREGATION SHOMREI HABRITH

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Join us for an enjoyable evening to celebrate our last class before the summer

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5.30PM

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2320 HAMPDEN BLVD
READING, PA 19604

\$12.00

RSVP by May 31 to
lipskerreading@aol.com or 610-334-1577



Confirmation at RCOS

Rabbi Brian Michelson celebrates with the 5776 confirmation class at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. From left are Audra Nemirow, Leah Egol, Tristan Haas, Kacie Horowitz, Chase Weizer and Jessica McIntosh. Missing from photo are Jamie Zamrin, Matthew Driben, Brandon Missan and Tobias Walker.



Artwork by Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom Religious School students was on display during the Oneg at the May 20 Shabbat service that celebrated the school's teachers.

Obituaries

Ruth J. Knoblauch, 90, of Warwick, NY. Ruth was born in Reading. She was the Regional Coordinator of Daycare Services of northern New Jersey. Ruth is survived by her children, Steven H. Knoblauch of New York, Kenneth Knoblauch of France and Patti Knoblauch of New York. There are also four grandchildren.

Alan L. Mann, 75, of Exeter Township. Alan worked for the former Gilbert Associates as a Chemical Engineer. He was a member of Keshar Zion Synagogue, where he served on the Board of Directors and was president of the Cemetery Committee. Alan is survived by his wife, Rochelle and his daughters, Rhonda and Darcy. He is also survived by his three grandchildren.

Helaine Schiffman, 79, of Reading. Helaine was a former president of the Reading Chapter of Hadassah. She was also a lifetime member of ORT and was a former president of its branch in Passaic, N.J. She is survived by her husband Peter,

her son Jeffrey and his wife, her daughter Jill Schiffman of Maryland and her son-in-law Richard McGlamory. Other survivors include her brother Dr. Lionel Kuhn, her four grandchildren and her nephew and nieces.

Marlene S. Weiss, 81, of Exeter Township. Marlene was a graduate of Penn State University and taught in New York and Pennsylvania. She is survived by her husband George and her sons; Gary and his wife Adele of New Jersey, Jeffrey and his wife, Randi, of Tennessee and Martin and his wife, Jinju, of Texas. Other survivors include her eight grandchildren, her sisters Renee Lichter and Nadene Sales and her nieces and nephews.

Martin J. Goldstein, 89, of Reading. Martin was a veteran of World War II serving with the Navy. He was the owner of Martin's Clothing Store in Reading and later worked as a salesman for Met-Life Insurance. He was a member of Keshar Zion Synagogue. Martin is survived by his daughter Maralyn Goldstein of Arizona and his sons;

Steven of Michigan, and David and Marc of Reading. Other survivors include his four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Abner Salon, 96, of New Jersey and formerly of Reading. He served in the armed services during World War II. Abner was owner of Salon's Department Store and Tots N Doodads, both located in West Reading. He is survived by his two daughters, Joy, wife of Gordon Schafer, and Lynne, wife of Andrew Levin, and his son Robert Salon and his wife, Sally. Other survivors include his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren.

Michael Diamond, 72, of Mohrsville. Michael was an Army veteran. He is survived by his wife, Arlene, his daughter Michelle of Reading, his stepson Jeffrey Smith of Dauberville and his brother Eric of Texas. Other survivors include his grandchildren, great-grandchildren.

Robert S. Rachman, 79, of California and formerly of Reading. Robert served in the Navy and was a decorated boxer. He and his cousin Roger were owners of the store Cousins, which was one of the first outlet stores in Reading. He is survived by his children, grandchildren and his sister Phyllis and her husband.



Joint Shavuot Celebration of RCOS and KZ at Keshar Zion!

Saturday Night, June 11, 2016 - 7:00-11:00 p.m.

Study Session One:	7:00-8:00
Study Session Two:	8:00-8:45
Maariv and Havdalah:	8:45-9:15
Dessert and Refreshments:	9:15-9:45
Study Session Three:	9:45-11:00

Sessions will be taught by Rabbi Brian Michelson, Rabbi Matthew Abelson, Dr. John Incledon, and Dr. Jennifer Koosed.

Topics for study sessions include, but are not limited to:

- "The Americanization of the Holocaust: Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer*"
- "How do we disagree? Civility in Public Discourse"
- "Discourses on the Book of Ruth"
- "The Meaning of Revelation"

Sunday, June 12th	Monday, June 13th
9:30 a.m. Shavuot Services	9:30 a.m. Shavuot Services
Kiddush to follow	(including Yizkor) Kiddush to follow

Please RSVP by Thursday, June 2nd to 610-374-1763 or kzsecretary@entermail.net

There is **no charge**. Reservations are recommended and would be helpful in order to accommodate everyone who is attending. Thank you!



CHABAD OF BERKS COUNTY

SHAVUOT

Anniversary of the giving of the Torah

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THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

& Enjoy a

DAIRY BUFFET AND ICE-CREAM PARTY

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Office@chabadofberks.org
610-334-3218



Jewish Community High School marks end of an eventful year

By Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner

Reading JCHS Director

This year's Reading Jewish Community High School has come to a conclusion with a burst of activities and plans for 2016-2017.

On May 15 Rabbi Yosef Lipsker (and several helpful children) hosted both Better Together seniors and teen participants and all the students of the JCHS at Chabad-Lubavitch of Berks County. We are grateful to Rabbi Lipsker for a day of preparation such that we could watch both the actual preparation of a wonderful recipe – referred to as “Haney's Challah” – and then after learning the particular mitzvah of “Challah,” we twisted three-strand challot for baking or for taking home to complete the baking.

For our final weekend on May 22, we celebrated with multiple experiences. We were able to complete the year of studies with an outstanding attendance rate — even though the students had multiple competing programs and family activities.

Rabbi Dov shared his collection of arrowheads from 20-15,000 BCE to medieval European crossbow-bolts in honor of Lag BaOmer. JCHS students handled arrowheads made of stone from around the world, of bone from ancient Egypt, for hunting small animals when the Sinai was a savannah and not a desert, one bronze arrowhead dated to the time of King David, and from all over the Middle East reflecting Biblical and Second Temple history from 3,000 years ago.

Lag BaOmer is a holiday celebrated with sports events including archery, on the 33rd day of the Counting of the Omer, which occurs on the 18th day of Iyar. Rabbi Dov was a national inter-collegiate archery champion in the early 1960s and began collecting arrowheads, bows, arrows and specialist equipment representing archery history. Later he became an archery specialist at Jewish camps.

We asked students to evaluate the program for this current year and to propose suggestions for courses, formats and even times. Simultaneously we reminded students of the opportunity to participate in the forthcoming year in a new format that encourages Better

Together activities while promoting a greater opportunity for student elective choices. On June 5 we will be celebrating the Better Together year's activities. Watch for details or contact me at bdlerner1@gmail.com.

We presented certificates of accomplishment and graduation to Megan McIntosh and Bryce Weizer, our two graduating seniors. We are sending them each a mezuzah for their college residence. Rabbi Dov contributed the mezuzah case and Federation provided the mezuzah parchment he secured on a trip to Israel.

Rabbi Dov presented the second annual Adiv Vivek Lift z”l Memorial Award to Matthew Driben in recognition of his personal qualities as he participates in classes, his relationships with fellow students and his dedication to traditional Jewish values, the same dimensions of personal and Jewish values (Hebrew-“middot”) as did Adiv who died tragically in an auto accident March 28, 2014

We wish our graduates well in the years ahead and hope that they will visit us when they are home from college studies. Coincidentally but providentially, Rabbi and Holly Michelson visited our celebration with two of our graduates, Naomi and Lella. We love it when our grads come by and visit!!

We concluded the evening by viewing a scene from “The Danish Girl,” and a discussion of the Jewish tradition that was exemplified by Yitzchak Perlman, the world-class violinist who recently canceled his performance with the North Carolina Symphony in Raleigh to protest HB2, the controversial North Carolina law limiting civil rights protections for LGBT people. We considered a variety of Jewish sources, definitions and rulings that support community inclusiveness and a discussion as well of understanding why nevertheless there are other opinions.

We want to thank the Jewish Federation of Reading for its support, and especially those who have worked so hard with our program: Bill Franklin, Amanda Hornberger, Carole Robinson, Brenda Seidel. I want to thank Shira Simon for joining the team and making the journey every week for the



Checking out one of Rabbi Dov's arrowheads

three hours in addition to preparing and teaching each Sunday. We are grateful to Rabbis Matt Abelson, Yosef Lipsker and Brian Michelson and their respective congregations for their input and support.

Better Together returns

Better Together is a national pilot philanthropy that supported our grant for a program linking teens and senior citizens, and we are hopeful that this coming year we will have additional seniors to join with us in 10 monthly programs of intergenerational education and communication. For information

about the program, please contact Carole Robinson at the JCC.

Preparing for the fall

Registration is now open for the 2016-2017 JCHS year, and anyone with questions is encouraged to contact me at bdlerner1@gmail.com or the JCC office at 610-921-0624.

Some of the topics under consideration are Jewish Humor, Jewish View of Bioethics, Current Events, American Jewish History, Hebrew Calligraphy, How to Learn Hebrew – Now and courses dealing with food, cooking and baking.

Student essay: It's truly better when we learn together

Submitted by Talia Spillerman, 8th grade

“The best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.”

A year ago this quote by Andy Rooney would have made no sense to me, but since I joined the Better Together program, I now understand it. “The best classroom” is referring to the fact that senior citizens have been in this world the longest, which means they have learned many lessons throughout life that everyone, including teens, can learn.

“The feet of an elderly person” refers to how that I, as a teen, am just at the bottom or beginning of life, the feet, and I have to work my way up. Better Together has shown me that senior citizens have very interesting pieces of advice to share and it has allowed me to see how the world has changed from generation to generation.

From ages 5 to 18 it is expected that children attend school to prepare for college, jobs, and the real world. Kids are taught mathematics, proper English, history, sciences, and even a foreign language. However, there is no way to learn all about life and all its obstacles just in school. Through each Better Together meeting, I have learned valuable lessons from the senior citizens that were not taught in school. For instance, during one conversation, the topic of technology came up.

As young adults, people my age just see the countless benefits of technology, but the seniors shared with us a different point

of view. They told the teens that they were worried for our generation and wondered what will happen in the future because of the speed of technology. Today, we can send a message in a click of a button and we don't have time to really ponder our words. When they were younger, the seniors had to write a letter and mail it which gave them more time to really consider what they wanted to say. Never would I have thought this way if it weren't for the input of seniors. Since then, I have tried to really think about what I say before I communicate electronically.

Furthermore, there is no such thing as an “average” senior citizen. When I watch a program on television where a senior citizen is being portrayed, they are usually shown as being a dull and frail person who likes to give out butterscotch candies or a lonesome person who stays in their home reminiscing about their youth. Contrary to Hollywood's image, senior citizens actually are contributing members to society. They are teachers with a plethora of valuable information. Seniors are each in a different place emotionally, physically, and morally. This is why we should really listen to each person, since every person has different life experiences to learn from. Some have been teachers, lawyers, accountants, or even stay-at-home parents, which means that every senior has valuable advice to share. The rest of the world has to just be willing to listen.

Not all conversations have made me change my mind though. Some conversations have opened my eyes by making me see

how far the world has come. For example, last week's conversation was on the current election. The senior that I spoke with was a seventy year old man. His opinion was that Donald Trump was the answer to make America great again. Before that day, I had never met someone who genuinely wanted Donald Trump to lead our country.

When listening to his reasoning, I realized how much of a generation gap there is between seniors and teens. He thought that gay marriage was not right. However, throughout my entire school career, I have been taught to accept people for who they are, and to respect and be nice to everyone. Never have I heard someone say that gay marriage was wrong in school.

Another one of Donald Trump's outlandish ideas is building a wall. If we want to eventually have world peace, we should be welcoming our neighbors, not keeping them out. But the senior talking to me said that we should build a wall because so many Mexicans are coming in illegally and not paying taxes. He had no sympathy for the hard life they were living and he did not see that coming to America would give them an opportunity to have a better life.

Differences between generations are not a bad thing, because they show how the world has progressed from generation to generation. People are now more accepting and open to new things than ever. This reaffirms my faith that the world can only become better.

Even though I have learned so much

from these conversations, I do not think just the teens are learning and benefiting. The seniors are getting to an age where they are wondering about what was their impact on the world and what will happen once they pass away. Some of them may not have grandchildren so they are not really connected to the youth of the world.

Better Together allows them to see what the next generation will do for the world, good or bad. Likewise, many teens may not have a grandmother, grandfather, or both so they lose out on having the opinions of the older generations. Thanks to Better Together, the seniors are able to be involved with the youth and the teens are able to learn from the seniors.

Many people do not realize the importance of talking with seniors. They don't realize that learning lessons from the past can help make the future better. Thanks to Better Together I have realized the importance of speaking with the elderly, and now I know why it is commanded in the Torah.

If we truly want to complete the mitzvah of Tikkun O'lam (repairing the world) it is necessary to know what needs to be repaired and what better way to learn than by conversing with those who have lived the longest and learned the most. Each time we have met, I have learned a lesson having to do with almost anything under the sun, from the current election to Torah stories.

This program has definitely taught me a lot, but most of all I have figured out that it is truly better when we learn together.

Jews, Muslims work together to bring solar panels to West Bank

Solar panels financed by a group of U.S. Jews and Muslims are helping farmers in the West Bank community of Auja, according to a *New York Times* report.

For example, the panels provide power to draw water for irrigation from deep underground.

Solar panels are fairly common in the West Bank and Israel, often donated by European governments. But according to the *Times*, experts in the field say the \$100,000 project here in Auja is the first substantial one to be financed by a group involving both Jews and Muslims in the United State and to have both Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims on its technical team. In addition to its environmental benefits, the solar project gives an economic push to farmers who struggle with unreliable and expensive electricity.

The Times reported that Palestinian farmers embraced the project on one condition. The community, said Ben

Jablonski, the New York Jew who led the initiative, insisted only that the collection of donors and engineers be free of any connection to the Israeli settlements scattered across the West Bank on land Palestinians consider their own.

Peter Beinart, a professor at the City University of New York and a leading American Jewish critic of Israel's occupation, sees Jablonski's initiative, called Build Israel Palestine, as a sign that younger American Jews are less comfortable with Israeli control of the West Bank than traditional philanthropic groups and their members have been.

"It's one thing for American Jewish organizations to talk vaguely about economic development for Palestinians," Mr. Beinart said. "To be willing to take a stand in opposing settlements as part of it, as Ben has done — that makes it unusual."

The political complexities, in a

place where any cooperation with Israelis is generally denounced by Palestinian leaders as "normalization" of the occupation, were apparent when Auja's mayor, Fakhri Injoun, approached the solar array during a visit this month by the initiative's Israeli and Palestinian partners.

"We are eager to develop Auja, but projects with the Israelis are not welcomed," the mayor told the *Times*., In its first phase, which started this spring, the new solar array supplies about a third of the electricity needed to run a subterranean pump; the rest comes from the local electricity company. The project also included agricultural training for the farmers growing the prized Medjool dates, and surveys to assess the farmers' needs.

Water is undeniably scarce in the Jordan Valley, and a longstanding complaint among Palestinians and their supporters is that it is unfairly distributed across the West Bank. .

In the valley, the underlying aquifer is relatively shallow, said Deeb Abdelghafour, a senior official at the Palestinian Water Authority, and has been under pressure from drought for as much as a decade. Electricity is also expensive, and service can be unreliable. One asset the valley has is sunlight, and plenty of it, said Monther Hind, a senior engineer at the Palestinian Wastewater Engineers Group, a private organization that is a partner on the initiative. So engineers came up with the idea of powering the pump with photovoltaic panels.

In a small building next to the solar array, a meter was counting its output, and water was audibly rushing through a pipe connected to the pump, about 250 feet below ground. Ashraf Yahiaa, an engineer with the contracting company that built the array, said it was 3,000 square feet and could produce 25,000 watts when the sun was at its brightest.

Israel lets Jordanian workers cross the border for jobs

For the past six months, Israel quietly has been allowing Jordanians to cross the border to its Red Sea resort of Eilat to work minimum-wage jobs at hotels, *The Washington Post* reported. Up to 1,500 are to take part in the program, which has been successful in the early going.

"The Jordanians need work, and we need workers," the head of the Eilat Hotel Association, Shabtai Shay, told the *Post*.

Getting the Jordanians work permits to cross the border from Aqaba to Eilat took three years of negotiations with 10 Israeli ministries, he said."It was mission impossible," Shay said. On the Israeli side, there were concerns about security, vetting, the checkpoint, unions, the hours and how Israeli tourists would feel about being attended — even behind the scenes — by service workers who were Muslims from the Hashemite

kingdom.

Jordan and Israel fought two wars, in 1948 and 1967. Their relations have been further strained by the fact that Jordan is filled with Palestinian refugees. "I never thought I'd live to see the first Jordanian worker in our hotels," Shay said.

Eilat has a short strip of beach with a promenade of duty-free outlets, chain restaurants and swimming in the Red

Sea. During the intense heat in July and August, it is packed with vacationing Israeli families. Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia are nearby, but few Israelis venture to those destinations.

There are 55,000 Israelis living in Eilat and 40 hotels with 12,000 rooms that employ 9,000 workers, about a third of them in housekeeping — jobs Israelis won't do anymore, or won't do for the money offered, the *Post* reported.



You can help support our Lakin Preschool (without spending an extra penny!)

The Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom Board has authorized benefiting the Lakin Preschool by extending the synagogue's successful grocery store debit card discount program to the entire community.

RCOS has earned over \$175,000 in the past 25 years by participating in the grocery/gasoline debit card discount program offered by Giant, Redners and Weis. It remains an important income stream for RCOS. The driving force behind this successful fundraising program is Carole Kutscher. The cards are in \$25, \$50, and \$100 denominations and must be purchased through RCOS. The stores give us a 5% discount which, if you choose, can be allocated to support the Lakin Preschool at no cost to you. You get the full value of the cards.

How can you participate?

- The easiest approach is to use your bank auto pay check system. Just decide the amount you want monthly, set the payment date for the 23rd of the month and Carole will fill your order by the end of the month and mail it to you.
- It may be possible with the auto pay system for you to pick up your prepackaged cards at Day School which could be more convenient for you. You can create an order with any one more of the grocery stores.
- The cards cannot be refilled nor be replaced if lost or stolen.

How easy is it to raise a lot of cash? If you spend \$200/week on groceries and gas, that's \$10,000/year in purchases. The stores give us a 5% discount. You get the full value of the cards. We get to keep the 5% discount — that's \$500 that goes to the Jewish community at no cost whatsoever to you. Your participation benefits the Lakin Preschool, reduces the need for Federation support and helps build a stronger Reading Jewish community.

Carole Kutscher can be contacted at (610) 779- 7590 or carole.kutscher@gmail.com.

All Around the Town

Mazel tov to **Brenna Mendelsohn, her husband Brian Zansitis and big brother David Levi** on the birth of Daniel Philip. Delighted grandparents are Toby and Bernie Mendelsohn.

Congrats to new grandparents **Glenn & Becky Brok and new great-**

Depression

By Anne Seltzer

Back in August 2014, I wrote about the death of Robin Williams and what I believed for myself to be situationally depressed. As time wore on, and my weariness and lack of wanting to do things that previously brought me joy continued, it became clear that it was not situational. I would wake up in the morning not wanting to get out of bed. Everything became a chore — walking Buttons, taking a shower, exercising, cooking, shopping. Nothing was fun. I cried more and was overwhelmingly sad. Sure I could be happy and excited about things, but there was a thin layer of pervasive sadness. I was always looking around the corner for the next shoe to drop and the next bad thing to happen. I'm certain that others around me sensed my "Eyore"ness, but loved me enough to still talk to and include me. I had taken my anxiety and depression to a new level.

A very dear friend introduced me to a wonderful therapist who after several sessions told me that he felt I was really depressed and probably needed medication to help. Maybe he was getting tired of having to get a new box of Kleenex after every session. He referred me back to my primary doctor, who concurred with his impression and helped me to get regulated on an anti-depressant. Oh I did go kicking and screaming into the night not wanting to take drugs, after all I could handle it, except I couldn't. It was no longer just my father, mother, brother, sick child. It was just plain old me. Fortunately she worked with me to get the dosage right and told me it would probably take a month to start feeling better. She kept checking on me and we did up the dosage to where it is today, almost a year later.

Am I perfect? No. Have I noticed side effects? Yes. I added a pants size, I'm constantly hungry, I miss the high highs, but not badly enough to ever think is it worth it to experience the low lows. I look forward to walking Buttons in the morning (when it isn't cold and snowy). And I sing



grandfather Bob Brok on the birth of Ethan Nathaniel of Lexington, Kentucky. Proud parents are Sarah and Carlos Estrada.

We love good news about members of our community! Please share it by emailing Marknem@aol.com.

to her again. This past holiday season I couldn't wait to start baking cookies for the first time in a few years. It was a pleasure for me to cook for Thanksgiving. I was chomping at the bit to shop for, and plant flowers. I find humor in Alan's corny jokes again, even though he doesn't think I do. I look forward to accepting and initiating invitations from friends. Getting out of bed is no longer a chore. I have energy. I am living my life again after just going through the motions for several years. Do I still get sad? Of course. But I can usually put it into perspective and not let it control my life. I can be more compassionate to others because I'm not busy feeling sorry for myself and what I no longer have. Do I still get anxious? Yes, just ask Pam about having to expedite my mammogram results. Will there be days where the problem seems bigger than the solution? Of course. But hopefully with a little help from my little white friend, I will navigate it better than before and take control of it instead of it controlling me.

These cookies are for Alan, who was more than patient with me for way too many years. I love you.

Apricot, Pistachio and Chocolate Chip Bars
2 c. flour
1 c. chilled unsalted butter, cut into cubes
1 ¼ c. old fashioned oats
1 c. chopped shelled pistachios
1 c. packed dark brown sugar
Generous ½ c. chopped dried apricots
Generous ½ tsp. cinnamon
Generous ½ c. chocolate chips
1/8 tsp. table salt
1 15 ½ oz. jar of apricot preserves
Combine and beat flour, oats, brown sugar, cinnamon and salt. Add butter and beat until mostly incorporated and begins to pull together, about 3 minutes. Stir in pistachios and reserve 1 ½ c. Stir apricots and chocolate chips into reserved mixture. Refrigerate. Firmly press remaining mixture into ungreased 9x13 pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes. Cool 20 minutes. Spread apricot preserves on top. Crumble reserved crumb mixture over the top. Continue baking until lightly browned and bubbling all over, about 35-40 minutes more. Cool completely before slicing. Enjoy!

Gardening with Vicky

Bring home a healthy plant

By Vicky Sokoloff

Bringing home a healthy plant is the first step to its success in your landscape. When you get to the garden center, look around. Do the plants look healthy? Touch the soil in a few of the pots. Have they been watered? Does there seem to be enough staff to care for the number of plants they have? Ask a few questions, even one you already know the answer to. Do you get good information?

Do the plants have tags with both their common and botanical names? Can you read the tags? Do they include information you need to know where to site the plant and how to care for it? How big will it get? Is it an annual or perennial? Does it prefer sun or shade, wet or dry conditions? Is it drought tolerant once established? What are its known pests and diseases? Does it require any special care? When is the proper time to prune it? Is it hardy in our climate? Does it need any protection over the winter? Many of the plants sold as 'patio plants' are not hardy in zone 6.

Pick out the plant you are considering buying. Place is where you can get a good look at it. Does it have a pleasing shape? Do you see any signs of damage? Now tilt it slightly and slide it part way out of its container. Do you see soil, or just a tangle of roots?

Look on the under side of the foliage. Is there any sign of insects or disease? If you bring home a plant that is harboring insects or disease you risk not only losing that plant, but having it infect plants already in your landscape.

Try to find out where the plant was grown. It is more like to adapt to your yard if it came from Lancaster County than if it's been shipped in from California or Minnesota. Ask how long the plant has been at the garden center. Plants that have been sitting for more than

one growing season are very likely to be root bound. When that happens it takes a great deal of time and patience to separate all the roots and head them into the surrounding area. If not, the plant will strangle itself.

If you are purchasing a perennial ask if there is any guarantee. The garden center has no control over what happens to the plant once it leaves them. If you take a three-week vacation and no one waters the plant, that's on you. But if the plant is well cared for and does not survive the winter, you want to know if it will be replaced.

Have you dealt with this seller before? Did the plants do well? If not, how did they handle the problem? It doesn't hurt to ask friends or neighbors about their experience with local sellers before you even head out to look.

These are examples of root-bound plants:



This is what you want to see — good proportion of soil to roots



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Partnering with



Jewish Family Service

Berks County centenarians honored

United Way



By Sari Incledon, M.Ed.

In May I enjoyed attending Berks County's Fifth Annual Centenarian Lunch with my husband, John, and his father, Al, who will be 100 in August. The purpose of this event was to recognize and honor local centenarians for their unique witness of the past 100 years. There were 24 centenarians ages 100-106 attending with their families, and 158 were unable to attend. Forty people in Berks County will turn 100 in 2016.



This event, organized by the Berks County Area Agency on Aging is held as part of the National Celebration of Older American Month. County officials warmly welcomed the centenarians and urged them to share their perspectives, life experiences and wisdom with friends and family.

A booklet containing autobiographies of the centenarians in attendance was a lovely memento of the occasion. The booklet showed the centenarians to be a diverse group in many ways. Many were raised on farms and lived in rural settings. Some were highly educated professionals, many were homemakers, two were World War II veterans, and two women were immigrants from Germany. They had

varied hobbies and interests, and all were proud of the longevity. The centenarians were asked about their secrets to living to 100. The most commonly given secret was hard work and staying active and several reported that they always enjoyed walking. Several attributed their longevity to healthy habits, and a happy marriage and family life. God's will and their faith in God were mentioned by several centenarians, and others included using talents, humor, a positive attitude, appreciating nature and enjoying the company of others, as their secrets. Many felt that eating fresh and healthy foods, especially vegetables, was an important factor. One woman credited her Italian heritage and her Mediterranean diet, and one man, age 106, the oldest in attendance said eating the veggies from his own garden was his secret.

There was however a disagreement about the role alcohol had in contributing to longevity. Many of the Berks centenarians, men and women alike felt that their daily alcoholic drink

— red wine, beer and Manhattans were a key component for them, but two were teetotalers. So the role of alcohol was one thing these seniors disagree about.

In May I had a chance to wish Eva Bartos, the only Jewish Berks County centenarian (that I know of) a happy 103rd birthday. I asked her if she thought there were any secrets to living a long life that she could share and she laughed and said that she did not have any. But she like many of the others thought good genes were the reason for her longevity. I think her positive attitude and wonderful sense of humor also were factors.

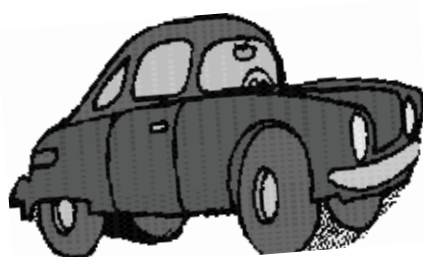
Women on Their Own

Our women's social-support group now has 20 members and meets monthly. For more information call Sheryl Weintraub at 610-796-4761 or email her at Sheryl.woto@gmail.com

Encore

A monthly discussion group for seniors next meets on Monday, June 6 at 3:00 p.m. at the JCC. Call Sari at 610-921-0624 for more information. All are welcome.

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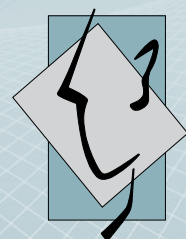
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Contributions as of May 20

Holocaust Library & Resource Center

In honor of:

Jack and Jeff Gernsheimer receiving the Ruth and Irvin Balis Volunteer Appreciation Award – Rosalye Yashek

Hilde Gernsheimer’s special birthday – Sue and Herb Wachs, Jon and Kathie Wachs, Michelle Wachs & Erwin Gross, Beth and Howard Mortman, Debbie Goodman and John Moyer, Barbara Nazimov, Ann and Don Kelly, Ruth and Conrad Heisman, Sue and George Viener, Amanda, Jason and Nina Hornberger

Mariette Jacobson’s special birthday – Amanda, Jason and Nina Hornberger

Sid and Esther Bratt’s 65th anniversary – Amanda, Jason and Nina Hornberger

In memory of:

Charlotte Hirsch – Rosalye Yashek

Rae Rudnick – Rosalye Yashek

Jewish Family Service

In memory of:

Helaine Schiffman – Adam Kuhn and family, Louise Zeidman

Alan Mann – Karen and Marty Jacobson, Irwin Goldstein, Louise Zeidman

Larry Harris’ brother – Sheila and Gary Lattin

Mark Garfinkle – Barbara Nazimov

Marlene Weiss – Barbara Nazimov, Louise Zeidman, Ruth Isenberg, Irwin Goldstein, Seymour Bloom

Martin Goldstein – Edith Mendelsohn, Louise Zeidman

Federation Jewish Community Campaign

In honor of:

Alexa Chronister’s high school graduation – Debbie, David, Scott, Mark and Abby Goldberg

JoJo Ure’s high school graduation – Debbie, David, Scott, Mark and Abby Goldberg

Sandy Solmon and Doug Messinger – Susan and Paul Levy

Margie and Alan Leisawitz – Edwina Stoner

Hilde Gernsheimer’s special birthday – Dena and Vic Hammel

Sid and Esther Bratt’s 65th anniversary – Margie and Alan Leisawitz

Marriage of Irv and Arlene Ehrlich’s daughter Melissa – Cheryl and Eric Farber

Andy Primack’s Bar Mitzvah – David, Debbie, Scott, Mark and Abby Goldberg

Honorials and Memorials

Contributions may be made to the following Funds:

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

Get well/speedy recovery:

Julian Syret – Debbie Goodman and John Moyer, Carol and Bernie Gerber

Berna Sherman – Yvonne and Rob Oppenheimer

Sandy Miller – Carol and Bernie Gerber

In memory of:

Charlotte Hirsch – Hilde Gernsheimer, Carol and Bernie Gerber

Rae Rudnick – Hilde Gernsheimer, Carol and Bernie Gerber, Jerry Marcus

Craig Keuscher – Patricia Wetzel

Rhoda Dersh – Carol and Bernie Gerber

Alan Mann – Judy, Bob and Susan Pollack, Carol and Bernie Gerber, Debbie Goodman, Jerry Marcus

Helaine Schiffman – Eleanor Lurensky

Marlene Weiss – Carol and Bernie Gerber, Geoffrey and Lisa Ermentrout, Pollack and Hamburger families, Doris Alberts, Ron and Mary George, Rose Safir, Al and Betsy Katz

Martin Goldstein — Cheryl and Eric Farber, Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer, Judy and Bob Pollack

Friendship Circle Fund

Get well/speedy recovery:

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Elaine Levine – Ethel Engel

Eric Bluestone – Glenn and Gaye Corbin

In memory of:

Mark Garfinkle – Jennie Saft

Martin Goldstein – Jennie Saft

Marlene Weiss – Jennie Saft, Saul and Donna Eisenberg

Alan Mann – Saul and Donna Eisenberg

Helaine Schiffman – Saul and Donna Eisenberg

Lakin Preschool

In honor of:

Michele Leisawitz – Jennifer and Joseph Woodward

Israeli researchers ready to take on Zika-carrying mosquito

Israel21.com

The mosquito-borne Zika virus, according to news reports, is even more dangerous than first believed. While better information about prevention has helped slow the rate of infection in some areas, the health community is still urgently searching for a vaccine or drug treatment.

The green Israeli company Biofeed, specializing in the development and production of environmentally friendly pesticide solutions since 2005, believes the focus should be on eliminating the primary factor: the mosquito.

“Biofeed’s groundbreaking approach can control any mosquito-borne disease,” CEO Nimrod Israely said. “Everybody is looking for a vaccination against Zika virus, but we should keep in mind that the same mosquito that transmits Zika is also

transmitting other viruses as well. What we’re aiming to do is to control a vector, the mosquito itself.”

Biofeed’s Slow Fluid Release (SFR) technology employs a liquid mixture of lures and additives to manipulate insect behavior. “We have for many years recognized the great potential in harnessing the world of insect smells for the benefit of humans. Evolution has given insects an elaborate sense of smell, which they utilize to find mates, food, egg-laying sites and more,” explains Israely, a world-renowned fruit-fly ecologist. “The company has developed a liquid formula that ties different kinds of smells to other materials, as the need arises. The result is a special decoy that draws the target insect through smell. The decoy is slow-released from a hanging device over the course of a year. The insect is drawn to

the decoy, feeds off it and is eliminated.

Long in use on farms for fruit-fly control, for example, the same technology could be tweaked to target the Zika-carrying Aedes Aegypti mosquito as well as flies, moths and other types of mosquitos, such as those transferring malaria.

“We have the platform and know how; we need to do the development and testing. But it’s only a question of some time and money,” Israely said.

SFR keeps an area pest-free for up to 365 days. The Biofeed team is now working on extending its effectiveness to three years. Biofeed was named a winner by the Grand Challenges (Israel) program for creating a technological solution to health challenges in developing countries. As part of the program, Israel’s chief scientist and Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ international development

agency, MASHAV, pledged grant money to help Biofeed develop new methods of no-spray pesticide application for India..

Israely says 50 percent of India’s crop is lost to pests. By bringing the pest to the lethal substance and eliminating it without spraying, Biofeed’s chemical-free method leaves the environment clean and safe, Israely said.

The technology has been fully tested and successfully implemented for years in Israel. “Israel is a perfect place to develop the Biofeed technology because we have all kinds of weather within one or two hours from where we’re located, we have 30 different crops that we run trials on, and farmers that are open-minded and ready to participate and try new things all the time,” he said. “We need to study in the lab but most importantly in the field, under field conditions.”

EVERYTHING’S RELATIVE

by Jordan B. Gorfinkel • www.jewishcartoon.com

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THOSE HOLIDAYS I KNOW. THEN WHY NOT SHAVUOTH?

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